

7 Memorialization Practices and Memory Struggle

7.1 Contested Memory and Practices of Memorialization in the Public Space

Collective memory, particularly what Aleida Assmann calls «political memory», is not simply the sum or condensate of a series of individual memories, but something which is *made* by institutions and larger social groups with the aid of *memorial signs*. Through memorial signs, such as monuments, museums, commemoration rites and ceremonies, groups and institutions are able to frame and reframe collective identities. According to Assmann, political constructions of memory consist of three main characteristics. First, they tend towards homogeneous unity and self-contained closure. Second, they are «emplotted» in a narrative that is emotionally charged and conveys a clear invigorating message. Third, they are anchored in material and visible signs as well as in performative actions, which periodically reactivate individual memories and enhance collective participation.¹ As Biljana Menkovic argues, these materials and visible signs are manifestations of practices of the mythological narration of past events.² Peter Reichel calls this the «politicization of memory», which began with the French Revolution, the emancipation of the bourgeoisie and the emergence of nation-states.³ War memorials are the most common public monuments. They are found in cities and villages, especially those commemorating the victims of the Second World War. It thus seems that there is a significant link between political violence and practices of memorialization. Reinhard Koselleck defines this memorialization of events of political violence as the new «political death cult of modernity», which serves for the legitimization of nation-states and the construction of national collective identities.⁴

In Italy, many memorials commemorate the two key moments of modern Italian history, the *Risorgimento* and the *Resistenza*. In the fourth chapter, we saw that in both historical contexts the rhetoric of sacrifice and martyrdom was quite diffuse. The use of such rhetoric is documented by

1 See Assmann 2010, 42–43.

2 See Menkovic 1999, 1–3.

3 See Reichel 1995, 21–27.

4 Koselleck 1999, 11.

memorial signs that can be found in different Italian regions and places. It is useful to consider a few examples. In Mantova, via Chiassi, there is a plaque that commemorates the men condemned to death by hanging in the city between 1852 and 1855 by the general governor of Lombardia-Veneto, Major General Josef Radetzky. The plaque states: «In this house, challenging the death, in the night of 2 August 1850, the martyrs of Belfiore and their comrades united to conspire against Austrian oppression».⁵ In Matelica, in the province of Macerata, there is a plaque that commemorates the partisans who died during the war in the town's territory as follows: «In the twentieth anniversary of the Resistance, the city of Matelica, remembering [this experience], immortalizes on this stone the martyrs of the partisan struggle».⁶ Similarly, in Ancona there is a large marble block located at one of the main and most visible access points to the city, in the port area, dedicated to «the fallen and the martyrs of the Resistance».⁷ In some cases, there is no need for the terms «martyr» or «martyrdom» to appear to perceive the presence of a martyrological or at least sacrificial conception of death. This is the case of a plaque located in the *Cimitero monumentale della Certosa di Bologna*, which states:

Partisan city faithful to ancient traditions did not want to be subjected to the arrogance of the German invader and with the pure blood of thousands of his youngest children, with its houses destroyed in epic diurnal fighting sustained with weapons taken from the enemy, was at the forefront of the unequal struggle and insurrection that in the radiant daybreak of April 1945 led the fatherland to the conquest of its freedom.⁸

Resistance here is clearly conceived as a patriotic struggle against invaders, where the «blood» of the «children» assumes the connotation of a material witness, which can be understood as an appeal to future generations for the defense of the freedom of the «fatherland». Some memorial signs trace

5 It.: «In questa casa sfidando la morte la notte del 2 novembre 1850 si unirono a congiurare contro l'oppressione austriaca i martiri di Belfiore e i loro compagni.»

6 It.: «Nel ventennale della Resistenza la città di Matelica memore immortala sulla pietra i martiri della lotta partigiana.»

7 It.: «Ai caduti e ai martiri della Resistenza.»

8 It.: «Città partigiana fedele alle antiche tradizioni non volle soggiacere alla prepotenza del Tedesco invasore e col sangue purissimo di migliaia dei suoi figli minori con le sue case distrutte ed in epici diurni combattimenti sostenuti con le armi sottratte al nemico fu all'avanguardia nell'impari lotta e nell'insurrezione che nell'alba radiosa dell'aprile 1945 portò la patria alla conquista della sua libertà.»

a *fil rouge* between the struggle for Italian unification and the partisan Resistance, such as a plaque located on the old street walls of Frascati, in the province of Rome, which is dedicated «to the Resistance that heroically here marked the second Risorgimento on September 10, 1943».⁹ Another interesting plaque that is located in the village of Ceppo, in the province of Teramo, where in 1943 there was a battle between partisans and German soldiers, commemorates the fallen of the two nations as martyrs; the plaque states:

Here the battle faded; the prodigy was accomplished on September 25, 1943 in fraternity of arms with Yugoslav patriots and allied soldiers, artisans of Teramo, who were poor of means [but] not of courage, defeated powerful German forces. Established in the 39th anniversary of the victorious day, this monument perpetuates the memory sanctified by the blood of martyrs and the fallen in the Resistance of Teramo.¹⁰

As shown in the previous chapters, sacrificial and martyrological representations were widely used during and immediately after the 55 days of Moro's imprisonment. It is not surprising, then, that some memorial signs commemorating Aldo Moro also reproduce such rhetoric and language. This is perfectly exemplified by a memorial dedicated to the «memory of Aldo Moro and the fallen soldiers of via Fani» situated in the Apulian city Brindisi and erected in June 1980. The monument was commissioned in 1979 by the municipal administration to artist Marcello Avenali and situated in the center of the roundabout at the north entrance of the city. The website brindisiweb.it provides the following description of the monument:

An anti-rhetorical sculpture, in balance with the chosen environment, set on the verticality of two adjacent bands of steel in modular slabs, both 12 meters high, which attract, reflect, move the light, and which diverge to the point where, perpendicularly, a group of stylized birds fly, as if it were pushed by a thin red line. The idea that life denied by violence nourishes the vitality of freethinking was a guide in the defi-

9 It.: «Alla Resistenza che eroicamente qui segnò il 10 settembre 1943 il secondo Risorgimento.»

10 It.: «Qui divampò la battaglia si compì il prodigo il 25 settembre 1943 in fraternità d'armi con patrioti Jugoslavi e soldati alleati artigiani di Teramo, poveri di mezzi non di valore volsero in fuga possenti forze germaniche eretto nel XXXIX anniversario della vittoriosa giornata questo monumento vuole perpetuarne il ricordo santificato dal sangue dei martiri e caduti della resistenza teramana.»

nition of that twisted and broken tree, of that flight that quickly moves from red blood.¹¹

This description uses a metaphorical reference to blood to signify Moro's death as a sort of sacrifice for the defense of freedom of thought. Similarly, another website refers to the red line as «the symbol of the victim's blood» and stylizes birds as a «symbol of the ideals that despite the violence and death fly high».¹² Moreover, this rhetoric was also used in the plaque at the bottom of the monument:

Beyond the ephemeral time of the violent [people], Brindisi remembers Aldo Moro, gentle martyr—powerful mind—his blood spilled to forge future destinies for a free and worthy Italy.¹³

Less explicitly martyrological, but still interesting for the analytical purpose of this study, is the bust of the Christian Democrat statist that was erected in Bari in Piazza Aldo Moro. One of the streets facing the square was called *via Martiri di via Fani*, thus representing Moro's bodyguards as martyrs. The engraving on the stone that holds the bust reproduces a passage from a speech that Aldo Moro gave on March 20, 1976, during the 13th Congress of the Christian Democracy (DC), in one of the most difficult moments of his political career. Here, he was confronted with a government crisis (the Italian Socialist Party had just moved away from the majority and had returned to the opposition), strong criticisms of the government and the party (the Lockheed scandal had just broken out), and in-

11 It.: «Una scultura anti-retorica, in equilibrio con l'ambiente prescelto, impostata sulla verticalità di due fasce affiancate di acciaio in lastre modulari, due superfici alte 12 metri, che attirano, riflettono, muovono la luce, divergono in alto nel punto in cui, perpendicolarmenete, prende il volo un gruppo di stilizzati uccelli, come sospinto da una sottile linea rossa. L'idea che la vita negata dalla violenza alimenti la vitalità del pensiero libero fu di guida nella definizione di quell' albero contorto e squarcato, di quel volo che muove rapido dal rosso del sangue.» http://www.brindisiweb.it/monumenti/monumento_aldo_moro.asp (accessed August 20, 2017).

12 It.: «Il monumento è caratterizzato dal movimento sinuoso delle due parti di cui è composto, rappresentanti l'albero della vita squarcato e al suo interno una linea rossa, simbolo del sangue delle vittime e gli uccelli stilizzati simbolo degli ideali, che nonostante le violenze e la morte volano in alto.» <http://www.brundarte.it/2014/05/07/monumento-a-virgilio-e-uno-sguardo-al-patrimonio-monumentale-contemporaneo/> (accessed August 20, 2017).

13 It.: «Sull'effimero tempo dei violenti, Brindisi leva in ricordo Aldo Moro, martire mito – mente potente – sangue sparso a forgiare destini futuri per un Italia libera e degna.»

ternal party conflicts caused mainly by its policy of openness toward the Italian Communist Party (PCI). The plaque reproduces only a short passage of this speech, which, as with many of Moro's speeches, is quite long:

This country will not be saved, the great season of rights will be ephemeral, if a new sense of duty does not emerge in Italy.¹⁴

Extracted from the full text of the speech, this phrase completely loses the meaning it held in its original context, at least for those who did not hear or read the speech. Given that the appeal to duty during Moro's 55 days of prison was above all used by those who appealed to the *raison d'État*—the duty of not accepting negotiations with the BR—one cannot but notice that the sentence is implicitly used to make Moro's sacrifice appear as the ultimate fulfillment of his duty. There is no doubt that the sentence here assumes an instrumental and non-critical function. Moreover, on the side of Moro's bust, there is a second stone that reproduces the speech by the Pope from April 21, 1978, which, as we saw, implicitly endorsed the «line of firmness» adopted by the government. In Moro's speech, within the context in which it was originally held, the sentence was not an appeal to the «reason of state». On the contrary, Moro spoke of the «disruptive force of youth and the right of revolutionary succession» that initiated a «process of liberation», which «can be neither disputed nor circumvented with false promises».¹⁵ In other words, he called for the recognition of the demands of social justice—for example, the demand for full «recognition of women's value, [...] of their true independence and equality»—which for years had been expressed by young people, primarily by the student movement.¹⁶ Moreover, Moro requested the recognition of «the radically new weight that workers have in social organizations, their incomprehensible right to be not a mere tool.» Finally, he said without half measures that

Faced with this [social] blossoming, politics must be aware of its limits, ready to bend over this new reality, which takes away the rigidity of State reason, to give to [this new reality] the breath of man's reason.

14 Moro 1979, 337; it.: «Questo Paese non si salverà, la grande stagione dei diritti risulterà effimera, se non nascerà in Italia un nuovo senso del dovere.»

15 Moro 1979, 336; it.: «Chi può ignorare la forza dirompente della gioventù ed un diritto di successione rivoluzionaria che non può essere né contestata né aggirata con false promesse?»

16 Moro 1979, 336; it.: «Chi può negare che il riconoscimento del valore della donna, della sua originalità, della sua ricchezza, la sua reale indipendenza ed uguaglianza, siano un problema non eludibile a questo punto cruciale dello sviluppo storico?»

[...] The law must be restored to its universal character, so that not only the law, but rights in their balance, together, prevail, as it is just, in social life. It is not about returning to the old and unbearable constraints, which sacrifice the person to a monstrous deity that does not deserve sacrifices. [...] A long-suffering historical experience brings to light the revolutionary claims of rights. But no society advances, no society achieves its goals, the most radical, of justice if the strict voice of consciousness and authentic sense of community do not place people in the right relationship of social solidarity. This country will not be saved, the great season of rights will be ephemeral if a new sense of duty does not emerge in Italy.¹⁷

Moro's speech therefore addressed the universality of rights and appealed for the recognition of the ethical primacy of human rights and justice over the «reason of state». That Moro explicitly appealed to his party to not sacrifice the person to the state, to that deity that Hobbes called Leviathan, is significant, since it demonstrates that he was well aware of the function of state mythology. There is no trace of this critique of the rhetoric of the «reason of state» left in the monument erected in Bari. Moro's words were extracted and decontextualized in such a way as to reverse, or at least to silence, its intended meaning.

Maybe the most important memorial sign is the one that was erected in via Caetani, the same place where Aldo Moro's body was found. On the first anniversary of the statesman's death, Moro was commemorated through the erection of a plaque that states:

On the morning of May 9, 1978, fifty days after his barbaric abduction, Aldo Moro's bullet riddled body was found in this place. [...] His sacrifice, coldly wanted with inhuman ferocity by those who tried in vain

17 Moro 1979, 336–337; it.: «Di fronte a questa fioritura la politica deve essere conscia del proprio limite, pronta a piegarsi su questa nuova realtà, che le toglie la rigidezza della ragione di Stato, per darle il respiro della ragione dell'uomo. [...] Al diritto va restituito il suo carattere universale, sicché non solo il diritto, ma i diritti nel loro equilibrato insieme prevalgano, com'è giusto, nella vita sociale. Non si tratta di tornare alla vecchia e insostenibile costrizione, che sacrifica la persona ad una mostruosa divinità che non merita sacrifici. [...] Una lunga sofferta esperienza storica porta alla luce le rivendicazioni rivoluzionarie dei diritti. Ma nessuna società avanza, nessuna raggiunge i suoi traguardi, i più radicali, di giustizia, se la voce rigorosa della coscienza ed un senso autentico della comunità non collochino le persone nel giusto rapporto di solidarietà sociale. Questo Paese non si salverà, la grande stagione dei diritti risulterà effimera, se non nascerà in Italia un nuovo senso del dovere.»

to prevent the implementation of a brave and far-sighted program for the benefit of the entire Italian people, will remain as a warning and an instruction to all citizens for a commitment to national unity in justice, peace, in national progress.¹⁸

On the same day, another plaque was erected in via Fani, which commemorated the death of Moro's bodyguards as follows:

In this place [...] five men loyal [fedeli] to the State and democracy were killed with cold ferocity while fulfilling their duty.¹⁹

As Ruth Glynn and Giancarlo Lombardi observe, «although both plaques were dedicated on the same day, only in the case of via Caetani is the date of the plaque's erection the anniversary of the death that occurred there. Despite the fact that it was mounted on the anniversary of Moro's death, nothing in the wording of the via Fani plaque acknowledges the connection between the deaths it commemorates and that of the statesman abducted in the same location. In neither case is it acknowledged that those who died were victims of terrorism. In via Fani, the use of the passive voice constructs the deaths as resulting from the actions of unacknowledged forces. [...] Reference to the BR is equally absent from the plaque in via Caetani, where abstract wording dehistoricizes the death commemorated therein by depriving it of concrete agents.»²⁰ According to Glynn and Lombardi, the phrase «by those who tried in vain to prevent the implementation of a brave and far-sighted program for the benefit of the entire Italian people» is intended to suggest that the BR were perhaps not the only ones responsible for Moro's death, but rather that some other «forces» were involved in the assassination. Furthermore, they argue that the memorial sign in via Caetani constructs the assassination as an assault on the Italian people as a whole. I agree with this interpretation and would add that this de-historicization serves not only to suggest the possible involvement and responsibility of obscure forces, but also contributes to the

18 It.: «Cinquantaquattro giorni dopo il suo barbaro rapimento, venne trovato in questo luogo, la mattina del 9 maggio 1978, il corpo crivellato di proiettili di Aldo Moro [...]. Il suo sacrificio freddamente voluto con disumana ferocia da chi tentava inutilmente d'impedire l'attuazione di un programma coraggioso e lungimirante a beneficio dell'intero popolo italiano resterà quale monito e insegnamento a tutti i cittadini per un impegno di unità nazionale nella giustizia, nella pace, nel progresso nazionale.»

19 It.: «In questo luogo [...] cinque uomini fedeli allo Stato e alla democrazia sono stati uccisi con fredda ferocia mentre adempivano il loro dovere.»

20 Glynn/Lombardi 2012, 6.

mythicization of the event, which assumes the connotation of the outcome of a cosmic, metahistorical battle between good and evil. Reiterating a rhetorical strategy previously used during the 55 days of Moro's imprisonment, those who were responsible for his death are dehumanized: they craved death with «inhuman ferocity». Moreover, this also demonstrates that suggesting the possible involvement of forces and actors other than the BR—that is, the uncritical and superficial reference or implicit allusion to alleged conspiracies—only supports a mythical conception of violence and political conflicts.

Both via Fani and via Caetani serve as key places of annual commemorative practices on March 16 and May 9 (see figures 7 and 8). Glynn and Lombardi rightly point out that «over the years, the nature of commemoration has changed, with significant anniversaries and more recent years witnessing ever greater institutional representation» and that «the hierarchical importance of the via Caetani site has been maintained throughout.» Moreover, they draw attention to the fact that each place «has attested to deep divisions between institutions and the family members of the victims, who have tended to absent themselves from the official events.»²¹ In fact, Moro's family has always sustained, even in recent times, that the masterminds of the kidnapping were not all identified, accusing members of the DC and the government, particularly Francesco Cossiga and Giulio Andreotti, of being responsible for Moro's death.²² As previously mentioned in the fourth chapter, in 1998 Luigi Scalfaro, then President of Italy, endorsed the view of Moro's family as well as many historians, politicians and journalists, saying that the members of the BR were only the material performers of the attack, but that others were the real masterminds. Interestingly, after Scalfaro's intervention and during his presidency, the anniversaries of Moro's death became occasions for politicians to appeal to national reconciliation, which in 2008 culminated in the designation of 9 May as the «Memory Day for the Victims of Terrorism».²³ David Moss rightly addresses the presence of conflicting practices of memorialization, observing that, «while Moro himself is now memorialized across Italy in annual commemorations, and in the large number of streets, schools and political cultural associations named after him, these external forms of re-

21 Glynn/Lombardi 2012, 6.

22 See Senzani, Fiorenza, «Per Moro non potevamo trattare.» Andreotti replica al figlio dello statista. Cossiga: non leggerò il suo libro», *Corriere della Sera*, 15.10.2007, 21.

23 See Glynn/Lombardi 2012, 8.



PICTURE 7: Sergio Mattarella, 12th President of Italy, in via Fani, Rome, on the 40th anniversary of the kidnapping of Aldo Moro and the killing of his guards, March 16, 2018.



PICTURE 8 : Sergio Mattarella, 12th President of Italy, in via Caetani, Rome, on the 37th anniversary of the assassination of Aldo, May 9, 2015.

membrance are not accompanied by a consensual collective memory of the significance of his life and death.»²⁴ As an emblematic example of this ten-

24 Moss 2009, 168.

sion between memorialization practices and unresolved collective memory, Moss points to a controversy that emerged in 1985 when a statue of Moro was erected in his birthplace, Maglie, representing him with a copy of *L'Unità* under his arm. Criticism of this statue, which is clearly intended to symbolize Moro's policy of openness toward the PCI, was also recently expressed.²⁵

At each anniversary of the kidnapping and assassination of Aldo Moro, the «Moro case» was and still is widely covered by the media. Despite newspapers focusing mainly on the trials, the work of parliamentary commissions, and the declarations and «revelations» of former members of the Red Brigades (BR), as well as on different conspiracy theories, sacrificial and martyrological language and rhetoric continue to reappear. The wording «the martyrdom of Aldo Moro» or «the sacrifice of Aldo Moro» reappears in many articles describing the commemorative rituals held in via Caetani or via Fani, but generally these articles do not express any judgment on the government's choice to adopt the «line of firmness». There are, however, some exceptions: to give just an example, in the editorial of the March 16, 1988, edition of *La Repubblica*, entitled «The Martyr Who Refused to Become a Symbol», the journalist Enzo Forcella argued that

[Moro's] sacrifice has served to overcome the abyss opened by terrorism, to restore a minimum of dignity to a shaky state and trust in the laws and moral values that must support any national community. It is a sacrifice, however, that the sacrificial lamb has refused. Until the last, as you know, Moro refused the role that destiny gave him, he did not accept becoming a symbol. The prisoner was right, as were those who did not accept yielding to terrorist blackmail, even at the cost of letting him die. There were, and are, two irreconcilable reasons. This is the *topos* of all the contradictions, the catastrophe that has transformed the slaughter of an eminent political man and his guards into a great tragedy, one of the rare, authentic tragedies of contemporary politics.²⁶

25 See Mieli, Paolo, «Moro non voleva allearsi col PCI – Un compromesso (non storico)», *Corriere della Sera*, 13.11.2016, http://www.corriere.it/cultura/16_novembre_13/moro-aldo-compromesso-storico-pci-dc-massimo-mastrogiovanni-salerno-comunisti-democristiani-ff773f9a-a9c7-11e6-9e75-99cc0b521152.shtml (accessed August 12, 2017).

26 Forcella, Enzo, «Il martire che rifiutò di divenire un simbolo», *La Repubblica*, 19.3.1988, 1; it.: «Il suo sacrificio è servito a superare il baratro aperto del terrorismo, a restituire un minimo di dignità a uno Stato traballante e di fiducia nelle leggi e nei valori morali che devono sostenere qualsiasi collettività nazionale. È un sacrificio, però, che l'agnello sacrificale ha rifiutato. Sino all'ultimo, come si

Forcella iterates here the tragic representation of the event already widespread in 1978, by which Moro's death is represented as an inevitable event, something dictated by destiny. Within this tragic narrative, the figure of the scapegoat and the figure of the martyr can coexist, because the will of the martyr, otherwise a *condition sine qua non* for the allocation of the martyr role, does not matter, since destiny determines historical events.

Four decades after the events of 1978, this kind of uncritical justification of the line of firmness «had come to be questioned by almost all Italians, in the context of a generalized change of attitude towards 'reason of state' on the one hand and the 'right to existence' on the other.»²⁷ As Piero Fassino, the former leader of the Democratic Left political party, expressly stated in 2007 after Italian journalist Daniele Mastrogiacomo was kidnapped in Afghanistan: «Moro's story has admonished us to consider that there is no reason of State that justifies the sacrifice of life. Perhaps we had to negotiate even then. Moro's life was just as important as that of Mastrogiacomo.»²⁸ The process that led to this change was long and largely promoted by «mediatic reworking of the statesman image»; as Pezzini demonstrates in her important essay, the «recuperation» of Moro's image was traced on television by Sergio Zavoli's NOTTE DELLA REPUBBLICA (IT, Rai 2, 1990), while his «symbolic resurrection» was epitomized in Marco Bellocchio's film BUONGIORNO, NOTTE (IT, 2003).²⁹ However, before we turn our attention to cultural productions that specifically work with images or, more precisely, with moving images, it is necessary to analyze the literary interventions of three important Italian writers, which, in different ways, challenge and overcome hegemonic representations and institutional practices of memorialization, and that anticipate the reworking of Moro's image by television and cinema.

sa, Moro ha rifiutato il ruolo che gli assegnava il destino, non ha accettato di trasformarsi in simbolo. Aveva ragione il prigioniero, avevano ragione coloro che non hanno accettato, pur di salvarlo, di cedere al ricatto terrorista. Erano, e restano, due ragioni inconciliabili. Questo è il topos di tutte le contraddizioni, il punto di catastrofe che ha trasformato l'eccidio di un eminente uomo politico e della sua scorta in una grande tragedia, una delle rare, autentiche tragedie della politica contemporanea.»

27 Pezzini, 2012, 139–140.

28 Mazzocchi, Silvana, «Impossibile trattare per Moro, nel mirino c'era anche il PCI», *La Repubblica*, 31.3.2007, 15; it.: «La vicenda di Moro ci ha ammonito ha considerare che non c'è ragione di Stato che giustifichi il sacrificio di una vita. Forse bisognava trattare anche allora. La vita di Moro era importante come quella di Mastrogiacomo.»

29 Pezzini 2012, 136.

7.2 Literary Interventions

Critiques of the hegemonic and doxological representation of Moro's death were expressed even before his death. Claudio Martelli, referring to those who denied the authenticity of Moro's letters, observed just over a week before the politician's assassination that «they seem to be more concerned with Moro's «memory» than with his life and discuss the interpretation of a style and a life that has not yet been lost.»³⁰ Moreover, a few days after his death, the author of *A Clockwork Orange* Anthony Burgess observed that the process aiming at constructing the official memory of Moro's kidnapping and assassination had already begun and warned the Italian people «not to transform Moro into a saint». He also mentioned the interesting example of Charles I of England, who, after being executed by Oliver Cromwell, was canonized by the Anglican Church. This was a big mistake, Burgess argued, since through his glorification as a martyr the English conservative party became a theocracy. He expressed the hope, though a bit sarcastically, that this would not happen in Italy: «Christian Democrats in Italy will certainly not want to allow themselves to earn the collective aura of their boss' martyrdom!»³¹

Italo Calvino also intervened in an article published in the *Corriere della Sera* a week after the discovery of Aldo Moro's corpse in via Caetani. Here, the famous writer basically supported the line of firmness put forward by the government, major political parties and the established media, since

If Moro was kidnapped in order to upset the institutions of the Republic, the action, whoever contributed to inspiring it, could only have been solved in the way it was solved. They wanted to eliminate Moro as the man of the difficult balance between the DC and the PCI. But [they wanted] not to kill him immediately to prevent his last political operation from being consecrated by his martyrdom. Then begins the

³⁰ Martelli, Claudio, «Perché non credere a quelle lettere?», *Corriere della Sera*, 1.5.1978, 3; it.: «Costoro sembrano più preoccupati della «memoria» di Moro che non della sua vita, e si disputano l'interpretazione di uno stile e di una vita che non è ancora perduta.»

³¹ Quoted in Silj 1978, 187; it.: «Dobbiamo badare bene a non fare di Moro un santo. [...] I democratici cristiani dell'Italia non vorranno certamente consentire a sé stessi di guadagnarsi l'alone collettivo del martirio del loro capo!»

most perverse phase of the jailers' work: to use Moro against himself, against his party, against the line pursued up to that point.³²

Calvino directly addressed the topic of martyrology, but seems to exclude the possibility that Moro, as actually happened, could be represented as a state martyr despite the content of his letters. He also believed that Moro would have died anyway regardless of the policy adopted by the government and parties. Moreover, he did not see any metamorphosis in the letters, or any change of perspective between the Moro before and the Moro after March 16, 1978. In fact, he argued, «what Moro wanted or had to write in the sense of taking distance from the men of his party seems to be studied so as not to harm anything or anyone, which is why it can be said that Moro basically remained a party man until the end.»³³ However, he stated, «it was clear that Moro renounced his public image and assumed that of a family man, who was only interested in returning home.»³⁴ Finally, although he did not seem to assign any responsibility to the government, major parties or the established media for Moro's death, he unconditionally expressed his conviction that the BR's action helped the DC above all:

[...] it is certain that the Red Brigades, inarticulate and fierce, while threatening Christian Democracy in the physical existence of their cadres, paradoxically guarantee them a kind of moral immunity, they help to postpone the examination of the responsibilities and faults [colpe] accumulated in thirty years of government and sub-government, [thus] which was called the *process* to the DC too quickly, but

32 Calvino 1995a, 2339; it: «Se Moro è stato sequestrato per sconvolgere le istituzioni della Repubblica, l'azione, chiunque abbia concorso ad aspirarla, non poteva avere altra soluzione di quella che ha avuto. Volevano togliere di mezzo Moro, come uomo del difficile equilibrio tra DC e PCI. Ma non ucciderlo subito per evitare che la sua ultima operazione politica risultasse consacrata dal suo martirio. Comincia allora la fase più perversa del lavoro dei carcerieri: usare Moro contro sé stesso, contro il suo partito, contro la linea portata avanti fin là.»

33 Calvino 1995a, 2341; it: «[...] quel che Moro ha voluto o ha dovuto scrivere nel senso di una presa di distanza dagli uomini del suo partito, sembra studiato in modo da non danneggiare niente o nessuno, cosicché si può ben dire che Moro è restato fino in fondo essenzialmente un uomo di partito.»

34 Calvino 1995a, 2340; it: «[...] è stato chiaro che Moro rinunciava alla sua immagine pubblica e assumeva quella di un uomo di famiglia cui interessa solo che lo lascino tornare a casa.»

which in reality means in particular the possibility of overcoming a serious crisis and the expulsion of the disease, of ex novo recovery.³⁵

According to writer and literary critic Marco Belpoliti, this passage relates to Calvino's theory of power and violence and is based on the idea that «sacrifice is a sublimatory process and a mythical or mystical experience.» His arguments, Belpoliti notes, are similar to those of René Girard, «who is also Frazer's debtor for the figure of the scapegoat.»³⁶ Calvino refers to James George Frazer in an article entitled *Il potere intercambiabile* («The Interchangeable Power»), written in 1974, in which he addresses the resignation of Nixon following the Watergate scandal. Calvino resumes the English anthropologist's theory of power, according to which in «primitive cultures» the reigning king was sacrificed as soon as he showed a decline in power in order to not break the balance between the natural cycle and the social cycle, fertility and social organization. In Calvino's reading of Frazer, power has a cost proportionate to the privileges related to it. In this sense, he understands the assassination of Moro as a natural outcome, the inevitable cost to pay for power. Moreover, in Calvino's thought the sacrifice of the king is nothing but a moment within the cycle through which power renews itself.³⁷

This point of view leads him, in the final part in the article about Moro, to conceive good and evil as two opposing forces, both necessary in the great cosmic balance, and to reject the idea that goodness mingles with evil:

There is a philosophical process that is called dialectics, which consists in reversing the positive into the negative. But I do not believe in dialectics. I think that evil is nothing but evil. The accumulated Italian vices have led to the monstrousness of the Moro crime. This will result in more evil, which will be fought as evil, if possible, and reflected as evil, in any case. There is also a story of the good, mixed with the evil, but fundamentally separate, that one day may prevail for a lucky com-

35 Calvino 1995a, 2342; it: «[...] è certo che le Brigate rosse, inarticolate e feroci, mentre minacciano la Democrazia Cristiana nell'esistenza fisica dei suoi quadri, le garantiscono paradossalmente una sorta di immunità morale, contribuiscono a rimandare l'esame delle responsabilità e delle colpe accumulate in trent'anni di governo e sottogoverno, quello che troppo in fretta fu definito il «processo» alla DC, ma che in realtà vuol dire soprattutto possibilità di superamento di una crisi grave, d'espulsione della malattia, di ripresa ex novo.»

36 Belpoliti 2001, 103.

37 See Belpoliti 2001, 101.

bination of objective circumstances, and also a little for our will and intelligence. Maybe.³⁸

Calvino basically says that he does not believe that the sacrifice of Moro can produce positive effects, that evil cannot produce something good, which is why his interventions can be considered a critique of sacrifice. However—and this is the key point—since he «naturalizes» sacrifice, conceiving it as related to the natural disposition of man towards violence, he finally conceives the sacrifice of Moro as a «cynical necessity», since «every powerful man knows that high commanders are exposed to the danger of violent death, so that the death of Moro, though it is execrable, confirms in a negative way the bond that unites death and exercise of power.»³⁹ In other words, Calvino remains imprisoned in a mythological conception of history, as he basically conceives violence as intrinsically interlinked with exercising power, which guarantees and maintains social order.

Calvino's understanding of the relationship between power and sacrifice as indivisible and interdependent is also addressed in an article published in November 1978, in which he criticizes Leonardo Sciascia's *L'affaire Moro*, arguing that

The killing of a politician is a very serious fact [...]; but we know that those who hold high positions of power are exposed to violent deaths [...], even in the most powerful and civil countries; this responds to a very ancient tradition that connects death with exercising power, and one cannot presume that this tradition will be interrupted in the very near future. [...] One can take the «test of firmness of the country» for good, as does the official version of the facts with apologetic intent, and so does Sciascia with critical intent. I am more pessimistic, [...] as I believe that the hope of a happy ending was an illusion that it would be more pitiable not to cultivate.⁴⁰

38 Calvino 1995a, 2343; it.: «C'è un procedimento filosofico che si chiama dialettica che consiste nel rovesciare il negativo in positivo. Ma io non credo nella dialettica. Credo che dal male non venga altro che male. I mali italiani accumulati hanno portato alla mostruosità del delitto Moro. Ne deriverà altro male, che andrà combattuto in quanto male, se possibile, e pensato come male, comunque. C'è anche una storia del bene, necessariamente mescolata a quella del male, ma sostanzialmente separata, che potrà un giorno riavere il sopravvento, per un fortunato concorso di circostanze obbiettive, e anche un po' per nostra volontà e intelligenza. Forse.».

39 Belpoliti 2001, 103.

40 Calvino 1995b, 2349–2352; it.: «L'uccisione di un uomo politico è un fatto gravissimo [...]; però sappiamo che chi ricopre alti posti di potere è esposto a morti vi-

L'affaire Moro by Leonardo Sciascia is the most quoted and discussed text which addresses the events of spring 1978. The author describes the book as a «pamphlet»; the introduction, which Belpoliti describes as «one of the most beautiful pages of the entire post-war Italian literature»⁴¹, discusses a central topic in the author's entire literary work: the relationship between literature and the search for truth. «Literature [...]—Sciascia writes in *Nero su nero*—is the most absolute form that truth can take.»⁴² Indeed, among the first chapters of *L'affaire Moro*, there is a concentration of literary references, among them references to Jorge Luis Borges, author of the short story *Pierre Menard, autor del Quijote* («Pierre Menard, Author of the Quixote»), which is written in the form of a literary review or critical piece about Pierre Menard, a fictional eccentric twentieth-century French writer.⁴³ According to Sciascia, Borges was inspirited by Miguel de Unamuno's attempt to «rewrite» Cervantes masterpiece in his *Vida de Don Quijote y Sancho* (usually translated in English with «Our Lord Don Quixote»). Referring to Borges, Sciascia argues that any work of «copying» a certain sequence of words, even if the copy exactly reproduces the original, has a different signification than the sequence of words had in its original context or appearance. The Sicilian author points out that in the seventeenth century the assertion according to which history is «the mother of truth», as seen in Cervantes' Don Quixote, was a «mere rhetorical eulogy of history». The same assertion, rewritten in the nineteenth century assumed a completely different connotation, since it could now be understood as indicating the idea that history does not contain the truth, but is rather the origin of truth. In other words, the sentence was now expressing the belief that historical research is not research into truth but its foundations. The same change in meaning happened with what was said and written during or in the immediate aftermath of Moro's kidnapping and assassination. Sciascia provides the example of a description of Moro's interrupted path to parlia-

olente [...], anche nei paesi più potenti e civili; questo risponde ad una tradizione antichissima che collega la morte all'esercizio del potere e non è presumibile che questa tradizione si interrompa nel prossimo avvenire. [...] Si può prendere per buona la prova di fermezza del paese, come fa la versione ufficiale dei fatti con intenti apologetici e come fa Sciascia con intenti critici. Io sono più pessimista [...] pensando che la speranza di un lieto fine era un'illusione che sarebbe stato più pietoso non coltivare.

41 Belpoliti 2001, 3.

42 Sciascia 1991, 834; it: «La letteratura [...] è la più assoluta forma che la verità possa assumere.»

43 See Borges 2000, 88–95.

ment the day of March 16 and emphasizes that such a description completely changed the meaning within only half a year (the approximate duration separating March 16 from the drafting of *L'affaire Moro*):

The center of gravity has shifted: from Mr. Moro [...] to the Chamber of Deputies, where Mr. Moro's absence would quickly produce what his presence difficultly would have achieved: namely the calmness and the concordance that allowed the approbation of the fourth government chaired by Mr. Andreotti without any debate. The drama of the abduction has been replaced [...] by the drama that the absence of Mr. Moro from Parliament, from political life, is more productive—in a certain direction—than his presence.⁴⁴

After a few months, Sciascia argues, the relationship between words and things, acts and events changed, because the changed historico-political setting allowed for understanding words differently. In fact, after a few months it became clear that Moro's death had facilitated the consolidation of a certain type of government: not the government wanted by Moro, but Andreotti's government. His absence from politics was not productive in the direction wanted by Moro, but in the direction wanted by his political enemies. This conception of the performativity of language is fundamental to an understanding of Sciascia's hermeneutical approach to Moro's letter, the BR's communiqués and to the hegemonic discourse produced by the government and established media. Sciascia continually works to acquire even fragmentary elements in an attempt to reconstruct the «truth» by extrapolating details from language, form and style.

According to Sciascia, «Moro and the affair seem to have been generated by a certain type of literature.»⁴⁵ Moreover, as already mentioned in the fifth chapter, he argues that Pasolini, when he wrote that Moro was the «least implicated of them all», already prefigured the «Moro affair» in 1975. The Sicilian author is particularly interested in Pasolini's expression «for an

44 Sciascia 1978, 26; it.: Si è come spostato il centro di gravità: dall'onorevole Moro [...] alla Camera dei deputati dove l'assenza dell'onorevole Moro avrebbe rapidamente prodotto quel che la sua presenza difficoltosamente avrebbe conseguito: e cioè quell'acquietamento e quella concordia per cui il quarto governo presieduto dall'onorevole Andreotti veniva approvato senza discussione alcuna. Al dramma del rapimento si è come sostituito [...] il dramma che l'assenza dell'onorevole Moro dal Parlamento, dalla vita politica, è più produttive – in una determinata direzione – della sua presenza.»

45 Sciascia 1978, 27; it.: «Allo stesso modo che don Chisciotte dai libri di cavalleria errante, Moro e la sua vicenda sembrano generati da una certa letteratura.»

enigmatic correlation»; in fact, he argues, «in this brief parenthetical element [...] there is something like the premonition, like the prefiguration of the *«Moro affair»*. Now we know that the *«correlation»* was a *«contradiction»*: and that Moro paid for it with his life.»⁴⁶ Correlation is the relationship between two elements. What then is the enigmatic correlation affecting the Sicilian author? On the one hand, there is the correlation between power and sacrifice, which will be discussed later. On the other, there is the correlation between language and things, acts or events.⁴⁷ Sciascia believes that literature has a privileged relation with *«truth»*, because literature has the power to bring to light the correlation between language and things, act or events that, in different hermeneutic and pragmatic contexts, produce meaningfulness. In other words, literature uncovers the truth of the radical exteriority and contingency of language.

Before discussing the results of Sciascia's analysis, we need to reject from the outset the thesis according to which the Sicilian author is a *dietrologo*, namely one who advocates conspiracy theories.⁴⁸ In fact, Sciascia does not argue that the assassination of Moro happened with the direct complicity of secret services, the government or occult organizations. Though he does not exclude *a priori* the possibility of such complicity, his thesis is another: the action of the BR responded to the interests of a certain political class that wanted to maintain (or increase) its power and for which the absence of Moro was more productive than its presence. In fact, he argues, despite the BR's efficacy in planning and executing the attack in via Fani,

The Red Brigades [...] are Italian. They are our thing [*cosa nostra*], whatever the relations they may have with revolutionary sects or secret services of other countries. [...] Their reason of being, their function, their *«service»* are solely in the shift of force relations: and of the forces that are already there. And to not shift them much, one has to add. Shifting them in the sense of *«changing everything to change nothing»* [...]. [It is] thus an operation of pure power. Which can only be carried out in that area between political parties where, in the shelter of ideological winds, power now lives.⁴⁹

46 Sciascia 1978, 16; it.: «In questo breve inciso c'è un presentimento, come la prefigurazione dell'affaire Moro. Ora sappiamo che la *«correlazione»* era una *«contraddizione»*: e che Moro la pagata con la vita.»

47 See Belpoliti 2001, 8.

48 See Gotor 2008b, 192–195.

49 Sciascia 1978, 128–130; it.: «Le Brigate Rosse [...] sono italiane. Sono una cosa nostra, quali che siano gli addentellati che possono avere con sette rivoluzionarie

Sciascia therefore does not say that the BR were directed by someone, but rather that their activities suited certain political interests, since they prepared the ground for the legitimization of the political and institutional *status quo* as absolutely necessary for the security and safety of Italian society. With «operation of pure power», the author does not intend to indicate a form of improbable direct complicity with the BR, but rather explain how Moro's kidnappers could operate with such great ease, why there was so much negligence with the investigations into finding Moro's prison, why the government spread a false communiqué, and finally why, from the outset, the government assumed an uncompromising position with regard to negotiations.

The capital error of the BR, Sciascia argues, was that they did not realize that their action produced the opposite effect of their intentions: to stop the political alliance between the PCI and the DC. They chose Moro precisely because «he was the creator of the return, after thirty years, of the Communist Party to the governing majority.»⁵⁰ In other words, they wanted to imprison the highest representative of power, because they thought they could throw the entire Italian political system into crisis. It is worthwhile, at this point, to compare Sciascia's reflections with what was written by a great Italian writer about the BR, Umberto Eco. In an article published in *La Repubblica* on March 23, 1978, and republished in a collection of his texts in 1983, the famous semiotician lucidly analyzes the language and ideology of the BR one week after Moro's kidnapping, arguing that

We must have the courage to say that this «delusional» message [the BR's first communiqué] contains a very acceptable premise and translates [...] a thesis that all European and American culture, from the students of the 1968 movement to the theorists of the *Monthly Review*, as well as the leftist parties have long been repeating. So if there is a «paranoia», it is not in the premises, but [...] in the practical conclusions that they draw from these premises. [...] [N]o one can deny that global planetary policy is not determined by individual governments

o servizi segreti di altri paesi. [...] La loro ragion d'essere, la loro funzione, il loro «servizio» stanno esclusivamente nello spostare dei rapporti di forza: e delle forze che già ci sono. E di spostarli non di molto, bisogna aggiungere. Di spostarli nel senso di quel «cambiar tutto per non cambiar nulla» [...]. Operazione di puro potere, dunque; che si può soltanto svolgere in quell'area interpartitica in cui, al riparo dai venti ideologici, il potere ormai vive.»

⁵⁰ Sciascia 1978, 131; it: «[...] è stato l'artefice del ritorno, dopo trent'anni, del partito Comunista nella maggioranza di governo.»

but rather by a network of productive interests (and we can even call it a network of multinationals) [...].⁵¹

The BR's mistake thus did not lie in their premise, but in the analysis of the function of power and the way they decided to counteract it:

The confused idea that drives terrorism is a very modern and very capitalist principle (with respect to which classical Marxism was unprepared) of the theory of systems. Large systems have no head, no protagonists, and are not even based on individual selfishness. This is why it is not possible to strike them by killing their Kings, but by making them unstable through disturbing gestures that rely on their own logic. [...] Modern terrorism pretends (or believes) to have meditated on Marx, but in fact, it meditated on Norbert Wiener on the one hand and science fiction literature on the other. The problem is that it did not meditate enough. Proof of this is that in all previous BR's propaganda they still talked of «striking at the heart of the State», cultivating on the one hand the nineteenth-century notion of State, and on the other the idea that the adversary still has a heart or a head. [...] In the last leaflet, the BR abandon the idea of the heart, the State, the bad capitalist, the «hangman» minister. Now the opponent is the system of the multinationals, of which Moro is a committed follower, at most a depositor of information. [...] Once they have mastered the idea of large systems, they mythologize it again, believing that these systems have «secret plans» of which Moro would be one of the depositors. The truth is that big systems have nothing to do with secrecy and we all know exactly how they work.⁵²

51 Eco 1983, 109–110, it.: «Dobbiamo avere il coraggio di dire che questo «delirante» messaggio contiene una premessa molto accettabile e traduce [...] una tesi che tutta la cultura europea e americana, dagli studenti del Sessantotto ai teorici della *Monthly Review*, sino ai partiti di sinistra ripetono da tempo. E dunque se «paranoia» c'è, non è nelle premesse, ma [...] nelle conclusioni pratiche che ne traggono. [...] [N]essuno si nasconde che la politica internazionale planetaria non è determinata dai singoli governi ma appunto da una rete d'interessi produttivi (e chiamiamola pure rete delle multinazionali) [...].»

52 Eco 1983, 110–111; it.: «L'idea confusa che muove il terrorismo è un principio molto moderno e molto capitalistico (rispetto a cui il marxismo classico si è trovato impreparato) di teoria dei sistemi. I grandi sistemi non hanno testa, non hanno protagonisti e non vivono neppure nell'egoismo individuale. Quindi non si colpiscono uccidendone i Re, ma rendendoli instabili attraverso gesti di disturbo che si avvalgono proprio della loro logica. [...] Il terrorismo moderno finge (o crede) di avere meditato Marx, ma in effetti, ha meditato Norbert Wiener da un

The fundamental mistake of the BR was thus their belief that power «still has a heart or a head», that they could defeat an established power by kidnapping the one person they regarded as embodying and representing power. Moreover, they did not understand that their actions were functional to the maintenance and legitimization of what they called the «Imperialist State of the Multinationals»:

Terrorism is not the enemy of large systems but, on the contrary, their natural, accepted, and anticipated counterpart. The multinational system [...] accepts small local wars, which will, from time to time, be disciplined and reduced by astute international intervention, and on the other hand accepts terrorism. [...] Terrorism also serves to give a reason for being to police and armies, which, if they are made inoperative, demand to realize themselves in some other wider conflict. Lastly, terrorism serves to encourage disciplined action, where an excess of democracy renders the situation ungovernable.⁵³

Eco's reflections are useful in clarifying the function of the «discourse of sovereignty» and the «mythology of the state». A general critique against the reintroduction of the concept of sovereignty in political theory as a paradigm of governance is that it is incompatible with the paradigm of governmentality. Different research fields have used the concepts of «governmentality», «discipline», the «microphysics of power» and «biopolitics» since Foucault introduced them in the 1970s. In particular, the idea of a

lato e la letteratura di fantascienza dall'altro. Il problema è che non l'ha meditata abbastanza. Prova ne sia che in tutta la propaganda precedente le BR parlavano ancora di «colpire il cuore dello Stato», coltivando da un lato la nozione ancora ottocentesca di Stato e dall'altro l'idea che l'avversario avesse ancora un cuore o una testa. [...] Nell'ultimo volantino le BR abbandonano l'idea di cuore, di Stato, di capitalista cattivo, di ministro «boa.» Adesso l'avversario è il sistema delle multinazionali, di cui Moro è un commesso, al massimo un depositario di informazioni. [...] Una volta colta l'idea dei grandi sistemi, li si mitologizza di nuovo ritenendo che essi abbiano «piani segreti» di cui Moro sarebbe uno dei depositari. In realtà i grandi sistemi non hanno nulla di segreto e si sa benissimo come funzionano.»

53 Eco 1983, 111–112; it.: «Il terrorismo non è il nemico dei grandi sistemi, ne è al contrario la contropartita naturale, accettata, prevista. Il sistema delle multinazionali [...] accetta piccole guerre locali, che verranno di volta in volta disciplinate e ridotte da oculati interventi internazionali, e dall'altro lato accetta appunto il terrorismo. [...] Inoltre il terrorismo serve a dare una ragion d'essere alle polizie e agli eserciti, che a lasciarli inoperosi chiedono di realizzarsi in qualche conflitto più allargato. Infine il terrorismo serve a favorire interventi disciplinati là dove un eccesso di democrazia rende la situazione ingovernabile.»

government over life, in the form of an «anatomo-politics of the body» and «biopolitics of the population» has been employed productively in analyses of welfarist and neo-liberal programs of governance.⁵⁴ However, despite assertions of the diminution in importance of the nation-state—through and alongside work on globalization and trans- and multinationals corporations—Giorgio Agamben's works on the sovereign ban and the state of exception highlight that the two paradigms of governmentality and sovereignty do not exclude each other. On the contrary, techniques of sovereignty and governmentality perfectly coexist. At the latest since the French Revolution, the modern democratic state has not been able to exercise violence without a moral justification, because it takes its legitimization from a reference to human and citizens' rights. What Benjamin calls «law-preserving» state violence can be justified only through the presence of an external threat.⁵⁵ This is why terrorism is so convenient for the exercise of power through both sovereign and governmental techniques: the emergence of external, non-state violence allows not only the representation of state violence as necessary for the safety of the population, but also the production of docile subjects that accept all kinds of governmental techniques.

The coexistence of governmentality and sovereignty paradigms becomes even clearer by looking to the discursive practices through which Aldo Moro was first represented as a great statesman, reduced to mere life and finally declared a state martyr. As Sciascia masterfully describes, the kidnapping of Aldo Moro allowed for the reemergence of a national rhetoric. In fact, as the Sicilian writer notes, in the first days after the kidnapping and before his letters were published, the media began to represent Moro as the «great statesman», while before he was referred to simply as the leader or the President of the DC, as well as the weaver of political alliances. As discussed in the sixth chapter, this form of acclamation of sovereignty was accompanied, even before Moro died, by the first allocations of the martyr role. Moro was thus represented as both a great statesman and as a state martyr, almost indicating that Moro had to accept sacrifice, *because* he was the sovereign; but when Moro began to oppose this national rhetoric, expressly criticizing the «line of firmness» as an appeal to an abstract «reason of state», the situation changed:

54 Foucault 1978, 139.

55 Benjamin 2007, 284.

An unexpected and immense state-idolatrous torchlight seems to have been attached to the Christian Democracy and possesses it. Moro, who continues to think as he always thought, is now an extraneous body: a kind of painful biliary calculus to be extracted—with the state-idolatrous ardor as an anesthetic—by an organism that, almost touched by the miracle, has acquired the movement and the use of the «sense of the State». [...] Independent and party newspapers, illustrated weeklies, radio, and television: they are almost all there, in line to defend the State, proclaiming Moro's metamorphosis, his civil death.⁵⁶

Influenced or persuaded, Moro now speaks like the Red Brigades: this is the thesis that as a huge tombstone falls on the living man, combative and sharp, which is still in the «people's prison», while [the government, parties and media] remember and celebrate the Moro that is already dead, the Moro to be monumentalized.⁵⁷

Sciascia discloses a fundamental point here: Andreotti, Cossiga, the DC, or the government as a whole would not have been able to categorically reject negotiations for the liberation of Moro if a number of discursive practices produced by many social actors and diffused in different media had not transformed Aldo Moro into a *homo sacer*. Moro's voice had to be silenced, constructing the opposition between a good Moro—before the letters—and a bad Moro—the one who wrote the letters. Only after this procedure of discursive reduction to bare life, and after his death, could he again be acclaimed as a great statesman and finally glorified as a state martyr. This does not only corroborate Agamben's thesis, according to which «contemporary democracy is a democracy that is entirely founded upon glory, that is, on the efficacy of acclamation, multiplied and disseminated by the media beyond all imagination», but also demonstrates that power over mere

56 Sciascia 1978, 130; it.: « [...] un'inaspettata e immane fiaccola statolatrice sembra essersi attaccata alla Democrazia Cristiana e possederla. Moro, che continua a pensare come pensava, ne è ormai un corpo estraneo: una specie di doloroso calcolo biliare da estrarre – con l'ardore statolatrico come anestetico – da un organismo che, quasi toccato dal miracolo, ha acquistato il movimento e l'uso del «senso dello stato». [...] I giornali indipendenti e di partito, i settimanali illustrati, la radio, la televisione: sono quasi tutti lì, in riga a difendere lo Stato, a proclamare la metamorfosi di Moro, la sua morte civile.»

57 Sciascia 1978, 73; it.: «Suggestionato o convinto, Moro ormai parla come le Brigate Rosse: questa è la tesi che come un enorme pietra tombale scende sull'uomo vivo, combattivo e acuto che è ancora nella «prigione del popolo», mentre si ricorda e si celebra il moro già morto, il Moro da monumentare.»

life is endorsed by the means of discursive practices.⁵⁸ The discursive practices through which Moro was first excluded from the political sphere, then repeatedly represented as a state martyr, can be described as hegemonic procedures that regulate the formation of public opinion and political will. Without such discursive performances, there could be no justification for «sacrifice» and «martyrdom» for the state—no justification for the idea that individual life is an exchangeable commodity with which a society can buy its own welfare and security—since the rhetoric of sacrifice and martyrdom would otherwise appear to be what it is: a way to conceal the necessity of terrorist violence for the preservation of the *status quo*.

The strongest pages in Sciascia's book are probably those in which he addresses the situation of Moro in the «people's prison» and attempts to oppose or subvert the hegemonic discourse. Firstly, he highlights that Moro's rejection of the rhetoric of the «reason of state» and of the «sense of the state» in his first published letter is absolutely consistent with what Moro had been saying for years:

The Moro who formulates this proposition is perfectly coherent with the politician Moro and the teacher Moro that the Italians have known for thirty years: with his vision of life, of Italian things, the development of politics; with his sense of law and his sense of the State (and this time not in quotation marks, the sense of the State: that is to say, different from the «sense of the State» that some, by deception, imposed on him).⁵⁹

In fact, Sciascia argues,

Aldo Moro, President of the Christian Democracy, had already said a few years ago that, between saving a human life and keeping faith in abstract principles, one had to force the legal concept of the *state of necessity*, so that it becomes the principle: the non-abstract principle of the [primacy of] the salvation of the individual against abstract principles.⁶⁰

58 Agamben 2011, 256.

59 Sciascia 1978, 51; it.: «Il Moro che formula questa proposizione è in perfetta coerenza col Moro politico e col Moro docente che gli italiani hanno conosciuto per un trentennio: con la sua visione della vita, delle cose italiane, del corso della politica; col suo senso del diritto e col suo senso dello Stato (e questa volta non tra virgolette, il senso dello Stato: diverso, cioè, da quello che gli si è voluto, per impostura, imporgli).»

60 Sciascia 1978, 61; it.: «Così pensava Aldo Moro, presidente della Democrazia Cristiana, già qualche anno prima: che tra il salvare una vita umana e il tenere fede ad

According to Sciascia, there is a passage in the second letter, which became public when it was published on April 5, 1978, that demonstrates how Moro himself had a premonition that he would not survive. In this passage, Moro admonished the PCI to remember that the kidnapping occurred the same day in which all other politicians were going to the Chamber of Deputies «for the consecration of the government», the same government that he himself had helped to realize.⁶¹ According to Sciascia, the use of the word «consecration» is

A lapse for a Catholic; a premonition for the man who feels himself «a bit abandoned» (and he meant completely). «Referring to human affairs»—says the Catholic Tommaseo—«no one should never use that great word ... *Consecrating* making sacred what was not sacred, with solemn words, acts, rites». Solemn words: the defense of the State. Rites: the massacre of five men, the execution of a death sentence.⁶²

As previously mentioned, before his kidnapping Moro was known for his ability to use language instrumentally to defend his party from different accusations, but after the kidnapping, and after he saw the reaction to his letters, he began to use another language, a language that allowed him to become aware of and express the function of power. Commenting on Moro's letter to the DC, published on April 29, 1978, Sciascia highlights a sort of metamorphosis in Moro:

Here there is the word that for the first time he writes in the most atrocious nudity; the word finally revealed itself to him in its true, profound, and terrible sense: the word «power». «I do not want around me, I repeat, the men of power». But in the previous letter he spoke of «State authority» and «party men»: it is only now that he has come to the right name, the frightening word. For power and from power he had lived until nine o'clock in the morning of that 16 March. He hoped to have it again: perhaps to return to take it fully, certainly to

astratti principi si dovesse forzare il concetto giuridico di stato di necessità, fino a farlo diventare principio: il non astratto principio della salvezza dell'individuo contro astratti principi.»

61 Moro 2008c, 13.; it.: «[...] per la consacrazione del Governo.»

62 Sciascia 1978, 64; it.: Un lapsus per un cattolico; un presentimento per l'uomo che si sente «un po' abbandonato» (e voleva dire del tutto). «Di cose umane» - dice il cattolico Tommaseo - «non si dovrebbe mai adoperare quell'alta parola ... *Con-sacrarsi* facendo sacro quello che sacro non era, con parole solenni, con atti, con riti.» Parole solenni. Difesa dello Stato. Riti: il massacro di cinque uomini, l'esecuzione di una condanna a morte.»

avoid facing that death. But now he knows that others have the power: he recognizes in others its filthy, astonished, fierce face.⁶³

Paradoxically or, as Sciascia says, tragically, imprisonment and the consequent discovery of the true face of power allowed Moro to «save» himself:

Moro begins, *pirandellianamente* [in the manner of author Luigi Pirandello], to get rid of form, since he tragically entered into life. From character to «lonely man», from «lonely man» to creature: the steps that Pirandello assigns to the only one possible salvation.⁶⁴

Here the fundamental difference between Sciascia and Calvino becomes manifest. The author of *L'affaire Moro* believes that, despite everything, even when Moro was in the «people's prison», reduced to bare life and to the status of a «creature», there was still the possibility of salvation. What kind of salvation did he have in mind? To answer this question, it is useful to quote what, in August 1978, three months after Moro's death, Sciascia stated in an interview with the French magazine *Le Nouvel Observateur*:

Yes. Aldo Moro by dying—despite all his historical responsibilities—has acquired an innocence that makes us all guilty, then me too. [...] By dying, Aldo Moro was, so to speak, stripped of his Christian Democratic tunic. His body does not belong to anyone, but his death puts everyone on trial.⁶⁵

63 Sciascia 1978, 110; it.: «[...] ecco, c'è la parola che per la prima volta scrive nella più atroce nudità, la parola che finalmente gli si è rivelata nel suo vero, profondo e putrido significato: la parola «potere». «Io non desidero attorno a me, lo ripeto, gli uomini del potere.» Ma nella precedente lettera aveva parlato di «autorità dello Stato» e «uomini di partito»: è soltanto ora che è arrivato alla denominazione giusta, alla spaventosa parola. Per il potere e del potere era vissuto fino alle nove del mattino di quel 16 marzo. Ha sperato di averne ancora: forse per tornare ad assumerselo pienamente, certamente per evitare di affrontare quella morte. Ma ora sa che c'è l'hanno gli altri: ne riconosce negli altri il volto laido, stupito, feroce.»

64 Sciascia 1978, 73; it.: «Moro comincia, pirandellianamente, a sciogliersi dalla forma, poiché tragicamente è entrato nella vita. Da personaggio a «uomo solo», da «uomo solo» a creatura: i passaggi che Pirandello assegna all'unica possibile salvezza.»

65 Quoted in Balducci/Ferrara/Katz 1987, 155; it.: «Sì, Aldo Moro morendo – nonostante tutte le sue responsabilità storiche – ha acquistato una innocenza che rende tutti noi colpevoli, dunque anche me. [...] Morendo, Aldo Moro si è, per così dire, spogliato della tunica democristiana. Il suo cadavere non appartiene ad alcuno, ma la sua morte ci mette tutti sotto accusa.»

As Sciascia highlights some months later in *L'affaire Moro*, this acquisition of innocence was not a reward obtained through sacrifice, but the result of the awareness of the function of power or, more precisely, of the performativity of the language of power. Paradoxically, the condition of mere life is the starting point from which it is possible to develop a language, a model of representation and narration, by which one can unveil, or demythologize the discourse of sovereignty and the mythology of the state. From this point of view, it can be said that Sciascia continues to develop the kind of subversive narrative Moro had started in his letters. The paired concepts of «innocence» and «guilt», as well as the idea of death that radically transforms the moral status of both the victim and of those who are held responsible for violence, recall and iterate the rhetorical structure of Christian martyrology. Some might argue that the allocation of innocence and guilt is also used in modern forensic and judicial discourses; but a closer observation reveals that this view is inconsistent. There is no legal system that «puts everyone on trial». Sciascia, by using the word «trial», does not want to refer to the process in which the ultimate form of judgment is the law of a country. What he has in mind, rather, is an analogy, however implicit, to the judgment of Christ at the end of time.

But one must not be fooled. Sciascia, as an atheist, surely does not want to say that on the Day of Judgment all Italians will have to take responsibility for what happened in the spring of 1978. Rather, he uses language units and rhetoric patterns in order to provoke an emotional response in the readers. As a Sicilian intellectual, Sciascia could not help but be aware of the performative power of Christian language; but, in the mind of Sciascia, there is no final judgment or redemption, but only historical guilt. In his representation, Moro is a weakened martyr, who accused, desacralized and delegitimized, but who «does not belong to anyone», not to the party, not to the state, not to the Church and not to the country. Moro's letters and Sciascia's book are attempts to propel people to become aware not only that there is collective guilt and responsibility, but there is also the possibility of collective salvation. It is salvation from the thanatopolitics that characterizes the function of modern and contemporaneous governmental practices that can be achieved by becoming aware of this function. Salvation can also be achieved by overcoming the correlation, within the hegemonic discourse, between politics, violence and sacrificial rhetoric, which is not a natural phenomenon, a discursive mirror image of a natural predisposition of man, but the result of a historical and cultural development. Only by forming a subversive discourse, by creatively developing discursive practices that appeal to individuals to empower themselves, to not accept

the exercise of sovereign power with docility and to overcome the politics of fear on which this power is based, does it become possible to prepare a new a way of conceiving and organizing the political community.

7.3 Moro's Image on Television and in Italian Cinema

Every image or visual representation requires subjective positioning from the spectator. Each image portraying individuals or situations, even if the image documents a moment or gesture of daily life or if the individuals portrayed are already dead and their names have been erased from collective memory, potentially functions as an aid to remembrance. The famous photograph representing Moro's body in the trunk of a Renault 4, surrounded by police officers, carabinieri and journalists looking at the corpse, does not capture an everyday occurrence, but rather an exceptional event of death. It does not capture a man in his daily singularity, or in his personal way of existing in the world, but instead captures a collective event of historic significance. This image of Moro presents only the flesh, where he is only a void body alone and abandoned.

Different scholars point out that the photographs of Moro's corpse in the trunk, as well as those taken by the BR and delivered to the newspapers to prove he was alive, are forms of «degradation» of Moro.⁶⁶ According to Christian Uva, the two photographs showing Moro in the «people's prison» were part of the propaganda strategy of the BR, which consisted not so much of proving that Moro was alive, but above all of forming a picture of Moro corresponding to that of the «naked king».⁶⁷ Both Uva and Pezzini refer to Sciascia and describe this as the deprivation of Moro's political status. Undoubtedly, such images facilitated the operation by which Moro was reduced to mere, killable life, and which, as we saw in the two preceding chapters, in the spring of 1978 served to justify the line of firmness, to legitimate the established political authority and to reactivate national rhetoric. Similarly, the image of Moro's corpse was used to promote the image of Moro as a state martyr, as the one who died to save state institutions and Italian society, symbolically represented by the policemen, Carabinieri and journalists surrounding the dead man. However, these images were perceived, interpreted and used differently in the following years. In different cultural productions they were not used to point out the

66 See Pezzini 2012, 136.

67 See Uva 2011, 261.

tragic inevitability of Moro's death. On the contrary, they were used to encourage people to remember Moro differently: as the man who within the «people's prison» managed to make his voice heard, criticizing a certain idea of the state, criticizing the operation by which he was represented as a finished man, deprived of all dignity.

The first television productions addressing the events of 1978 focused mainly on investigative journalism and historical divulgation. The emphasis was initially almost exclusively put on documentary and interview formats. The first broadcast dedicated to Moro's abduction was entitled *ALDO MORO: IL GIORNO PIÙ LUNGO DELLA REPUBBLICA* (RAI 1, IT 16.3.1979). The broadcast opens with a sequence of images and photographs of the assault on Moro's guards and the funeral of Domenico Ricci, Aldo Moro's driver. A speaker comments on the images and describes the four bodyguards as «symbols for those who oppose violence». The broadcast includes a series of interviews with political protagonists during Moro's captivity, in which Moro is described as «the man who had succeeded in realizing the policy of national solidarity» (Ugo La Malfa); «our highest intellectual, moral, and political guide» (Benigno Zaccagnini); and «one of the protagonists of the formation of the new majority» (Enrico Berlinguer). In the first anniversary of the attack in via Fani, the focus lies thus on the human and political qualities of Aldo Moro, and not yet on the responsibility of the political class or the mysteries related to the reconstruction of the event.

On March 21, 1988, after three trials (*Moro-uno*, *Moro-bis* and *Moro-ter*) on the tenth anniversary of via Fani, Rai 1 aired the newscast special *Dopo il terrorismo*, in which journalist Ennio Remondino interviews the former BR members Renato Curcio, Barbara Balzerani and Mario Moretti, of which the last two were directly involved in Moro's abduction. In this special program, all three declare that the «season of terrorism» is over, and assume all moral and political responsibilities for the attack in via Fani and the killing of Moro. After this first appearance, several members of the terrorist group repeatedly reappeared on television and acquired a certain celebrity status. For this reason, they were often accused of «mania of protagonism» and, in Miguel Gotor's words, of «keeping [Moro] prisoner today through an instrumental use of memory»: «A use that is necessarily functional for the current (judicial, political, moral, psychological, religious) needs of free men or those in search of freedom, but not for the historical reconstruction of what has happened, of a past on which they continue to exercise a monopoly and paradoxical dictatorship of testimony.»⁶⁸

68 Gotor 2008a, xxii–xxiii.

For this reason, Gotor considers it necessary to study Moro's letters, which he describes as «a living testimony to an ancient and perhaps unrepeatable thing, the last death of a Christian *prince*. [...] Visible manifestation [...] of Christian faith, consolation, relief, redemption, martyrdom.»⁶⁹ In other words, for Gotor the letters, like the Christian martyrologies, are living testimony that compensate for the lack of an «integral witness».⁷⁰

One of the broadcasts on television that strongly contributed to the cementing of images of Aldo Moro as a martyr is undoubtedly the episode *IL CASO MORO: DAL SEQUESTRO ALL'OMICIDIO – I 55 GIORNI CHE CAMBIARONO L'ITALIA* (RAI 3, IT 10.5.2003) of the television program *LA STORIA SIAMO NOI* presented by Giovanni Minoli.⁷¹ The program reconstructs the events of the spring of 1978 by showing archive materials (videos broadcast during the 55 days of Moro's imprisonment), interviews with people who investigated the «Moro case» (the member of the first parliamentary commission of enquiry Sergio Flamigni, author Robert Katz, prosecutor general of the fourth Moro trial Antonio Marini, and historian Francesco Biscione), and excerpts from official videos of testimonies given by members of the BR as well as by Moro's wife in the trials. At regular intervals, the presenter Minoli summarizes the events of 1978 as well as the results of investigations and trials. The fifty-two-minute documentary addresses two themes. The first part (the first 30 minutes) addresses the alleged implications of the Masonic lodge Propaganda 2 (P2), the possibility that part of the state apparatuses could have thrown the inquiry off track, and the «foreign interests concerning Moro's fate», as Flamigni argues, who refers in particular to the presence of the American expert on international terrorism, Steve Pieczenik, as an adviser to the Italian government during Moro's imprisonment. The second part addresses the conflict between advocates of the «line of firmness» and those who promoted negotiations. The program devotes coverage to Aldo Moro's letters by alternating between images of the handwritten letters, the streets of Rome, photos of Moro and his wife Eleonora, and a video filmed from the front of a car and at the height of the plates, while a voice-over reads the letters. The first letter read aloud is the one addressed to then Minister of the Interior Cossiga (first published on March 30, 1978). The letter is read almost in full; after that the documentary shows an excerpt from the official video of Eleonora Moro's de-

69 Gotor 2008b, 348.

70 Gotor 2008a, xxii–xxiii.

71 <http://www.lastoriasiamonoi.rai.it/puntate/il-caso-moro/381/default.aspx> (accessed August 20, 2017).

position at the first Moro trial, in which she expresses the conviction that the letters were written by her husband in the absence of any coercion. The same narrative strategy is used for the rest of the documentary, which alternates between the reading of Moro's letters and excerpts from the depositions in the fourth Moro trial of three former BR members who participated in the abduction (Anna Laura Braghetti, Barbara Balzerani and Valerio Morucci). All three of them say that if the state had negotiated, they would have freed Aldo Moro. While the speaker reads the letters, some of the rhetorically stronger or more controversial passages—such as «I die, if my party so decides, in the fullness of my Christian faith»⁷²—are accentuated with written words that cover almost half of the screen. The documentary ends with the reading of different passages of Moro's letters to his wife:

Someone should tell Giovanni [Moro's son] what political activity means. [...] And Zaccagnini? How can he remain quiet in his position? And Cossiga, who could not imagine any defense? My blood will fall upon them. But that's not what I want to talk about; but rather about you, who I love and will always love, about the gratitude I have for you, about the indescribable joy you gave me in life, about the little one [Moro's grandson] I loved to look at and who I will try to look at to the last.⁷³

At this moment, I feel an infinite tenderness for you, the memory of everyone, a great love of seemingly insignificant but precious memories. [...] Kiss and caress all of them for me, face to face, eyes for eyes, hair for hair. [...] Kiss and caress Fida, Demi, Luca (so much Luca), Anna, Mario, the unborn little one, Agnese, Giovanni. I'm so grateful for what they did. Everything is useless when one does not want to open the door.⁷⁴

72 Moro 2008l, 143; it.: «Muoio, se così deciderà il mio partito, nella pienezza della mia fede cristiana [...]»

73 Moro 2008d, 32-33; it.: «Bisognerebbe dire a Giovanni che significa attività politica. [...] E Zaccagnini? Come può rimanere tranquillo al suo posto? E Cossiga che non ha saputo immaginare nessuna difesa? Il mio sangue ricadrà su di loro. Ma non è di questo che voglio parlare; ma di voi che amo ed amerò sempre, della gratitudine che vi debbo, della gioia indicibile che mi avete dato nella vita, del piccolo che amavo guardare e cercherò di guardare fino all'ultimo.»

74 Moro 2008m, 177-178; it.: «C'è in questo momento una tenerezza infinita per voi, il ricordo di tutti e di ciascuno, un amore grande grande carico di ricordi apparentemente insignificanti e in realtà preziosi. [...] Bacia e carezza per me tutti, volto per volto, occhi per occhi, capelli per capelli. [...] Bacia e carezza Fida, De-

Now, suddenly, when some hope had come up, incomprehensibly comes the order of execution. Sweetest Noretta, I am in the hands of God and yours. Pray for me, and remember me gently. Caress the sweet little ones, everyone. God help you all. A kiss of love for you all, Aldo.⁷⁵

This selection of passages from the letters clearly aims at producing an emotional response through a climax that begins with Moro's anathema against his party and against the government and ends with a declaration of love for and gratitude to his family. Although the term martyr is never used in the documentary—more often the term «sacrifice» is used by the people interviewed in reference to Moro's death—it is clear that the documentary contributes to the formation of a hagiography of Moro, in which his death and letters assume the double meaning of a witness of love and faith *and* an accusation at the political class, the state authority. From this point of view, the documentary can, in all respects, be considered a martyrological representation. However, the martyr figure takes on a different role here, practically opposed to what he had and still has within hegemonic discourse. It is no longer functional to the discourse of sovereignty, but used to shape and reveal a discourse of rebellion that challenges the doxological way of representing Moro's death as a necessary sacrifice for the sake of national security and unity.

Sergio Zavoli's documentary series *LA NOTTE DELLA REPUBBLICA* similarly challenges the doxological representation of Aldo Moro as a state martyr.⁷⁶ Zavoli's program blends excerpts from radio broadcasts, archive footage, scenes from films, television reports and *ad hoc* shots filmed specifically for the documentary, editing them in seamless sequences to produce contrasting effects. The program gives credence to the importance of oral testimony, individual memory as well as to «the figurative inscription of events on the body, which television manages to convey to the

mi, Luca (tanto tanto Luca) Anna Mario il piccolo non nato Agnese Giovanni. Sono tanto grato per quello che hanno fatto. Tutto è inutile, quando non si vuole aprire la porta.»

75 Moro 2008n, 179; it: «Ora, improvvisamente, quando si profilava qualche esile speranza, giunge incomprensibilmente l'ordine di esecuzione. Noretta dolcissima, sono nelle mani di Dio e tue. Prega per me, ricordami soavemente. Carezza i piccoli dolcissimi, tutti. Che Iddio vi aiuti tutti. Un bacio di amore a tutti, Aldo.»

76 *LA NOTTE DELLA REPUBBLICA: CASO MORO – PRIMA PARTE* (RAI 2, IT 21.2.1990); *LA NOTTE DELLA REPUBBLICA: CASO MORO – SECONDA PARTE* (RAI 2, IT 28.2.1990); *LA NOTTE DELLA REPUBBLICA: CASO MORO – TERZA PARTE* (RAI 2, IT 7.3.1990).

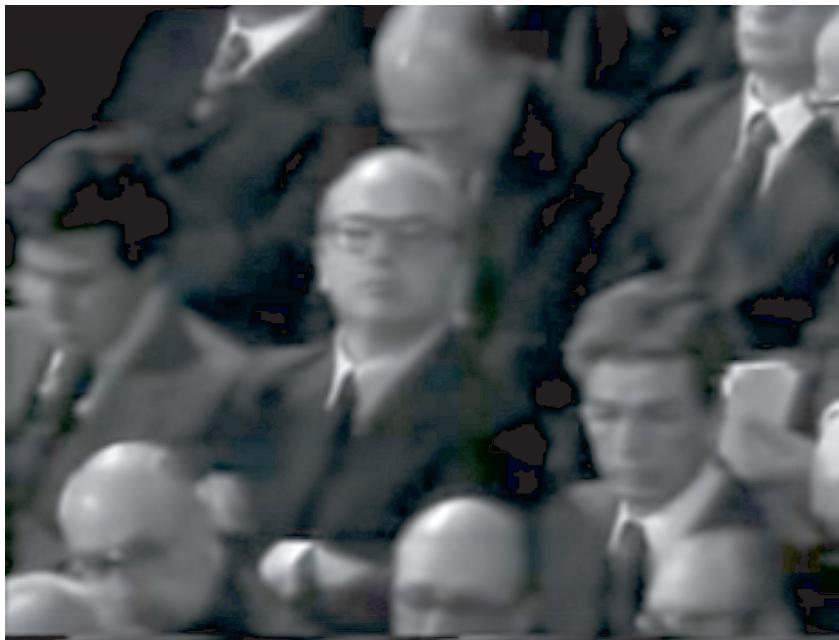
viewing public.»⁷⁷ The program narrates Moro's abduction, imprisonment and murder, the discovery of Moro's corpse and the diverse reactions of social actors to these events. As Pezzini highlights, «Moro is re-evoked at length first as a physical *absence* from the topical sites of Italian political life (effectively portrayed in black and white in all their void monumentality); then as an *image*; intermittently as a *shadow* (the enigmatic figure appearing in archive footage, or in the famous photo the BR circulated as proof that the statesman was still alive); and finally in the picture of his corpse, unnaturally doubled over in the trunk of a red Renault 4.»⁷⁸ The program also devotes coverage to the recitation of Moro's letters, highlighting the banishment of Moro from political life and his attempt to be heard. After addressing the abduction, the documentary provides a *portrait* of Aldo Moro, which maintains a clear progression: «The image of Moro is defined gradually over the course of the programme [...] He goes from being a politician firmly positioned at the centre of power and of political life in Italy to a man abruptly placed outside that political life, relegated to a kind of anti-space. [...] At the end of the narrative, the role that is ultimately assigned to Moro is that of sacrificial victim, a role that is sealed by the words of Pope Paul VI [...] who, in the funeral eulogy, described Moro as *buono, mite, saggio, innocente e amico* [good, mild, wise, innocent and friend].»⁷⁹ However, although Moro is represented as a sacrificial victim, a role that the narrative progression renders almost predestined, Moro undergoes a metamorphosis from an observed object to a subject that poses questions and demands answers, challenges hegemonic discourse and requires an emotional, moral and political stance. Furthermore, the documentary shows both the politicians' «pilgrimage» to via Caetani as well as their presence at the official funeral in the absence of Moro's body (see figure 9). As Pezzini pointedly observes, the politicians' «queuing for Holy Communion seems to sanction their self-acquittal, their absolution, while the gaze of the viewer becomes one with that of Moro himself. The effect produced by the footage is that the body of Moro, doubly absent, is in fact present in the form of a gaze granted to him by the camera, a gaze which is united with that of the viewer.»⁸⁰

77 Pezzini 2012, 143.

78 Pezzini 2012, 144.

79 Pezzini 2012, 146.

80 Pezzini 2012, 146–147.



PICTURE 9: *Bettino Craxi, secretary of the Italian Socialist Party, and Enrico Berlinguer, secretary of the Italian Communist Party, at the official funeral of Aldo Moro in the Archbasilica of St. John Lateran, Rome, May 13, 1978.*

On different occasions, Sergio Zavoli's *LA NOTTE DELLA REPUBBLICA* uses film sequences from Giuseppe Ferrara's *IL CASO MORO* (IT, 1986), which is based on Robert Katz's book *Days of Wrath. The Public Agony of Aldo Moro*.⁸¹ Katz himself collaborated on the screenplay of the film. It is the first cinematographic production that explicitly addresses Moro's abduction and murder.⁸² The film pays particular attention to the involvement of the CIA and summarizes the findings of the police investigations, the court proceedings and the investigative exposés available at the time of its release. It is defined as a «docudrama» and contains many of the characteristics of

81 Katz 1980.

82 As Alan O'Leary points out, there are other films, in particular *OGRO* (Gilo Pontecorvo, E/IT/F 1979) and *MALEDETTI VI AMERÒ* (Marco Tullio Giorndana, IT 1980), that do not specifically address the events of spring 1978, but which implicitly or implicitly refer to it. See O'Leary 2011, 34–45.

television that is based on a true story.⁸³ The thesis of the film is that the P2 Masonic lodge and the Italian secret services, sustained and influenced by Americans, ensured that the «line of firmness» would end with Moro's death. The film represents the DC as an instrumentalized party that, with its intransigence, was just as responsible for Moro's violent death as the jailers who left him dead in the trunk of a car. The central place of the Moro character, played by Gian-Maria Volonté in the role of a witness of truth and an accuser of the government and parties, distinguishes *IL CASO MORO* from the other Moro films. Volonté's choice is significant, since he previously played a main character in Elio Petri's *TODO MODO* (IT, 1976), which was a parodic caricature of Moro. *TODO MODO* is based on the homonymous novel by Leonardo Sciascia, who situates his protagonist, a painter, in the milieu of a religious retreat at the Hermitage Zafer. Sciascia's point of departure was Ignatius of Loyola's dictum: *Todo modo para buscar y hallar la voluntad divina* («One must use every means to seek and find the divine will»).⁸⁴ Throughout the course of Ignatian Spiritual Exercises, several of the retreatants, all from various influential institutions, are mysteriously murdered. Don Gaetano, the retreat's master played by Marcello Mastroianni, is himself eliminated at the conclusion of the retreat, and a shroud of mystery hovers over the Hermitage as the novel ends.

Petri used this novel as a starting point to develop a highly politicized and caustic film, which explicitly attacks and criticizes the DC. To make his attack more explicit, Petri added specific details from the contemporary political scene. He chose the prominent political figure «M» as his protagonist, which is a specific reference to Aldo Moro. As Michalczyk observes, the portrait was sketched to cause maximum damage to Moro's image as well as to that of his party.⁸⁵ In an interview, Petri recounted how strongly Volonté identified with the image of Moro as the true embodiment of power:

I scrapped the first two days of the making of *TODO MODO*, in agreement with the producer and Volonté, because the resemblance of Gian Maria Volonté to Aldo Moro was nauseating, embarrassing, sickening to the stomach. In that picture there was all the insidiousness, the cunning of the political man.⁸⁶

83 See O'Leary 2011, 51.

84 See Michalczyk 1988, 226.

85 See Michalczyk 1988, 228.

86 Manelli/Volonté 1998, 39; it.: «I primi due giorni di lavorazione di *TODO MODO* furono cestinati da me, d'accordo col produttore e con lo stesso Volonté, perché

Years later, Volonté provided completely different interpretations of the Moro figure, highlighting the process of metamorphosis that occurred in the media perception of the politician. Volonté's performances are interpreted as indicative of the responsibility felt by the left for the fate of the DC leader.⁸⁷ However, Volonté partially minimizes the difference between the images of Moro depicted in the two films:

In *TODO MODO* it [the image of Moro] was a mask, almost an imitation, within an allegory, so it was necessary to achieve a detachment, a continuous alienation. It was as if I had pulled the wires of that character, who was like a puppet, from the outside. In *IL CASO MORO*, instead, I wanted and had to look for internal paths, in the context of a dramaturgy that designed a progressive loss of power in a man and at the same time his descent into death: a fall. [...] But between the two characters, if their contents are well analyzed, there is not the enormous distance that someone wanted to indicate. In the Moro of *TODO MODO*, there is an almost disturbing sense of premonition; and even in that movie, as a background, we choose to narrate the Christian Democracy. While Petri and Sciascia had chosen the key of allegory [...], on the other hand, the authors of *IL CASO MORO* [...] rightly chose the tragedy. [...] In *IL CASO MORO* we referred to a real human experience that had a recognizable conclusion in history, and for this very reference the viewer cannot escape the human appeal of this character.⁸⁸

la somiglianza di Gian Maria Volonté con Aldo Moro era nauseante, imbarazzante, prendeva alla bocca dello stomaco. In quell'immagine risultava tutta l'insidiosità, l'astuzia dell'uomo politico.»

87 See O'Leary 2011, 52.

88 Balducci/Katz/Ferrara 1987, 19–20; it.: «In *TODO MODO* si trattava di una maschera, quasi un'imitazione, all'interno di un'allegoria, quindi era necessario raggiungere un distacco, uno straniamento continuo. Era come se io tirassi dall'esterno i fili di quel personaggio che era come un burattino. In *IL CASO MORO*, invece ho voluto e dovuto cercare percorsi interni, nell'ambito di una drammaturgia che disegnava in un uomo la progressiva perdita del potere e contemporaneamente la discesa verso la morte: una caduta. [...] Ma tra i due personaggi, se si analizzano bene i contenuti, non c'è poi l'enorme distanza che qualcuno ha voluto indicare. Nel Moro di *TODO MODO* c'è un senso di premonizione quasi inquietante; e anche in quel film, come fatto di fondo, si sceglie di raccontare la Democrazia Cristiana. Se da una parte Petri e Sciascia avevano scelto la chiave dell'allegoria [...], dall'altra gli autori de *IL CASO MORO* [...] hanno giustamente scelto la tragedia. [...] Ne *IL CASO MORO* noi ci siamo riferiti ad un'esperienza umana, reale, che ha avuto una sua conclusione riconoscibile nella storia, e

The intention of showing Aldo Moro's humanity is explicit in the first scenes of the film, in which he is represented as a benevolent father and grandfather. In these scenes, he carefully asks his daughter Maria Fida if she will celebrate Easter with him and his wife and lovingly talks with his little grandson, Luca (see figure 10). The Moro we see here is fundamentally the same as the Moro we see in the «people's prison», where he tries to convince the BR that their vision of politics is simplistic, almost infantile (see figure 11). Moreover, it is the same Moro that tries to persuade the government and public opinion that undertaking negotiations for his liberation is both morally and politically necessary. So, as was already the case in Sciascia's *L'affaire Moro* and in the documentary *LA NOTTE DELLA REPUBBLICA*, the «humanization» of Moro does not correspond to the de-politization of Moro's public image, but rather to the politicization of the man reduced to mere life, a man who, in spite of his captivity, tries to bear witness, accuse and appeal.



PICTURE 10: Aldo Moro (Gian Maria Volonté) speaking with his daughter Maria Fida (Daniela de Silva) in *Il caso Moro* (Giuseppe Ferrara, IT 1986).

proprio per questo riferimento lo spettatore non riesce a sottrarsi al fascino umano di questo personaggio.»



PICTURE 11: Aldo Moro (Gian Maria Volonté) speaking with one of the members of the Red Brigades (Mattia Sbragia) in *Il caso Moro* (Giuseppe Ferrara, IT 1986).

Paolo Sorrentino's *Il Divo* (IT 2008), a biographical drama based on the figure of Giulio Andreotti, further demonstrates that the image of Moro underwent a metamorphosis. The film focuses on Andreotti's political activity and legal proceedings between the presentation of his seventh government in 1991 and the start of the Palermo trial against him for collusion with the Mafia in 1993.⁸⁹ Although the actor who plays Moro (Paolo Graziosi) appears for only 14 seconds in the whole movie, his role in the film is essential (see figure 12). The film begins with a long series of murders and the alleged suicides of different personalities—journalist Carmine Pecorelli, General Carlo Alberto dalla Chiesa, judge Giovanni Falcone, bankers Roberto Calvi and Michele Sindona, lawyer Giorgio Ambrosoli and, last but not least, Aldo Moro—, insinuating, more or less explicitly, that Andreotti is somehow implicated in all of them. Moro's murder is hinted at only by a short shot of his body in the trunk of the famous Renault 4. After this montage of murders, we see Andreotti assuming, for the seventh time, the office of Prime Minister. An interesting scene appears

⁸⁹ Andreotti was acquitted in the first instance on October 23, 1999. On May 2, 2003, he was judged and sentenced by the Palermo Court of Appeal for *concorso esterno in associazione mafiosa*. However, the offense committed was no longer punishable because of prescription.

twenty minutes into the movie: the camera approaches slowly, moving downward toward the bed of Andreotti, who is lying on his back, reading. Once we see a close-up of the politician's face, the camera continues to move upward, where a painting depicting Karl Marx hangs over the bed. Immediately after, we hear the sound emitted by a recorded audiocassette reproducing the voice of Aldo Moro (played by Paolo Graziosi). This featured audiotape obviously alludes to the hypothesis that emerged during the investigations, trials and parliamentary commissions of enquiry, according to which the recordings of the interrogations of Aldo Moro in the «people's prison» still exist, but have been hidden or concealed. However, the text that the voice recites is not invented, but a combination of excerpts from Moro's «Memorial» and one of Moro's letters to his wife:

What will they remember about you, honorable Andreotti? I do not intend to rake up your dull career. That's not a crime. What will they remember about you? A cold organizer: inscrutable, incapable of doubts or thrills, incapable of pity. What will they remember about you? Postscript: The Pope did ever so little; perhaps he will feel guilty.⁹⁰



PICTURE 12: *Aldo Moro as the accuser of Giulio Andreotti in the «people's prison» in Il Divo (Paolo Sorrentino, IT 2008).*

90 It.: «Che cosa ricordare di lei, onorevole Andreotti? Non è mia intenzione rievocare la sua grigia carriera. Non è questa una colpa. Che cosa ricordare di lei? Un regista freddo, impenetrabile, senza dubbi, senza palpiti, senza mai un momento di pietà umana. Che cosa ricordare di lei? Post scriptum: Il Papa ha fatto pochino. Forse ne avrà scrupolo» (21:00–21:43). See Flamigni 1997, 325, 356; Moro 2008m, 179.

While the voice-over recites this text, we see Andreotti walking back and forth in a park or presumably in the garden of his residence in Rome. This leads the viewer to presume that the politician cannot sleep, perhaps due to feelings of guilt. Only after the voice pronounces the word «postscript», is there a sharp cut to a close-up of Moro; in the background stands the flag with the five-pointed star of the BR. He looks firmly in the direction of the lens or at the film's audience. The camera moves horizontally backwards until it reaches a frame that can be recognized by anyone who has seen the two *Polaroid* pictures shot by the BR. Here the scene, which lasts a little over a minute, ends. There are at least two aspects of this scene that can be highlighted. First, the prisoner is no longer represented here as a man deprived of his dignity, as the accused under trial in the «people's prison», but rather as an accuser who testifies in the trial where Andreotti is incriminated. Such an inversion was already emphasized by Sciascia, who in *L'affaire Moro* argues that in the BR's sixth communiqué, which could be considered as the «dispositive of a sentence», Moro looks more like a witness and an accuser than the accused.⁹¹ Second, the recited text emphasizes the theme of memory three times (although the phrase «what will they remember about you?» appears only once in Moro's «Memorial»). From this point of view, Andreotti is tried twice: once *in the film* in front of the court of Palermo, and a second time *by the film* in front of the film's audience. Here, the relationship between the narrative level and the performative or appellative intent of the film becomes manifest: just as it recounts the facts and events that are decisive for the accusation of collusion with the Mafia in the Palermo trial, the film constitutes itself as a second trial. This duplication is underlined at the end of the film, where we see Andreotti appear as the accused in the Palermo trial, which was held in the same bunker-courthouse where, between 1986 and 1992, 475 *mafiosi* were indicted in the so-called *maxiprocesso*. This is considered to be the biggest trial ever held in the world.⁹² While the camera is fixed on Andreotti's face as he sits in the dock, we hear the voice of Moro reciting the following text from the «Memorial» (see figure 13):

Andreotti remained indifferent, leaden, distant, cocooned in his dark dream of glory. He had to further his reactionary plan, not disappoint the Communists, the Germans, and who knows who else. What was the meaning, in the face of all this, of the inconsolable grief of an old

91 Sciascia 1978, 79.

92 See Giordano 2011, 68.

spouse, the destruction of a family? What did all this mean for Andreotti, once he had achieved the power to do evil, just as he had always done evil in his life? All this meant nothing.⁹³



PICTURE 13: *Giulio Andreotti accused of collusion with the Mafia at the maxi-processo in front of the Palermo court in Il Divo (Paolo Sorrentino, IT 2008).*

Despite the metamorphosis of Moro's image described up to this point, the tendency to represent his death mythically as a sacrifice for the state also survives in recent cultural productions, as in the case of Marco Tullio Giordana's *ROMANZO DI UNA STRAGE* (IT/F, 2012). The film, shot in Turin and Milan, deals with the reconstruction of the attack in piazza Fontana on December 12, 1969, as well as with the various inquiries made by the judiciary about the death of Giuseppe Pinelli during the interrogation and subsequent killing of police commissioner Luigi Calabresi, who conducted the investigations. This film is based on the book *Il segreto di Piazza Fontana* by Paolo Cucchiarelli, in which he shares and enacts the thesis according to which two bombs were placed in the National Bank of Agriculture: the first by Anarchists as a demonstration attack, in which the bombs were meant to explode when offices were already closed; the second by Fascists

93 It.: «Andreotti è restato indifferente, livido, assente, chiuso nel suo cupo sogno di gloria. [...] Doveva mandare avanti il suo disegno reazionario, non deludere i comunisti, non deludere i tedeschi, e chissà quant'altro ancora. Che significava in presenza di tutto questo, il dolore insanabile di una vecchia sposa, lo sfascio di una famiglia? [...] Che significava tutto questo per Andreotti, una volta conquistato il potere per fare il male, come sempre ha fatto il male nella sua vita? Tutto questo non significava niente» (01:41:16–01:41:57). Cfr. Moro 1997f, 326.

(who had infiltrated the Anarchists), which caused the massacre and aimed to make the attack appear as an act by leftist groups. It is not possible here to reconstruct the official results of the investigations and trials or the different conspiracy theories related to the massacre of Piazza Fontana—which, as we have seen, is seen as the starting point of the «years of lead» and the «strategy of tension».⁹⁴ The point of interest here is primarily the role attributed to Moro in the political management of the events of 1969 and the relationship that the film constructs between these events and the politician's murder in 1978.

The Moro character appears six times in the film: in a church in Rome; in the *Palazzo del Quirinale*, discussing the killing of a policeman during a demonstration in Milan with the then President of Italy, Giuseppe Saragat; in his office in Rome, discussing the threat of a *coup d'état* in Italy with the colonel of the Carabinieri, Pio Alferano; in Paris, recommending that the other members of the European Commission expel Greece from the Commission (because of the Greek military junta of 1967–1974); again in his office, where Alferano delivers the report on his investigation into the massacre of Piazza Fontana to him; and finally, again speaking with President Saragat. In this progression, Moro is represented as the politician who immediately realizes that the attack was organized and implemented by the Fascists, who opposes a series of repressive measures wanted by other members of government (Moro in that period was Foreign Minister), who investigates and finds out that part of the secret services and state apparatuses were involved, and who finally decides to keep information about the *strage di Stato* («massacre of the state») secret. In his last appearance, Moro submits Alferano's report to the President and, after the latter admonishes him not to make it public, he states:

If I made public what you just read, a civil war would break out, because for many people even the idea that some part of the state has covered or endorsed this horror would be intolerable. That is why we will

⁹⁴ As noted in the fourth chapter, it was established that the right-wing group *Ordine nuovo* placed the bomb. In the «Memorial», Moro himself wrote that, when the attack was perpetrated, he immediately assumed that it had been carried out by right-wing groups in an attempt to «block certain political developments» [it.: «bloccare certi sviluppi politici»] and expressed the conviction that «the interest and the intervention were more foreign than national» [it.: «l'interesse e l'intervento fossero più esteri che nazionali»]. See Moro 1997c, 230–232.

not do anything; we will force them to cover everything, like cats with their excrement.⁹⁵

The most significant scene is undoubtedly the first one, which begins with Moro in the Church of Santa Chiara, where we see him speaking with a Catholic priest in what appears to be a confession, although the scene does not occur within the confessional but on the church's pew (see figure 14). Here, he says:

I wonder what role the Lord has assigned me in the midst of this stormy sea. I cannot understand it, Father. I cannot see it. I look at my fellow man and I see nothing but iniquity and vanity; I see wailing, no sense of community; no love except for their own reward; then cowardice and opportunism; violence instead of ideas. Sometimes I think that only things maintain dignity: trees, stones, nature. Sometimes I think that Italy needs a catastrophe destroying all that we have built to contrast [these things]—the ant's nest, cars, cement—in order to bring Italy back to the desert. To the bare earth it once was. So that nature can regain control and start again from the first form of life, from the first man, from the first fire. Here, of this cataclysm, Father, I feel ready to be the first victim.⁹⁶

95 It.: «Se io rendessi pubblico ciò che le ho appena fatto leggere, scoppierebbe una guerra civile, perché per molti sarebbe intollerabile anche solo l'idea che una parte dello stato abbia coperto o avallato questo orrore. Per questo non faremo nulla; li costringeremo a coprire tutto, come i gatti con gli escrementi» (01:15:28–01:15:52).

96 It.: «Mi chiedo quale è il ruolo che il Signore mi ha assegnato in mezzo a questo mare in tempesta. Non riesco a capirlo, Padre. Non riesco a vederlo. Guardo i miei simili e non vedo che indisciplina e vanità; vedo furbizia; nessun senso della comunità; nessun amore se non per il proprio tornaconto. Poi viltà e opportunismo; violenza al posto delle idee. Alle volte penso che a mantenere un contegno siano rimaste soltanto le cose. Gli alberi, le pietre, la natura. Talvolta penso che all'Italia sia necessaria una catastrofe che distrugga tutto quello che vi abbiamo contrapposto: I formicai, le auto, il cemento, e la riporti al deserto. Alla nuda terra di prima. Così che la natura possa riprendere il sopravvento e ricominciare dalla prima forma di vita, dal primo uomo, dal primo fuoco. Ecco, di questo cataclisma, Padre, io mi sento pronto padre a essere la prima vittima» (05:54–06:50).



PICTURE 14: Aldo Moro's «confession» in *ROMANZO DI UNA STRAGE* (Marco Tullio Giordana, IT/F 2012).

In this scene, Moro basically expresses his willingness to accept martyrdom. The decision to set the scene in the same church where Moro went on the day of his abduction is obviously not accidental. The scene works with what Blumenberg calls «magic affirmation» (ger. *magische Sicherung*); that is, the narrative construction of a meaningful relationship between the juxtaposition of an event and another that precedes it. Moro's confession in the church in 1969 assumes the role of a premonitory sign, a prefiguration brought to a pathetic excess, of what happened on March 16, 1978. The film deploys the mythological conception already discussed above: Moro's death assumes the meaning of an expected sacrifice that is necessary to restore the balance of the natural *and* socio-political cycle of life and death, order and chaos.⁹⁷ Moreover, Moro's decision to maintain secrecy about the «massacre of the state» is denoted as a sort of «original sin», which can be expiated only by sacrifice. Sacrifice transforms guilt into innocence. This interpretation is corroborated by the fact that Moro's last appearance—the scene with Saragat—is preceded by a short sequence (nine seconds) in which we see him praying in church, and then followed by an intertitle stating «The Reason of State». The meaningful analogy constructed here is clear: the same «reason of state» that forced Moro into silence about what «really» happened in 1969 will force him to accept his sacrifice in 1978. His choice had a price, as the final title informs the audience before the closing credits: «Aldo Moro was assassinated by the Red Brigades

97 As Alan O'Leary points out, the idea of the death of Moro as a sort of totemic sacrifice is already present in Marco Tullio Giordana's *MALEDETTI VI AMERÒ* (IT 1980). See O'Leary 2011, 38–45.

on May 9, 1978». In short: ROMANZO DI UNA STRAGE is more proof of the widespread fascination with the mythical and sacrificial narrative model, since personalities such as director Marco Tullio Giordana and writer Italo Calvino, who are anything but naive and unprepared, failed to resist it.

In 2003, two films were released in cinemas that are quite different from each other: PIAZZA DELLE CINQUE LUNE (Renzo Martinelli, IT/UK 2003) and BUONGIORNO, NOTTE (Marco Bellocchio, IT 2003). The former is a thriller that brings the conspiratorial narrative plot to an unlikely and almost grotesque excess: twenty years after the Moro events, a judge on the cusp of retirement receives a film of the via Fani kidnapping from a mysterious figure and begins an investigation. The spectator comes to discover, after a series of revelations and twists, that Mario Moretti, the leader of the BR and principal architect of the Moro kidnapping, is a spy working for the CIA.⁹⁸ As O'Leary observes, PIAZZA DELLE CINQUE LUNE is «not a Moro film at all», since «it invokes Moro both as a metaphor (for victimhood as such) and metonym (for the *anni di piombo* as a whole), but as a trope unhitched from its specific historical circumstances.»⁹⁹ Moreover, the film does not pay attention to the «line of firmness» and to Moro's letters, which is why it has little relevance to this study. Much more interesting is the latter, since it explicitly addresses the problem of martyrological representation and the allocation of the martyr role. BUONGIORNO, NOTTE is not interested in providing knowledge or explanations of the events or in revealing and conveying little known aspects that had been consigned to the dark corners of memory by media oblivion. The film combines historical reality and fiction, almost becoming a story of counterfactual fiction: Moro is symbolically «resurrected» to bring to fruition the hypothesis that Moro might be set free from his BR prison and walk away undisturbed.

BUONGIORNO, NOTTE is loosely based on the dramatic memoirs of the former BR member, Anna Laura Braghetti, who, according to her own account of the event, was a resident in the via Montalcini apartment throughout Moro's imprisonment. The film is conceived as a mixture of fiction and news reportage.¹⁰⁰ For the most part, the story is told from the point of view of Chiara, the alter ego of the former female terrorist, who is eventually moved by the humanity of Aldo Moro and distances herself from the motives for the kidnapping and, above all, from the rationale of the death sentence. The camera follows her through her daily life, yet also

98 For a critique of conspiracy theory in this film, see O'Leary 2011, 48–59.

99 O'Leary 2011, 59.

100 See Braghetti/Tavella 1998.

depicts her dreams and fantasies. In the non-dreamlike dimension of the film, the television is constantly on in the apartment where Moro is held prisoner, transmitting the news reports and other programs of the time. The original televisual images of the outside broadcasting from the location of the via Fani attack are fused with other images in the film. The dream sequences in the film also incorporate episodes of documentary cinema and, in particular, fragments of Dziga Vertov's *THREE SONGS ABOUT LENIN* (USSR 1934) showing highlights of the Soviet revolution.

An important topic of the film is the problem of the historical memorization of the *Resistenza*. The reference to the partisan struggle is already present in one scene where Chiara attends a family reunion on April 25, the anniversary of the *Resistenza*, during which the older family members sing *Fischia il vento*, a popular song written in September 1943 at the inception of the partisan struggle; but the key scene in this regard is when Chiara reads one of Moro's letters to his wife, as already quoted above.¹⁰¹ As she reads the letter, we listen to the voice of Roberto Herlitzka, alias Aldo Moro, reciting the letter's content; after a while, his voice is replaced by another voice who reads a letter from a member of the Italian Resistance who is condemned to death. This scene is accompanied by Pink Floyd's song *The Great Gig in The Sky* and images of the atrocious executions of partisans from the final scenes of Roberto Rossellini's *País* (IT 1946) (see figure 15).¹⁰² We see, then, Chiara crying, as she realizes the analogy between Moro's and the partisans' ordeals. Moreover, the lyrics of the Pink Floyd song emphasize the theme of death and the courage when one is faced with death:

And I am not frightened of dying / Any time will do, / I don't mind. /
Why should I / be frightened of dying? / There's no reason for it, /
you've gotta go sometime. / I never said I was frightened of dying.

Undoubtedly, Bellocchio subverts and implicitly criticizes those who, as previously seen, in the spring of 1978, compared the partisans' letters and the letters by Moro to make the latter appear like a coward. Moreover, by combining fictional images of partisans' executions with the reading of a letter of a historical person who was actually executed, the director manages to construct a powerful analogy between Moro's letters and the partisans' letters and, at the same time, displays or unfolds the analogical construction. In a sense, the film invites the public to become conscious of the

101 See foodnote 73.

102 See Pezzini 2012, 147.

performative mechanism of prefiguration. Within the film, the situation of the partisans condemned to death prefigures the situation of Moro within the «people's prison», allowing Chiara to become aware of the instrumentality of the BR's rhetoric and self-identification as legitimate heirs of the *Resistenza*, since she understands that they are acting just like the Fascists by condemning an innocent person or, at least, «the least implicated of them all» to death. The spectator is encouraged to become aware that historical memory is always the product of discursive practices. In other words, Bellocchio uses images and words poetically and not instrumentally, unveiling their historicity and exteriority.



PICTURE 15: *Execution of partisans in PAISÀ (Roberto Rossellini, IT 1946)*.

The same approach is used in relation to the martyr figure in a scene where Moro and Mariano (the name of a character that impersonates the Red Brigades' leader Mario Moretti) debate within the «people's prison». The scene begins with a close-up of Chiara's eye, who looks at the «interrogation» from a little hole in the wall that separates Moro's cell from the rest of the apartment and listens to what the prisoner and his jailer say:

Mariano: Are you afraid of death?
Moro: Why did you ask this?

Mariano: Yet you believe in the afterlife.

Moro: Jesus was also frightened in Gethsemane.

Mariano: I remember that as a child I was so infatuated with religion that I hoped to die in order to go to heaven as soon as possible. So absurd!

Moro: Are you not afraid of dying?

Mariano: Every man one day has to die. But not all deaths have the same meaning. I believe our superiority consists in this: we are willing to die for our ideas. Communists are like that.

Moro: Like the first Christian martyrs. In the end yours is a religion, like mine. In fact, it is much more severe. For example, it despises the body far more than we Catholics do. Once also Christianity was like this, but now no more. The last crusade was in 1270.¹⁰³

In just over a minute, the dialogue uncovers the historicity of the martyr figure and draws attention to its signatures. The Moro character highlights the analogy between Communists and the first Christian communities in their willingness to die for a «higher» cause. He thus draws attention to the fact that both Christianity and Communism are based on a messianic and eschatological conception of history.¹⁰⁴ However, he also points out that the ideology of martyrdom was and is used as an instrument for the legitimization and justification of violence and war, as in the case of the crusades. In other words, Moro unveils, by the means of analogy, the instrumental use of memory: just as the crusaders understood themselves as the legitimate heirs of early Christians, the BR represented themselves as the legitimate heirs of Resistance fighters. The memory of early Christians and partisans, both willing to die for their ideas, is instrumentally used to legitimize the willingness to kill for ideas. The Moro character underlines the

103 It.: «Mariano: Hai paura di morire? / Moro: Perché me lo chiede? / Mariano: Eppure tu credi nell'aldilà? / Moro: Anche Cristo nell'orto del Getsemani ha avuto paura. / Mariano: Mi ricordo che da bambino ero talmente infervorato dalla religione che speravo di morire per andare in paradiso il più presto possibile. Che assurdità. / Moro: Lei non ha paura di morire? / Mariano: Ogni uomo un giorno deve morire. Ma non tutte le morti hanno lo stesso significato. Io credo che la nostra superiorità consista in questo: noi siamo disposti a morire per le nostre idee. I comunisti sono così. / Moro: Anche i primi martiri cristiani. In fondo la sua è una religione, come la mia. Anzi, è molto più severa. Per esempio disprezza il corpo, molto di più di quanto non facciamo noi cattolici. Un tempo il cristianesimo era così, ma ora non più. L'ultima crociata è del 1270» (47:00–48:08).

104 As far as the analogies between Christian and Communist eschatology are concerned, see Agamben 2005, 29–33.

instrumentality of both practices of memorialization. From this point of view, it is correct to affirm that *BUONGIORNO, NOTTE* «is not a film about the Moro events as such, but about the representational means through which we construct our understandings of such events» and, more generally, of history.¹⁰⁵

Although the film focuses on the deconstruction of the BR's rhetoric and language, it also challenges the hegemonic discourse produced by the government, major parties and established media. Again, it is the character of Aldo Moro that unveils the instrumental use of language and rhetoric. In the last dialogue before his death and resurrection, Moro tries to explain to his jailers why death will be extremely counterproductive for them:

Moro: Do you not understand that I will become a martyr? [Do you not understand that I will become] the idiot they will use to destroy you? When television—it does not take much to understand it!—when television and newspapers will show photos of my corpse, people will not understand. They will hate you.¹⁰⁶

The role of the media during Moro's 55 days of imprisonment is constantly underlined in the film, showing how, out of the «people's prison», an uncompromising position with respect to negotiation emerged and spread quickly. Here, Moro essentially says to the BR that they are doing exactly what the government, media and parties expect of them; but this does not serve to convince the BR, except for Chiara, who expresses her disappointment since she cannot accept the idea of murder, and Ernesto, who seems to understand Moro's argument. In fact, speaking with Mariano, he states:

You heard what the president said. Think a little: Everybody wants him dead and we are going to kill him. We will be doing them a great service. We will kill him for them—do you realize that?¹⁰⁷

105 O'Leary 2011, 61.

106 It.: Moro: «Ma non capite che diventerò un martire? L'idiota di cui si serviranno per annientarvi? Quando la televisione – non ci vuole molto a capirlo! - quando la televisione, i giornali, mostreranno le foto del mio cadavere la gente non potrà capire. Vi odierà» (01:26:06–01:26:21).

107 It.: «Hai sentito cosa ha detto il presidente. Ragiona: tutti lo vogliono morto e noi lo ammaziamo. Gli facciamo un gran servizio. Noi lo ammaziamo per loro, ti rendi conto?» (01:30:47–01:30:56).

Mariano does not realize and continues to justify the homicide as necessary for the revolutionary cause:

If we kill him, we will prove that we are stronger because no pity can stop us. We only respond to the proletariat and the working-class.¹⁰⁸

Here, the film clearly highlights what Umberto Eco had already noticed, namely that the BR's actions and ideology were functional to the same system they wanted to destroy.



PICTURE 16: *Alternative ending: Moro walking away from the «people's prison» in BUONGIORNO, NOTTE (Marco Bellocchio, IT 2003).*

The final sequence of the film is a montage of two alternative outcomes of the kidnapping, united by Pink Floyd's song *Shine On You Crazy Diamond (Part One)* on the soundtrack. In the first scenario, the female terrorist falls asleep after taking a last look at the prisoner and opening the door of his cell. The prisoner then gets up and, while everybody sleeps, leaves the apartment and walks calmly out onto the street. In the second scenario, the

108 It.: «Se lo ammaziamo dimostriamo che siamo più forti perché nessuna pietà ci può fermare. Noi rispondiamo soltanto al proletariato e alla classe operaia» (01:30:56–01:31:03).

woman falls asleep and Moro is led blindfolded from his cell with the sign «Buongiorno, notte», signaling the end. The film continues with a sequence of footage from the state funeral until the music changes: Schubert's *Musical Movement in F* accompanies the scene of Moro walking away into the open space of the city of Rome (see figure 16). As O'Leary observes, «the confusion between the poetic reconstruction of events and their revisionist reinterpretation in *BUONGIORNO, NOTTE* is deliberate», since «the jarring interpolation of sequences from other films, while illustrating Chiara's subjectivity, also force our attention to how film constructs our impression of history precisely through a rhetorical invocation and embellishment of the fact.»¹⁰⁹ This is particularly evident in the way the film refers to the martyr figure: instead of using it instrumentally, it poetically uncovers its historical uses and abuses. Should Italian people consider Aldo Moro a hero, a saint, a martyr? The director Bellocchio, in a cameo appearance, takes pleasure in not answering this question by saying: «Was it true glory? Posterity will judge». ¹¹⁰

7.4 Beatification Process

This reconstruction and deconstruction of memorializing representations and practices of the abduction and death of Aldo Moro cannot end without addressing a recent initiative: as reported firstly by the newspaper *La Gazzetta del Mezzogiorno* in September 2012, the Diocesan Tribunal of Rome approved an inquiry into the potential canonization and beatification of Aldo Moro.¹¹¹ The initiative was launched in May of the same year by the *Federazione dei Centri studi Aldo Moro and Renato Dell'Andro*, led by the engineer Luigi Ferlicchia, who organized a collection of signatures in support of Moro's «fame of sanctity». The Postulator of the Cause, Nicola Giampaolo, provided the *Supplice libello sulla fama di santità*, that is, «Pleading Pamphlet on the Fame of Holiness», to Cardinal and Archbishop Agostino Vallini, Vicar of the Pope, who then addressed the statesman as *Servo di Dio* (Servant of God). After this, the President of the Diocesan tri-

109 O'Leary 2011, 67.

110 It.: «Fu vera gloria? Ai posteri l'ardua sentenza» (01:18:55–01:19:00).

111 See Sorino, Benedetto, «Moro beato, via alla causa – agli atti c'è un miracolo», *La Gazzetta del Mezzogiorno*, 22.9.2012, <http://www.lagazzettadelmezzogiorno.it/news/home/397234/moro-beato-via-all-a-causa-agli-attic-e-un-miracolo.html> (accessed August 23, 2017).

enal of Rome introduced the cause by acquiring the acts of the *Supplice libello sulla fama di santità*.

The procedure of canonization and beatification is complex and can take years, if not decades. Moreover, it cannot begin unless at least five years have passed since the death of the person in question.¹¹² Canonization is the act by which the Catholic Church declares that a person who has died is a saint; the person is included in the «canon», or list, of officially recognized saints and can be venerated in the «universal Church» (while beatification permits only veneration in «particular Churches», that is, in a certain diocese). The procedure of canonization has two phases: a Diocesan and a Roman phase. The beatification and canonization of Aldo Moro is still in the preliminary part of the first phase, called *Inchiesta sull'eroicità delle virtù o sul martirio del servo di Dio* (Inquiry into the heroic virtue or the martyrdom of the servant of God).¹¹³ The purpose of the inquiry is to collect documentary evidence and testimonies *pro et contra* beatification and canonization. People who lived with the potential saint and know about his or her work and lifestyle initiate the process of canonization: the community of the parish, the religious congregation, the community in which he or she worked, and so on.¹¹⁴ The «Actor»—that is, the group of people initiating the process—charge a person they consider appropriate to submit a request to the competent bishop—the bishop of the diocese where the potential saint died—to open the Diocesan Inquiry into possible beatification. The person who submits the question is called the «Postulator of the Cause». The Postulator carries out investigations into the life of the «Servant of God» in order to know his «fame of holiness» and the ecclesial importance of the cause and to report this to the bishop.¹¹⁵ The goal is to verify the «heroic virtues» or the «martyrdom» of the dead person. As a legal representative of the «Actors», the Postulator prepares the *Supplice libello*, that is, the petition in writing with which he officially begins the Diocesan Inquiry. Along with this petition, the Postulator sends (a) a biography of the potential saint, (b) all the writings that the potential saint published or edited, (c) a list of «eyewitnesses» (*de visu*), that is, of texts that contribute to the verification of the virtues or martyrdom of the potential

112 See Congregazione delle Cause dei Santi 2004, 266.

113 See Congregazione delle Cause dei Santi 2004, 255.

114 See *Sanctorum mater*, Art. 9-11, in: Congregazione delle Cause dei Santi 2004, 411.

115 See *Sanctorum mater*, Art. 12-19, in: Congregazione delle Cause dei Santi 2004, 412-413.

saint.¹¹⁶ The bishop can accept the *Supplice libello* «after assessing the existence of the authentic and widespread fame of holiness or of martyrdom and of signs.»¹¹⁷ For this reason, he must consult with other bishops on the initiation of the cause as well as to «make known the petition of the postulator [...] with an edict, placed in a cathedral or published in the diocesan newspaper (bulletin).»¹¹⁸ In this edict, he invites all believers to provide useful information about the cause. Moreover, he must send a request to the Congregation for the Causes of Saints, asking for its *nulla osta* (nothing opposes).

In September 2016, Postulator Nicola Giampaolo declared to *Radio Vaticana* the following:

We are still gathering numerous postulations, testimonies of cardinals, bishops, convinced of the opportuneness of this cause, but also of common people, politicians and intellectuals. We hope to be soon able to request the *«nulla osta»* to proceed to the Italian Bishops' Conference.¹¹⁹

This means that the preliminary phase of the Diocesan Inquiry has not yet ended. Although the *Supplice libello sulla fama di santità* is not accessible to the public, some information on its contents was disclosed to the media by the Postulator. He declared three main arguments in favor of Moro's fame of holiness: his incontrovertible Christian and Catholic faith, his *martyrium in odium fidei*, and finally a miracle of intercession. According to the Postulator, the Red Brigades were a terrorist group led by Communist ideology in a war against Christianity, which is why Moro's death can be seen

116 See *Sanctorum mater*, Art. 37, in: Congregazione delle Cause dei Santi 2004, 418.

117 *Sanctorum mater*, Art. 40 – § 1, in: Congregazione delle Cause dei Santi 2004, 419; it.: «[...] il Vescovo diocesano o aperchiale potrà accettare il libello di domanda per l'avvio della causa dopo aver valutato l'esistenza di un'autentica e difusa fama di santità o di martirio e di segni.»

118 *Sanctorum mater*, Art. 43 – § 1, in: Congregazione delle Cause dei Santi 2004, 420; it.: «Il Vescovo deve rendere nota la petizione del postulatore di iniziare la causa nella sua diocesi o perchia con un edito, affisso in cattedrale o pubblicato sul giornale (bollettino) parrocchiale.»

119 Quoted in *Zenit. Il mondo visto da Roma*, «Aldo Moro. Il Vicariato di Roma avvia il processo di beatificazione», 24.9.2016, <https://it.zenit.org/articles/aldo-moro-il-vicariato-di-roma-avvia-il-processo-di-beatificazione/> (accessed August 23, 2017); it.: «Attualmente stiamo ancora raccogliendo numerose postulatorie, testimonianze di cardinali, vescovi, convinti dell'opportunità di questa causa, ma anche di gente comune, politici e intellettuali. Quanto prima speriamo di poter richiedere il *«nulla osta»* per procedere alla Conferenza Episcopale italiana.»

as a form of martyrdom. Moreover, he also referred to the witness of Monsignor Francesco Colasuonno, who is known for having organized the meeting between Gorbachev and Wojtyla and then being appointed Cardinal by John Paul II himself. Colasuonno recounted that, when he was in the Apostolic Nunciature in Mozambique in July 1978, a group of guerrillas attacked, destroyed and killed everyone they encountered. Closed in a room with a picture of Moro on the wall, Colasuonno began to pray, invoking his help. This is indicated as a miracle of intercession.¹²⁰

For the purpose of this study, the second reason indicated by the Postulator is particularly interesting. A manual for the Postulators published by the Congregation for the Causes of Saints states that there are three fundamental elements that characterize «true Christian martyrdom»: «a) material martyrdom; b) formal martyrdom *ex parte persecutoris*, and c) formal martyrdom *ex parte victimae».¹²¹ The material element is violent death; however, for such a death to be regarded as martyrdom, «it is necessary that those who commit death carry out such action because of their hatred of faith or of a virtue related to the faith of God.» Moreover, the second necessary element is «the voluntary acceptance of death for the sake of faith».¹²² Martyrdom therefore demands that the cause of death be the faith or practice of a faith-related virtue. Recalling Saint Augustine's dictum *non causa sed poena facit martyrem*, the manual states: «martyrdom does not depend on the sufferance but on cause of this sufferance.»¹²³*

According to Monsignor Andrea Venezia, Presbyter of the Papal Archbasilica of St. John in Lateran, material and formal elements of martyrdom are fulfilled in the case of Moro's death. When interviewed by *Radio Vaticana* with the Postulator, Venezia stated:

The premise to open the cause of beatification was there, because if political activity is carried out according to the cardinal virtues of justice,

120 See Ferlicchia 2014, 559.

121 Congregazione delle Cause dei Santi 2004, 61; it.: «Sono tre gli elementi importanti che caratterizzano il vero martirio cristiano, ed ogni processo per un'eventuale canonizzazione dovrà raggiungere la certezza morale a questo riguardo: a) il martirio materiale ; b) il martirio formale *ex parte persecutoris* e)c) il martirio formale *ex parte victimae».*

122 Congregazione delle Cause dei Santi 2004, 62; it.: «In primo luogo è necessario che chi infligge la morte compia tale azione per odio alla fede o a una virtù relazionata con la fede in Dio. [...] Il secondo elemento formale [...] è l'accettazione volontaria della morte per amore della fede [...]»

123 Congregazione delle Cause dei Santi 2004, 64; it.: « [...] il martirio non dipende dalla pena che si subisce, ma dalla causa di questa pena.»

fortune, temperance, sobriety, and service to the common good, but also in accordance with faith, it is the highest form of charity. For a Christian like Aldo Moro, baptized and raised as a young man in Christian consciousness, politics was certainly a charitable act that lived up to the effusion of blood. Moro was not only barbarously killed, as the images showing him as a «sacrificial lamb» show. But his end was also the conclusion of a testimony and that is why we can talk about martyrdom in his case. Not only did he testify to his faith with his gentle and peaceful approach to the things of politics and government activity, with his ability to listen, mediate, and reconcile opposites, but continued his testimony to the extreme consequences, to the point of death. His was not tactics; it was a model of government. And Moro was a politician also committed to a spiritual and transcendental ideal that is called Christian faith.¹²⁴

For Venezia, Moro was killed due to the inspiration of Christian ideals and virtues in his political activity. Similarly, the Postulator Giampaolo argues this in a book published in 2015 when he describes the politician's «exercise of charity as an authentic and essential testimony of faith.»¹²⁵ Moreover, according to the Postulator, Moro «was sacrificed for the salvation of so many [...].» Here, the voluntary acceptance of martyrdom is explicitly described as deriving from Moro's understanding of love as «agape», as a

124 Quoted in *Zenit. Il mondo visto da Roma*, «Aldo Moro. Il Vicariato di Roma avvia il processo di beatificazione», 24.9.2016, <https://it.zenit.org/articles/aldo-moro-il-vicariato-di-roma-avvia-il-processo-di-beatificazione/> (accessed August 23, 2017); it.: «Le premesse per aprire la causa di beatificazione c'erano perché l'attività politica se svolta secondo le virtù cardinali di giustizia, forza, temperanza, sobrietà e come servizio al bene comune, ma anche nella fede, è la forma più alta di carità. Per un cristiano come Aldo Moro battezzato e cresciuto sin da giovane nella coscienza cristiana, la politica è stata certamente un atto di carità vissuto fino all'effusione del sangue. Non solo Moro fu ucciso barbaramente come testimoniano le immagini che lo mostrano come «agnello immolato.» Ma la sua fine fu anche la conclusione di una testimonianza ed è per questo che nel suo caso possiamo parlare di martirio. Non solo testimoniò la fede con il suo approccio mite e pacato alle cose della politica e all'attività di governo, con la sua capacità di ascolto, mediazione, conciliazione degli opposti, ma portò avanti la sua testimonianza fino all'estreme conseguenze, andando incontro alla morte. Il suo non era tatticismo era un modello di governo. E Moro fu un politico impegnato anche per un ideale spirituale e trascendente che si chiama fede cristiana.»

125 Giampaolo 2015, 52; it.: «Aldo Moro ha cercato di esercitare il servizio della carità come una autentica ed essenziale testimonianza di fede.»

gift of oneself to others.»¹²⁶ We can find an explication in a book written by Luigi Ferlicchia, one of the main initiators of the procedure of beatification of Aldo Moro, of the first formal element of martyrdom, the hatred for faith. Here, he describes the reasons why the BR killed Moro:

Moro, with his political reasoning, all logical and concatenated into the strategy of attention, had foreseen and worked for the fall of Communism, and for this the «priests of international Communism» saw him as a danger that had to be eliminated with the armed struggle. The BR, who considered themselves the depositors of communist faith, in line with the Stalinist Communists of that time, came to the crazy gesture of eliminating him. As the priests of the temple entered into cahoots with «Roman power», through the game of parties, in order to sentence Christ to death, the same happened to Aldo Moro, when the BR, in the logic of the non-decision of the «established power», killed him. [...] A martyr! And martyrdom immediately places him among the defenders of faith in Christian values.¹²⁷

With the BR as the priest of the temple, and the Italian State as the Roman Empire, again, the mechanism of prefiguration is used to represent Aldo Moro as a martyr. Obviously, there is a certain ambiguity in this representation as well as, more generally, in the initiative for the beatification of Moro, since the cause of his death is indicated in his political activity as a statesman. Moro's death seems to assume here the connotation of martyrdom, a witness of faith in both the Italian State and the Church, in secular and religious power.

The initiative launched by Ferlicchia and carried by Postulator Giampaolo aroused some criticism and controversy in the press. To cite only one ex-

126 Giampaolo 2015, 52; it.: «L'amore egli lo intendeva e lo viveva come «agape», come dono di sé agli altri. E lui si è donato, si è sacrificato per la salvezza di tanti altri che non hanno riconosciuto il suo sacrificio.»

127 Ferlicchia 2014, 549; it.: «Moro con i suoi ragionamenti politici, tutti logici e concatenati sino alla strategia dell'attenzione, aveva previsto, intuito e operato per la caduta del comunismo, e per questo era visto dai «sacerdoti del comunismo internazionale» come un pericolo che andava eliminato con la lotta armata. Le Br che si ritengono i depositari della fede comunista, in sintonia con i comunisti stalinisti dell'epoca, arrivano al folle gesto di eliminarlo. Come per Gesù Cristo i sacerdoti del tempio giungono in combutta con il «potere romano», attraverso il gioco delle parti, alla condanna a morte del Cristo così per Aldo Moro, le Br nella logica della non decisione del «potere costituito», giungono alla sua eliminazione fisica. [...] Un martire! Ed il martirio subito lo pone fra i difensori della fede nei valori cristiani.»

ample, in the right-wing newspaper *Il Giornale*, journalist Marcello Veneziani argued that

Moro was a politician and acted as a politician, [but] he was not a saint. His death still burns, but as Saint Augustine said, it is not the sufferance but the cause that makes martyrs. And I do not see Moro [as someone who was] moved by a Christian cause, but by [the cause of] Christian Democracy. Or should we sanctify all the Catholic victims of terrorism? True saints sacrificed themselves in the name of faith or devote their lives to works of charity or do miracles. Does Moro fall into these categories? There is already a political saint: it is Saint Thomas More. That's enough. God did not vote for the DC.¹²⁸

This, like many articles and blog posts in favor of or against the beatification procedure, demonstrates that even today the politician Aldo Moro is controversial and that conflicting interpretations of the reasons, causes and interests that led to his kidnapping and death still remain. What seems to remain constant, within the various discursive and memorializing practices concerning Moro and his violent death, is the figure of the martyr. Whether the attribution and allocation of the martyr role is accepted or not, it continues to dominate public debates and cultural productions. This study shows how Aldo Moro has been constructed as a state martyr, and how alternative and subversive forms of representation have challenged this construction. In years, maybe decades, we will learn if the initiative will lead to the politician's beatification. For the moment, we can only observe that the battle through which different social actors tried and still try to take possession of the figure of the murdered politician, to represent and memorialize the events of 1978 in one way rather than in another, continues.

128 Veneziani, Marcello, «Tommaso, l'unico Moro vero santo», *Il Giornale*, 20.7.2012, <http://www.ilgiornale.it/news/tommaso-lunico-moro-davvero-santo.html> (accessed August 23, 2017); it.: «Moro fu un politico e si comportò da politico, non da santo. La sua morte brucia ancora, ma come diceva Sant'Agostino non è la pena ma la causa a fare i martiri. E non vedo Moro mosso da una causa cristiana, al più democristiana. O dovremmo santificare tutte le vittime cattoliche del terrorismo? I veri santi si sacrificano nel nome della fede o dedicano la loro vita a opere di carità o compiono miracoli. Moro rientra in questi canoni? Un Santo Moro politico c'è già: è San Tommaso Moro. Basta lui. Dio non votava Dc.»