‘Somewhat of an affectation’: Bach, Vivaldi, and the Early Films of Pier Paolo Pasolini

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Pier Paolo Pasolini (1922–75) was one of Italy’s most important cultural ambassadors. A poet, novelist, filmmaker, and intellectual, he was born in Bologna and raised in the Friulian region of Italy where, as a young man, he taught in secondary schools and initially made a name for himself as a poet, often writing in the Friulian dialect. He moved to Rome in 1950 and became a full-time writer, working as a journalist, essayist, poet, and in the cinema. He was one of the eight screenwriters for La donna del fiume (Mario Soldati, 1954), and he contributed dialogue for Federico Fellini’s Le notti de Cabiria (1957) and La dolce vita (1961). During the same period he published two novels, Ragazzi di vita in 1955 and Una vita violenta in 1959. They were set in Rome, more specifically in the borgate, the parts of the city where an underclass of pimps, prostitutes, and petty thieves lived. The borgate were also the setting for his first two films, Accattone (1961—‘accattone’ is slang for a scrounger) and Mamma Roma (1962), both of which he wrote and directed. He would subsequently make documentaries, contribute an episode for a portmanteau movie, and make ten feature films, including his so-called Trilogy of Life—Il Decameron (The Decameron, 1971), I racconti di Canterbury (The Canterbury Tales, 1972), and Il fiore delle Mille e una Notte (A Thousand and One Nights, 1974). His final film, Salò o le 120 giornate di Sodoma (Salo, or the 120 Days of Sodom, 1975), a harrowingly graphic exploration of fascism and sexual sadism, was released shortly after his murder in Ostia on 2 November 1975.

Accattone premiered at the Venice Film Festival on 31 August 1961 and was commercially released later that year on 22 November. Made on a low budget with non-professional actors, it is the story of Vittorio, a layabout pimp. Like Pasolini’s novels and his life more generally, the film courted controversy. It was given an ‘R’ certificate with the stipulation that all posters bore the message ‘specially prohibited to those under 18’, something that attracted rather than deterred audiences.¹ The film’s modest success was enough to assure funding for his next film, Mamma Roma, with the eponymous heroine played by Anna Magnani. Her acclaimed role as Pina in Roma città aperta (Roberto Rossellini, 1945) invited misplaced comparisons between Pasolini and the neorealists, an association that Pasolini rejected.² Mamma Roma premiered at

* London. Email: dongreig@gmail.com. An early draft of this article was read at the REMOSS (Representations of Early Music on Stage and Screen) conference, ‘Music and Disruptive Pasts: Between the Popular and the Arcane’, held at the Open University, 21–2 August 2019.


² For a discussion of the issue, see John David Rhodes, Stupendous, Miserable City: Pasolini’s Rome (Minneapolis, 2007), esp. ch. 3, “‘Scandalous Desecration’: Accattone against the Neorealist City’ and pp. 58–69. Rhodes argues that Pasolini’s approach was more politically engaged, and that he was more interested in challenging the system than documenting social reality. Despite some different approaches to film form, both Pasolini and the neorealists nonetheless abide by the more standard conventions of spatial and temporal continuity.
the Venice Film Festival on 31 August 1962, exactly one year after *Accattone*, and also caused a stir: charges of immorality were raised against the film, only to be dismissed by the courts. In *L’Unità*, plenty of column inches were devoted to the story, and the paper even printed an editorial in favour of the judge’s decision to dismiss the case. With a nod to Dreyer’s *La Passion de Jeanne d’Arc*, a review that followed was entitled ‘La Passione di Mamma Roma’. After acknowledging the censorship debate, the review criticized Magnani’s ‘mannerist’ depiction of her character Mamma Roma, which was a distinctly different approach to acting style than that of the amateur supporting cast. A review in *La Stampa* praised the film though noted an unevenness of tone, particularly in the eye-catching presence of Anna Magnani, for whom the film was conceived. Like *L’Unità*, the critic took issue with her ‘bravura’ performance and its contrast with the otherwise naturalistic approach of the rest of the cast.

The male heroes of Pasolini’s first two films echo the life of Christ in a number of ways. In *Accattone*, Vittorio (played by Franco Citti, brother of Sergio Citti, Pasolini’s friend and occasional collaborator) idles his life away in the local bar with his unemployed friends, chatting, scheming—anything to avoid getting a job, particularly one that is deemed honest. His life revolves around two Marian figures: Maddalena (an obvious reference to Mary Magdalene, and played by Silvana Corsini), a prostitute whom he pimp’s, and Stella (*Stella Maris*, Star of the of Sea, denoting Mary, mother of Christ, played by Franca Pasut), a virgin whom he seduces and tries to convert to a life as a prostitute. His death at the end of the film obliquely references Christ’s crucifixion, with Vittorio resigned to his fate, uttering his final words, ‘Ah, I’m fine’ (‘Ah, io sto bene’), framed between two thieves. Ettore’s life in *Mamma Roma* is likewise aimless and has similar Christian parallels. Echoing Pasolini’s own geographical relocation from the Friulian region to Rome, Ettore (Ettore Garofolo) is a teenager entrusted to his mother’s care, tough but essentially naive, who befriends local boys and loses his virginity to an older single mother, Bruna (Silvana Corsini), with whom he falls in love. Ettore’s mother, Mamma Roma (Magnani) is blackmailed by her estranged husband, Carmine (Franco Citti) to return to her life as a prostitute. Ettore dies strapped to an iron bed with arms outstretched in a shot modelled on Andrea Mantegna’s *Lamentation of Christ* (c.1480, tempera on canvas, Pinacoteca di Brera, Milan).

Both films employed extant recordings of classical Baroque repertory: exclusively Bach for *Accattone* and Vivaldi for *Mamma Roma*. The use of music from the classical tradition drew plenty of comment at the time and has done since, and a significant imbalance of reception prevails: considerably more has been said about the use of Bach in *Accattone* than Vivaldi in *Mamma Roma*. To a degree this can be explained by reference to value judgement and the composers’ respective places in the classical canon. Vivaldi’s reputation has risen steadily since the discovery of the Turin manuscripts in the 1920s, but in the early 1960s, despite a glut of new recordings, a great deal of

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6 *La Stampa*, 1 Sept. 1962, p. 5.
Furthermore, as a composer of over 500 concerti, he was enhanced by his association with Bach through the latter’s transcriptions of his work. Bach, by contrast, was a Great, a pillar of the Austro-German tradition. Given that our main access to Pasolini’s thoughts about music in the first two films come from his answers to questions posed by commentators about Accattone and Bach at the expense of any consideration of Vivaldi and Mamma Roma, the director unwittingly furthered this critical bias. From those responses, one comment stands out:

As you can see, I tried to use the same procedure [in Mamma Roma] that I had used in Accattone; the music in Mamma Roma is perhaps less arresting because in a certain sense one could describe it as more logical . . . . In Accattone there was a friction: in fact, between Bach and Accattone there is more difference than between Vivaldi and Mamma Roma.9

Vivaldi’s music, ‘sentimental, sweet, melodic and thus popular’, is frictionless because it is simpler, and, more importantly, unfettered by familiarity or foreknowledge of any kind. It thus ‘works more easily’ than Bach’s, which ‘posed something of a problem’.9 Indeed, Pasolini was delighted that one critic mistakenly believed that Mamma Roma’s music was entirely composed by Carlo Rustichelli, a film composer and the film’s musical director, taking it as proof of Vivaldi’s popular appeal.10

In this article I seek to unravel the several factors that inform Pasolini’s responses and their implications. Principal amongst these is the view that Bach’s music is so heavily freighted with cultural baggage and associative meaning that his music inevitably commands attention. To echo a sentiment that still resonates within film-music studies, Vivaldi’s music, compared to that of Bach, goes unheard.11 Bath’s status as a church composer and the connotations of religiosity are particularly pertinent here: his music ‘is widely recognizable [and] carries a heavy referential power or spiritual connotations (in the sense of being inevitably religious, liturgical or paraliturgical).’12


9 ‘sentimentale, dolce, melodica e quindi popolare . . . Vivaldi passerà più facilmente’; ‘costituisce una specie di problema’ (ibid.).

10 Pasolini is presumably referring to the review in La Stampa, which speaks of ‘la musica di Carlo Rustichelli’: ‘Even some critics, quite ignorant when it comes to music—newspaper critics—believed that Rustichelli had composed this music’ (‘Addirittura alcuni critici piuttosto ignoranti in fatto di musica—critici di quotidiani—hanno creduto che questa musica l’abbia fatta Rustichelli’); La Stampa, 1 Sept. 1962, p. 6.

11 Claudia Gorban, Unheard Melodies: Narrative Film Music (Bloomington, Ind., 1987).

12 Ennio Morricone and Sergio Miceli, Composing for the Cinema: The Theory and Praxis of Music in Film, trans. Gillian B. Anderson (Lanham, Md., 2013), 93. Vivaldi was himself a priest, though his reputation in his lifetime and in the modern day is more that of a (struggling) musical entrepreneur. Morricone disagrees with Miceli and applauds the use of Bach on the basis that the music has an integrity that much film music does not: ‘To function well in a film, music has to have and to conserve its own formal characteristics—tonal relations, melodic relations if we want, rhythmic relations, instrumental relations—in sum, a correct internal dialectic. If this formal correctness and technique is
Consequently, readings of *Accattone* pursue and discover ties between the Christological arc of Vittorio’s narrative and Bach’s music despite the fact that more than half the music used in the film is secular. Given that Pasolini asserted that the music for *Mamma Roma* followed the ‘same procedure’, such readings also ignore how Vivaldi’s entirely secular music is deemed to fit with Ettore’s similar symbolic itinerary. In such a light, the abiding image of Bach as a religious composer contributes to the *strangeness* of the repertorial choice rather than intensifying allusions to Christ.

Considering the two films together is a useful corrective, inviting us to investigate Pasolini’s broader aesthetic purpose. Textual analysis can also play a part, moving us away from cultural reference and towards an investigation of the formal correlations between Baroque repertory and film form. This provokes questions of how musical style serves the moving image more generally, and in turn contributes to an understanding of why Baroque repertory remains an exception to dominant paradigms of film music such as the late Romantic idiom favoured in the studio era and the fluid soundscapes of more recent cinema. Such a strategy does not invalidate readings of the individual films, not least for reasons of textual plurality. But what we should resist, if possible, is Bach’s gravitational pull; reading Pasolini’s films through the lens of Bach, rich as it is, does not tell the whole story. Mark Brill’s recent article on the use of Bach in *Accattone* and *Il Vangelo secondo Matteo* (*The Gospel according to Matthew*, 1964) is a case in point.13 His analyses of both films are incisive and he convincingly demonstrates the role of Bach’s music in the ‘consecration of the marginalized’, but the focus on Bach inevitably and necessarily underplays secular music in both films. Furthermore, Brill ignores the very different way that movements from the St Matthew Passion in *Il Vangelo*, particularly ‘Wir setzen uns mit Tränen nieder’, operate in *Il Vangelo* and *Accattone*. The music of the St Matthew Passion is unambiguously associated with the subject matter in the former while the latter prompts a strong sense of cultural disconnection. As Alessandro Cadoni puts it in an article that shares some of Brill’s concerns, ‘[w]hile in the Gospel the use of *Matthäus Passion* appears logical, and the reference to a model on the same subject almost obvious, *Accattone* instead is shaded by a stylistic contamination that results in forceful alienation’.14 The logic to which Cadoni points is the fairly conventional associative use of Bach’s Passion in a film that elsewhere features Odetta’s ‘Sometimes I Feel Like a Motherless Child’, movements from the *Missa Luba*, and Blind Willie Johnson’s ‘Dark Was the Night, Cold Was the Ground’.

Rather than pursuing a line of argument that binds Pasolini to Bach, I am advocating a strategy that addresses the more striking, though apparently contradictory, commonality of Baroque music and the film’s social milieu. That is not to say that we present in the music and is applied to the images, the result will certainly be better. (Technique is still more important.) How have I arrived at this certainty? It came at different times when I heard and saw the music of Bach or Mozart or other composers applied to film. They were applications made as an experiment or from a desire for a definitive matchup. We all have seen this type of operation in Pasolini’s *Accattone* (1961) and *Il Vangelo secondo Matteo* (1964) and in so many other films. Because these musical compositions were not invented for those scenes and because they have in themselves all the characteristics, the correct internal dialectic that I mentioned just now, they function on the emotional as well as the formal level itself.’ (p. 54).

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should treat Bach and Vivaldi as merely representatives of eighteenth-century repertory, only that we should more fully pursue and investigate Pasolini’s insistence that his approach to music in Accattone and Mamma Roma was the same. We thus set Bach’s particular status to one side, marginalizing the consecrated to invert Brill’s title. To that end, we must present and interrogate the various commentaries about Bach and Accattone and Vivaldi and Mamma Roma to establish similarities. First, though, we must provide the context for that reception by tracing something of the inheritance of Baroque music in cinema at the time Pasolini’s films were released.

NARRATIVE CINEMA, BAROQUE MUSIC, AND THE CRITICAL CONTEXT

A comment by the writer Giulio Cesare Castello in a round table discussion held in 1964 at the Centro Sperimentale di Cinematografia between Pasolini and various teachers and critics strongly implies that Baroque music was not just prevalent in cinema at the time but overused: ‘what sense is there in the adoption of this kind of music for films, which is becoming somewhat of an affectation?’15 If the use of Baroque music had indeed calcified into cliché then Pasolini was certainly aware of it. His La Ricotta, made in 1962 and therefore before Il Vangelo, is a satirical short film that portrays the making of a film about Christ, part of the portmanteau movie RoGoPaG (Roberto Rossellini, Jean-Luc Godard, Pier Paolo Pasolini, and Ugo Gregoretti, 1963). When a tableau vivant of the descent from the cross is ready to be filmed (a reconstruction of the Mannerist painter Rosso Fiorentino’s Deposition, Pinacoteca Comunale, Volterra, oil on wood, c.1521), a pop song is cued by mistake. ‘Not that one ... Publicani! Blasphemers. The Scarlatti record!’ the first assistant director shouts. Castello’s criticism is nevertheless surprising given how little Baroque music had actually been used in cinema. He was perhaps thinking of Jean-Pierre Melville’s Les Enfants terribles (1950), which had a music track of Bach and Vivaldi, and Jean Renoir’s The Golden Coach (1952), with its Italian Baroque repertory that strongly favoured Vivaldi, or even of Lo Duca’s misconceived, clumsy cut-and-paste collage of mainly Italian Baroque repertory for the re-release of Carl Theodor Dreyer’s 1928 La Passion de Jeanne d’Arc.16 Robert Bresson had also used the music of Johann Fischer (mistakenly attributed in the film and thereafter to Lully) in Pickpocket (1959), but in the main Baroque music was used infrequently. Looking specifically at the use of Bach and Vivaldi in silent cinema, there are no entries for music by Bach in the most significant American and European catalogues and compendiums of music created for silent-film accompaniment.17 However, the composer did have a place in special or ‘deluxe’ film presentations.18 Vivaldi is similarly absent from the compendiums, though for more

mundane reasons: not a lot of his music was published or performed in the 1960s.\textsuperscript{19} Handel, Rameau, and other contemporaries are found in both American and European catalogues, though the categories under which they appear indicate that they are to be used to fulfil very specific functions.\textsuperscript{20} Four non-mutually exclusive conventions of the use of Baroque repertory emerge from a survey of the compendiums and deluxe presentations: as a signifier of religion and Christianity; as an antiquating effect to suggest a generalized past; as a supplementary, pseudo-diegetic illustration of court life; and as a source of recognizable and comforting pleasure afforded by the promise of a good tune—a ‘popular classic’ like Handel’s ‘Largo’, for example. These associations abide to the present day: Pasolini’s ‘La Ricotta’ and the opening credit sequence of \textit{Casino} (Martin Scorsese, 1995) are two sides of the same coin, the former acknowledging the clichéd association of Baroque music and the sacred, the latter exploiting it ironically. Lo Duca’s vague application of Baroque music to the medieval period in his sonorization of Dreyer’s film is a good example of the second approach; period dramas such as \textit{The Golden Coach} and \textit{The Favourite} (Yorgos Lanthimos, 2018) exemplify the broad courtly connotations of the repertory, and the popularization of Handel’s Sarabande in D Minor, HWV 437 (La Folia) in a version created by Leonard Rosenman for \textit{Barry Lyndon} (Stanley Kubrick, 1975) is testament to the last category. But the implication of what Baroque repertory was deemed incapable of doing is perhaps more important: it could not illustrate emotional states—love, loss, danger, etc.—or provide suitable thematic material for stock characters—villain, hero, heroine, etc. Again, we find that attitude manifest in more recent cinema. Stanley Kubrick, for example, insisted that he could find no instrumental repertory from the period that could convincingly serve as a love theme.\textsuperscript{21}

The developing interest in Baroque music since the Vivaldi revival, and a greater awareness of the repertory through television and commercials, have undoubtedly helped energize new associations. Baroque instrumental fast movements have come to be used to complement on-screen kineticism, most often in montage sequences, while slow movements have been milked for their affective values \textit{(pace} Kubrick\textit{)}. Such properties are evinced in mainstream films such as \textit{Kramer vs. Kramer} (Robert Benton, 1979)—Vivaldi, and \textit{Ordinary People} (Robert Redford, 1980)—Pachelbel. More recently, different associations have emerged. Anahid Kassabian perhaps had in mind the dark machinations that lie at the heart of both \textit{Les Enfants terribles} and \textit{Dangerous Liaisons} (Stephen Frears, 1988) with its hybridized Handel/George Fenton score, when she summarizes the characteristics of Baroque music as ‘intricacy, excess, ornamentation, restraint, calculation, and lack of emotion’.\textsuperscript{22}

In this light, Castello’s weary complaint about the overuse of Baroque music in the early 1960s is surely hyperbole. The more interesting question is why he might object. From this brief survey it is clear that Baroque music has, or is deemed to have, a


\textsuperscript{22} Anahid Kassabian, \textit{Hearing Film: Tracking Identifications in Contemporary Hollywood Film Music} (New York and London, 2001), 70.
generally reduced semiotic potential compared to the standard late Romantic paradigm of film music. And from here it is easy to see why, as Mervyn Cooke observes and Kassabian implies in her description of a ‘lack of emotion’, Baroque repertory often functions as neutral underscore. To use Michel Chion’s term, Baroque music operates anempathetically, indifferent to the image track that it accompanies. Specific formal properties of the repertory predispose Baroque instrumental music, predominant amongst them being single metre. Significantly, regular metre is a common feature in Chion’s examples of anempathetic music: ‘insouciant waltzes, light music, music played on a record player or tape recorder, street singing, the rhythmic noise of an electric fan or a mill, or the regular rhythm of waves’. Governing metres are fundamental to Baroque instrumental repertory, determined either by tempo markings like Andante and Presto, or metres such as those associated with the minuet and chaconne. Metric change is thus discovered only across movements rather than within them. On a smaller scale, an impression of musical solipsism is advanced by Baroque repertory in its preference for systematizing musical techniques such as the fugue, the sequence, and the ostinato. Functional harmony, foregrounded in continuo parts, encodes a related impression of predictability, one that is furthered by repeated scalar and arpeggiated patterns as well as by repeated rhythmic cells. Furthermore, the interlocking design of rapid individual musical lines and chugging accompaniment leaves little room for local tempo variation. Compare such features with the variable time signatures of much film music and the metrical flexibility afforded by a conductor or standard time-code measured in tenths of a second. Baroque repertory thus advances several various impressions of inevitability, of self-governing motility, and of automatism, epitomized by notions of clockwork movement, of a ‘sewing machine’ mechanism, and, as Charles Rosen notes, an impression of perpetuum mobile. Fast movements in particular, while being musically complex—flashy, to use a colloquialism—paradoxically thus provide a sense of neutrality or a seeming sense of disinterest.

Reductive as this description of Baroque music and its use in cinema is, it is nonetheless useful in helping us to situate the music in Pasolini’s first two films. Of the four common associations observed in silent-cinema musical practice, only the fourth, the popular appeal of a good tune, would seem to apply. But, as we shall see, judging from Pasolini’s comments, that does not seem to be the aim and nor was that the ground on which critics took issue with his choice of music. ‘Curiously, *Accattone* has been furnished with Bach’s music. The andante in D minor of the Second Brandenburg Concerto, that acts as a backdrop for the conversation between Stella and Vitto’, between a shot of the pimp and a long field of waiting hookers, almost feels like the fatuous pose of a snobby LP collector’.

Like Castello, the charge is one of affectation though, thankfully, Bach the Übermensch rides to the rescue: ‘instead,

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seemingly impossibly, it’s perfect. Because Bach is eternal, like the sun, the moon, the sea, the wind. It works with everything.\footnote{28} It is the tension between Bach and the depiction of street life that fosters critical anxiety. But if condemning the film is allowed, condemning Bach is not. By invoking the tropes of transcendence and timelessness, familiar refrains when it comes to Great Composers, the critic is excused from accusations of both ignorance and insensitivity. In America, the \textit{New York Times} explained the music in terms of Pasolini’s politics: ‘The sensibility of the film is religious Italian Communist. Brandenburg Concertos accompany streetwalkers and street fights and, although the film is without any humor, or power, or bitterness … Pasolini’s direction has a certain squalid lyricism.’\footnote{29} The oxymoronic ‘squalid lyricism’ exemplifies a frequent critical response, one rooted in contrast or commentary. \textit{Variety}, for example, argued that ‘Bach musical adaptation effectively counterpoints action, especially in a fight scene’, and the review in \textit{Stasera} spoke of ‘the slightly cerebral counterpoint of Bach’s music’.\footnote{30} While this last observation might be taken to refer to counterpoint in its musical-technical sense, the qualifying adjective ‘cerebral’ suggests otherwise, implying intellectual distance. Other theorists have used the word ‘counterpoint’ more colloquially: ‘Bach on the soundtrack in \textit{Accattone} ironically counterpoints the world of pimps, prostitutes, and street-fighters.’\footnote{31}

Such counterpoint, though, may arise from a more fundamental and personal disconnect rooted in the status of (recognizable) extant music.\footnote{32} That issue is raised in the 1964 film forum, where one commentator opines that extant music ineluctably draws attention to itself: ‘I am persuaded that the employment of pre-existent music, particularly if famous, and even more so if top level, cannot give results of full fusion with the film, but rather creates perplexity in the audience, which begins to wonder about the reasons that have driven the director towards that choice.’\footnote{33} More recently, Sergio Miceli has made a similar case, pointing to a developmental curve in Pasolini’s film away from the ‘naïf’ use of extant music in \textit{Accattone} and \textit{Il Vangelo}.

A universally known piece of music, endowed … with a solid identity, has an enormous referential power that is closely tied to its natural location and to its traditional use, high or low as it may be. By carrying it abruptly into the cinema, one can cause a … serious aesthetic imbalance, a disproportion … between music and image.\footnote{34}
Extant music’s ‘solid identity’ and ‘enormous referential power’ threatens to overwhelm the moving image, something that Pasolini himself acknowledged:

Obviously when I choose music for a film I unfortunately have to take it for granted that the connoisseurs of music will recognize the piece, who plays it, the recording company, and will wonder about my choice, since they won’t find it justified. However, the number of people who would feel this way would be quite small and hopefully, after the first moment, even they could overcome this feeling.\(^\text{35}\)

Pasolini is perhaps being defensive here—or it may be wishful thinking on his part—but clearly the problem applies more in the case of famous composers; more to Bach, then, and less to Vivaldi.

However, it is the disparity between the high cultural esteem in which Bach’s music is held and Western art music more generally, and the low sociocultural standing of the films’ subjects, that causes the greatest concern. As Cooke notes, Bach’s music often ‘suggest[s] class and cultural distinctions’; diegetic music played by dance bands or issuing from car radios and gramophones in *Accattone* and *Mamma Roma* highlights that contrast.\(^\text{36}\) We are in the realm of musical snobbery, whereby Bach’s music is tainted by the images it accompanies: ‘The film has not gained anything from [the music] and [Bach] has definitely lost some majesty’, objects one student at the film forum.\(^\text{37}\) It is easy to discern a fear of miscegenation in this and similar objections: Western art music is corrupted. Conspicuously, there is no equivalent criticism when Pasolini cites Masaccio as the source of his visual imagination in *Accattone* nor in the visual reference to Mantegna in *Mamma Roma* when Ettore dies.\(^\text{38}\) ‘[T]he choice of music in the class of Bach or Vivaldi already represents a contradiction with the choice of the sources of visual inspiration, since those inspirations and that music belong to two different aesthetics, quite distinct and separate.’\(^\text{39}\) That implies a logical correspondence presumably premised on the shared visual domain of classical art and cinema; music, by contrast, because of its ontological difference as sound, is sullied. But Castello, who offers this observation, does not explain how cinema, a popular art, is somehow elevated by aspirational references to classical visual arts while classical music is tainted, though once more it is Bach who rescues the situation: ‘Bach could never fail, speaking directly to the sensibility and not to the intellect.’\(^\text{40}\)

Pasolini shows that he understands the issue, albeit with the benefit of hindsight. In addition to his comment cited above about Vivaldi’s more popular appeal, in an interview with Oswald Stack (aka Jon Halliday), he notes the alleviating effect of using the music of a lesser-known composer:

I think what scandalized them in *Accattone* was the mixture of the violent Roman subproletariat with the music of Bach, whereas in *Mamma Roma* there is a different kind of combination which is less shocking—ordinary people who are trying to be petit bourgeois with the music

\(^{35}\) Pasolini et al., ‘Epical-Religious’, 40.

\(^{36}\) Cooke, *A History*, 452.


\(^{38}\) ‘When I was making [*Accattone*] the only author I thought of directly was Masaccio’; Oswald Stack, *Pasolini on Pasolini* (Bloomington, Ind., 1969), 43. For more on the relationship between Pasolini’s films and the visual arts, see Alberto Marchesini, *Citazioni pittoriche nel cinema di Pasolini (da Accattone al Decameron)* (Florence, 1994), 13–22 (on *Accattone*) and 23–34 (on *Mamma Roma*).

\(^{39}\) Pasolini et al., ‘Epical-Religious’, 39

\(^{40}\) Ibid.

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of Vivaldi, which is much more Italian and is based on popular music, so the contamination is much less violent and shocking.41

Contamination here has a very particular (and non-pejorative) meaning that I will explore in the next section, but the more arresting detail here is Bach’s exceptionalism. When writing, Pasolini preferred to listen to Bach’s music, together with Vivaldi’s, and he was familiar with many of their works.42 Pasolini had also studied violin as a child, and a friendship in his early twenties with the violinist Pina Kalč led him to craft an essay on Bach’s three violin sonatas and three partitas sometime in 1944–5 that demonstrates a knowledge of musical history, theory, and notation.43 Unpublished during his lifetime, the ‘Studi sullo stile di Bach’ is best considered as an example of youthful exploration, more interesting as an emerging aesthetic of poetry than as musical commentary.44 Taking as its starting point what he sees as a major difference between the slow movement of the Sonata No. 1 in G minor (BWV 1001), the Siciliana, and the Prelude of the final partita, Partita No. 3 in E major (BWV 1006), Pasolini characterizes the former as a frenzied melodrama. The Siciliana is ‘a dramatic song, completely unexpected, with sudden onsets, dry, stagnant, raw, with unexpected returns and regrets; and nostalgia; and reminders; and disruptions; and outbursts; an almost-psychological drama.’45 The dialogue between the sighing refrain and its accompaniment is seen not as congruent but unconnected. Overall, and in the context of the sonata itself, it is difficult to reconcile the Siciliana’s essentially light and positive contrast to the musical complexity of surrounding movements with Pasolini’s overwrought description.46 And indeed, though the essay is passionately expressed, he himself may have realized the limits of his musical analysis. Later in life, he was certainly considerably less self-confident of his musical knowledge, even entrusting the choice of some repertory for Accattone to a friend, the poet Elsa Morante.47 Brill, though, is surely right to describe Pasolini’s modesty as disingenuous, but it is also the case that Pasolini frequently proclaims musical ignorance and paints with much broader brushstrokes: ‘I’ve taken Bach not for its specific historical significance, but rather as Music with a capital “M” insofar as for me, musically ignorant as I am, Bach truly is music in the absolute sense, able to give forth that sense of religiousness and that epic quality.’48

41 Stack, Pasolini, 52–3.
42 Schwartz, Pasolini Requiem, 251.
43 Ibid. 131.
44 For an account in such terms, see Alessandra Carnevale. ‘Studi sullo stile di Bach di Pier Paolo Pasolini’, De Musica, 9 (2005), 1–43. It is also available as a download here: http://users.unimi.it/gpiana/IX/carnevale.htm (accessed 21 Nov. 2020). Carnevale’s article includes the full text of Pasolini’s essay, which is elsewhere published as Pier Paolo Pasolini, ‘Studi sullo stile di Bach [1944–45]’ in Saggi sulla letteratura e sull’arte, ed. W. Siti and Silvia De Laude, i (Milan, 1999), 77–90.
45 un canto drammatico, tutto imprevisto, con aperture improvvisse, secco, stagnante, crudo, con inopinati ritorni e pentimenti; e nostalgia; e richiami; e pause; e sfoghi; una drammaticità quasi psicologica’; ibid. 82. My translation.
46 For example, ‘[t]he Siciliana lightens the serious tone that prevails in the other movements of the G-minor Sonata’. Joel Lester, Bach’s Works for Solo Violin: Style, Structure, Performance (Oxford, 1999), 87.
47 According to an on-set interview. Elsa Morante was responsible for the earliest of the musical choices and possibly for later ones too. The film will have background music by Bach, yet to be chosen, with the exception of the last, which has been fixed as the prelude to the Actus tragicus (also by Bach), at the suggestion of Elsa Morante ‘Il film si averra di un sottofondo musicale tratto da Bach e ancora da scegliere, salvo che per il finale, gia stabilito con il preludio all’Actus tragicus, (sempre di Bach) consigliato da Elsa Morante’. My translation. Cited by Luciano De Giusti in the Introduction, ‘Preludio della Passione secondo Pasolini’ (9–46) of Accattone: L’esordio di Pier Paolo Pasolini raccontato dai documenti, ed. Luciano de Giusti and Roberto Chiesi (Bologna-Pordenone, 2015), 32.
clearly an exceptional composer for Pasolini, but an explanation for the use of Bach’s music in Accattone will not be found in his musical commentaries. In order to understand the rationale for the use of Bach and Vivaldi it is necessary to explore Pasolini’s aesthetics in greater detail.

**PASOLINI’S AESTHETICS**

Though the modern setting and anachronistic music of Les Enfants terribles and Pickpocket would at first sight seem to be important precedents for Pasolini, he owed little, if anything, to either film. Nor was he interested in a more general interrogation of narrative cinema’s sound–image correlations or in textual politics more generally. As noted above, he did not consider himself to be a neorealist, nor were his films influenced by the emerging French New Wave. It is abundantly clear that Pasolini regretted any experience of disconnection that a spectator might experience, and that he chose Vivaldi’s less culturally charged music for Mamma Roma to promote integration between image and music.

From the range of Pasolini’s extensive writings it is possible to outline three broad theoretical strategies that underpin his filmo-musical aesthetic. The first draws on common conceptions of narrative film music; the second borrows from literary theory; and the third, informed by Pasolini’s politics, relates to a specific notion of sacredness.

To begin with the most conventional, Pasolini explains the disposition of musical cues in Accattone in terms of themes, characters, and relationships. This integrationist method, a common film-music approach, is often somewhat loosely described as leitmotivic, though Pasolini prefers the term motivic. The second of Pasolini’s three strategies draws on and develops the work of the German philologist Erich Auerbach’s theory of contamination, ‘the dominant stylistic factor’ in Pasolini’s own novels and a literary procedure that he transposed to cinema. Contamination refers to the mingling of dialects and idiolects, something Auerbach discovers in the Christian Gospels and Pasolini discovers in Dante. The result is an amalgamation of literary discourse and street language, most commonly found in free indirect discourse (sometimes known as free indirect speech), where the slang and idioms of a (low) social class rub alongside more decorous third-person narration. Speaking of Accattone, Pasolini identifies three distinct linguistic strata: the direct speech of the characters who, as members of the underclass, often speak in local dialect and vulgar slang—‘the interior monologue of my characters’; a more refined or at least more crafted framing of

49 James Wierzbicki points out that film-music studies have tended to conflate leitmotif and theme, the former being properly a smaller musical element from which themes will often be developed. See James Wierzbicki, *Film Music: A History* (New York, 2009), 144.

50 Pasolini et al., ‘Epical-Religious’, 42. Arguably, the intermixing of high and low cultures reaches its high point in Pasolini’s Trilogy of Life, i.e. Il Decameron (1970), I racconti di Canterbury (1972), and Il fiore delle Mille e una notte (1974).


speech; and the narrative level itself. However, for Pasolini contamination is not limited to speech or writing but includes ‘material borrowed from different cultural sectors: borrowings from dialects, popular verses, popular or classical music, references to pictorial art and architecture’. The reader of the New Testament or Dante is not distracted by, or even consciously aware of, the commingling of discourses; it requires an analyst such as Auerbach or Pasolini to excavate these different levels. By extension, Pasolini believes that classical music in the form of Bach and Vivaldi is a hidden mode of writing or, perhaps better, a mode of writing amongst others that remains unperceived by the spectator.

The third and perhaps most important of Pasolini’s explications is his conception of the sacred:

In Accattone I wanted to represent the degraded and humble human condition of a character that lives in the mud and dust of the Roman borgate. I felt, I knew that in this degradation there was something sacred, something religious in an undefined and universal sense of the word, and so I added this adjective, ‘sacred’, through the music. I said that Accattone’s degradation is, yes, degradation, but a degradation somewhat sacred, and I used Bach to explain my intentions to a vast audience.

Apparent here is Pasolini’s personal and somewhat romantic version of (Gramscian) Marxism: he discovers in the lives of the underclass a nobility and dignity that bourgeois culture otherwise denies them. The central conception of the sacred is considerably more complex. Theorists have traced both its philosophical genealogy and the part it plays in Pasolini’s creative output to the influence of diverse writers such as the Romanian historian of religion Mircea Eliade and the Italian anthropologist Ernesto De Martino. The sacred, according to Pasolini, while connected to Christian religion through manifest themes in his poetry, novels, and films, pre-dates Christianity and can still be found in earthbound, non-technical societies. Summarizing an interview with Pasolini conducted by Jean Duflot in 1969, Stefania Benini puts it thus: ‘The sacred imagined by Pasolini is a spontaneous, “anarchic,” noninstitutional sacred, a “forza del Passato” (force of the Past) that is identified with the “senso della terra” (sense of the earth) and the relationship with nature developed by ancient agrarian civilizations.’ In this light, Ettore’s move from the ‘ancient agrarian’ Friuli to Rome in Mamma Roma, the same geographical relocation that Pasolini himself undertook, is a deliberately nostalgic dramatization of the director’s rediscovery of the sacred and the (technological) profane in the Roman borgate. The sacred for Pasolini is, then, part of an essentialist philosophy, one that constantly vies with his bourgeois education:

When I consider things, I have a rational, critical attitude, learned from the secular, bourgeois, and then Marxist culture. There is a continuous critical exercise by my reason upon

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55 For a useful overview including a historiography of Pasolini’s notion of the sacred in more recent literature see Stefania Benini Pasolini: The Sacred Flesh (Toronto, 2015), especially ch. 1, ‘The Sense of the Sacred’, 18–51.
56 Ibid. 22. The full interview was published in Duflot, Entretiens.
the things of the world, but my true perspective, the most ancient and archaic one, with which I was born and which was shaped by early childhood and which is therefore my original disposition, is a sacred view of things. I see the world as almost all who have a poetic vocation see it: as a miraculous and almost-sacred fact, and nothing can violate [literally, de-sacralize] this original predisposition of mine. Thus Accattone mirrored this sacred way of seeing things through a sacred, religious technique.\(^{57}\)

The words ‘sacred’ and ‘religious’, then, are broadly descriptive and we must reject any implication of organized religion. We otherwise can make no sense of Pasolini’s equivalent use of the words in the context of his account of film style. For example, he identifies the ‘sacred, religious techniques’ of Accattone as frontal close-ups of faces, simple frontal tracking shots, and brief pans. These constitute ‘a hieratic, sacred process’.\(^{58}\) Elsewhere he writes ‘[t]here is nothing more technically sacred than a slow panning shot’.\(^{59}\) Pasolini here outlines a simplicity and clarity of expression, a documentarism with no connection to Christianity and explicable only by reference to his very specific notion of the sacred. Like framing and camera movement, music is also part of his method, merely another component of film style: music’s more specific Christian associations are irrelevant; it is music’s more universal and abstract properties that he wishes to exploit.

Taken together, Pasolini’s three explanations—the motif, contamination, and, in particular, the sacred—push us away from the more specific and distracting Christian connotations of Bach’s music and towards an understanding of the music of Accattone and Mamma Roma based on technical properties instead. To test this, we will now look at the operation of music in both films in greater detail.

BAROQUE MUSIC AND FILM FORM IN ACCATTONE AND MAMMA ROMA

Four years after its release, Pasolini described his approach to filming Accattone as both naive and uncomplicated.\(^{60}\) He used a small camera, an Arriflex, commonly employed by documentarists; his compositions of close-ups were symmetrical, frontal, and frontally lit, and alternated with long shots, pans, and dolly shots. He cited Carl Theodor Dreyer’s


\[^{58}\] ‘un andamento ieratico, sacra’; ibid. 212.

\[^{59}\] ‘Non c’è niente di più tecnicamente sacro che una lenta panoramica’; ‘Confessione Tecniche’, in Uccellacci e Uccellini (Milan, 1966) repr. in Siti and Zabaghi, Per il cinema, 2768. Pasolini is possibly referencing the debate about the relationship between film form and morality initiated by Luc Moullet, Jean-Luc Godard, and Jacques Rivette. Moullet, writing of Sam Fuller, declared that ‘morality is a question of tracking shots’ (‘la morale est affaire de travel-lings’), a formulation that Godard, speaking of Hiroshima, mon amour (Alain Resnais, 1959), inverted: ‘[t]ravelling shots are an issue of morality’ (‘Les travellings sont affaire de morale’). Both comments were published in Cahiers du cinéma: Luc Moullet, ‘Sam Fuller: sur les brises de Marlowe’, 93, (Mar. 1959) and Jean Domarchi, Jacques Doniol-Valcroze, Jean-Luc Godard, Pierre Kast, Jacques Rivette, and Éric Rohmer, ‘Table ronde sur Hiroshima, mon amour d’Alain Resnais’, Cahiers du cinéma, 97 [July 1959]. The essays can be found in Cahiers du Cinéma: The 1950s, ed. Jim Hillier (London, 1983), 143–57 and 53–9 respectively. Jacques Rivette referenced the essays in a famous review of Kapò (Gillo Pontecorvo, 1960), published as ‘De l’Abjection’, Cahiers du cinéma, 120 (June 1962), 54–5.

\[^{60}\] ‘Because I lacked technical knowledge, I reduced everything to extreme simplicity’ (‘Perché non conoscevo la tecnica e quindi ho ridotto tutto a un’estrema semplicità’). De Giusti and Chiesi, Accattone: L’esordio, 210. My translation.
films of ‘fifteen or twenty years ago’, presumably *Vredens Dag* (1943), which makes regular use of gentle tracking-and-panning shots, though elsewhere he cites *La Passion de Jeanne d’Arc* (1928) as a model: ‘If you analyze Accattone you’ll see that Dreyer’s *Passion de Jeanne d’Arc* has influenced me by giving me the sense of the close-up, the sense of figurative severity.’ Whichever of Dreyer’s films he is referencing, the style is discernible: the opening shot of *Accattone* is a close-up of a flower-seller’s raddled visage and though most of the shots in the short scene that follows are medium close-ups rather than close-ups, here and throughout the film the camera is preoccupied with faces. Other germane features are dolly shots (particularly of Vittorio walking), and contextual, panning long shots of the *borgate* and surrounding waste land. *Mamma Roma* retains all of these elements save for the concentration on the human face. A frontal orientation obtains, and though the earlier film makes frequent use of travelling camera shots, there is none as self-consciously ‘actorly’ as the long dollies of *Mamma Roma* walking through the streets at night, bantering with all-comers and indulging in some amateur philosophizing. While the later film is very much a vehicle for Anna Magnani, her central character shares more screen time with her son than comparative peripheral characters in *Accattone*, affording cross-cutting between locales, most notably in the affecting finale.

The music for both films is supplied from extant recordings. Inevitably this imposes certain constraints. Cues cannot be lengthened or shortened in a studio setting by a conductor, or edited at the level of the score. In practice, this means excisions and repetitions on both a small and large scale, or the use of fades in and out. In the main, *Accattone* opts for the former, with over half the cues aligning the beginnings and ends of musical movements with scenes or segments. This produces strange and sometimes musically illogical cuts, angrily described as ‘brutal’ by Sergio Miceli. In the credit sequence, for example, editing eliminates the choral sections of ‘Wir setzen uns mit Tränen nieder’ to produce a stately instrumental sarabande with the (false) promised formal coherence of an ABA structure (bb. 1–12, 25–36, and 1–3). Those who know the work will undoubtedly anticipate the full chorus entry at bar 13, aurally signposted by the rising quavers in the bass line. In the film’s final scenes, the Andante from the Second Brandenburg Concerto, which, at the recorded tempo, lasts around four-and-a-half minutes, repeats long sections and also on occasion excises single beats to produce a total running time of 6 minutes and 48 seconds (1:48:17–1:55:05). *Accattone* therefore suggests a process where the image track is edited first, the duration of the music determined, then the music made to ‘fit’. The approach in *Mamma Roma* is somewhat different. Rather than music being cut or internally edited, movements fade out under sirens or shouts. Indeed, sound design generally plays a larger role than in *Accattone*. Only once in *Accattone* is such potential exploited: a quick artificial increase in musical volume in scene 71 that cuts to sudden silence for the pursuant

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61 Pasolini et al., ‘Epical-Religious’, 42. Pasolini took Tonino Delli Colli, his cinematographer, to a screening of *La Passion de Jeanne d’Arc*, the purpose of which was ‘to have a model, since he couldn’t manage to explain to me what he wanted’. Quoted in Antonio Bertini, *Teoria e tecnica del film in Pasolini* (Rome, 1979), 20.


63 Meredith Little and Natalie Jenne identify seven characteristics of the sarabande: triple metre; serious affect; slow tempo; balanced $4 + 4$ phrase structure; characteristic rhythmic patterns; complex harmonies; and solostico. For more, see Meredith Little and Natalie Jenne, *Dance and the Music of J. S. Bach: Extended Edition* (Bloomington, Ind., 2001), ch. 7: The Sarabande, 96–113.

64 In scene 76 of *Accattone* there are cuts of two beats: beats 1 and 2 of bar 34; beats 2 and 3 of bar 36; and beats 1 and 2 of bar 37, all of which disrupt the metrical organization of anacrusis and downbeats. On two occasions the men’s laughter conceals the cut.
dream sequence. Music is also more obviously lower in the mix in *Mamma Roma* to allow dialogue to be heard, and correlatively present elsewhere. While fade-outs might suggest disrespect for the original music, the opposite is actually true; musical form and integrity are generally maintained.

Both films follow a motivic approach, summarized in Tables 1 and 2. However, Pasolini’s musico-motivic design for *Accattone* and some of his explanations present several challenges:

I had chosen two or three motifs from Bach: one was the ‘motif of love’ that always appeared in the relationships between Accattone and Stella; another, which was the Passion according to St Matthew, represented the motif of death and was the dominant motif (a more or less redeemed death); then there was the Actus Tragicus, which was the reason for the ‘mysterious evil’ and I used it when Accattone steals the chain from his son [and] when we see Amore [one of Vittorio’s prostitutes] in prison.\(^{65}\)

The correlation of musical theme with onscreen relationships is inconsistent and Pasolini’s description of ‘mysterious evil’ in particular is unhelpfully opaque. Furthermore, he makes no mention at all of the Adagio from Bach’s First Brandenburg Concerto, which occurs in two scenes: when Vittorio visits Maddalena at his former marital home, occupied by his wife and children; and in a later scene, where he berates Stella, his new love, accusing her of betraying him by sleeping with a client to whom he had introduced her. Giuseppe Magaletta relates this theme to Vittorio’s role as a pimp—‘il ruolo di pappone’\(^{66}\)—though elsewhere he argues that it signals Stella’s displacement of Maddalena in Vittorio’s affections.\(^{67}\) But the more consistent thread seems to be that of domesticity: Maddalena displaces Vittorio’s wife, and the subsequent argument between Vittorio and Stella revolves around familiar tropes of the restrictions on freedom, the loss of wealth, and the imposition of duty that a committed relationship entails (‘Before I met you ... I had a car and plenty of money ... and everything I wanted.’ ‘I’m not letting anybody drink my blood. Work?’).

Thematic function is similarly confused in the case of the other slow movement, the Andante from the Second Brandenburg Concerto. Initially it serves as an understated underscoring when Vittorio meets Stella, and on the second occasion it illustrates his incipient love for her. In long shot, Vittorio looks off-screen left (see Pl. 1). We cut to a long shot of Stella (Pl. 2) during which sighing strains of recorder, oboe, and violin begin, then back to him, now in medium shot (Pl. 3). He walks backwards while the camera tracks towards him, a simpler version of the famous Hitchcock shot from *Vertigo*, where a dolly-zoom distorts perspective. Again, we cut back to her, firmly marking her as the object of his look, before we cut back to him as he turns to run back to the bar (Pl. 5).

\(^{65}\)‘Li [in *Accattone*] avevo scelto due o tre motivi da Bach: uno era il “motivo d’amore” che appariva sempre nei rapporti fra Accattone e Stella; un altro, che era La Passione secondo S. Matteo, rappresentava il motivo della morte ed era il motivo dominante, (una morte più o meno redenta); poi c’era l’Actus Tragicus che era il motivo del “male misterioso” e l’ho impiegato nel momento in cui Accattone ruba la catenella al figlio, nel momento in cui Amore fa la spia in prigione.’ Quoted in Magrelli, *Con Pier Paolo Pasolini*, 50–1. My translation.


\(^{67}\)‘[T]he next meeting and conversation with Stella, Pasolini underscores with the Adagio from the first Brandenburg Concerto, which had accompanied the images of Accattone with Maddalena. Stella, in reality, is the new Maddalena, her substitute’ (‘[L’incontro successivo con Stella e il dialogo con lei, Pasolini lo sostiene con l’Adagio dal primo Concerto Brandeburghese, quello che aveva supportato le immagini di Accattone con Maddalena. Stella, infatti, è la nuova Maddalena, la sua sostituta’). Giuseppe Magaletta, *Pier Paolo Pasolini: Le opere, la musica, la cultura*, ii: *Cinema* (Foggia, 2010), 372. My translation.
### Table 1  Pasolini’s motivic design for *Accattone*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pasolini’s description (Magrelli, Con Pier Paolo Pasolini, 50–1)</th>
<th>Subject/relationship</th>
<th>Music (all by Bach)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>‘the “motif of love” that always appeared in the relationships between Accattone and Stella’</td>
<td>Love motif/Stella and Vittorio</td>
<td>Brandenburg Concerto No. 2 in F major (BWV 1047). Second movement: Andante</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘The Passion according to St Matthew represented the motif of death and was the dominant motif (a more or less redeemed death)’</td>
<td>Death motif</td>
<td>St Matthew Passion (BWV 244), final chorus, ‘Wir setzen uns mit Tränen nieder’¹</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘the Actus Tragicus which was the reason for the “mysterious evil” and I used it when Accattone steals the chain from his son [and] when we see Amore in prison’</td>
<td>Mysterious Evil</td>
<td>Sonatina from the sacred cantata ‘Gottes Zeit ist die allerbeste Zeit’ (BWV 106), ‘Actus Tragicus’²</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No reference made by Pasolini</td>
<td>Maddalena and Vittorio</td>
<td>Brandenburg Concerto No. 1 in F major (BWV 1046), second movement: Adagio</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹ The recording of the Passion was made in 1953 and issued by Westminster Records, conducted by Hermann Scherchen with the Vienna State Opera Orchestra and the Vienna Academy Chorus: Westminster WAI 401 (1955), LP.
² The recording is of the combined forces of the Choir and Baroque Ensemble of the Bach Guild and the Vienna State Opera Orchestra and Choir, conducted by Felix Prohaska, first released as Bach Guild BG-537 (1954), LP, and subsequently reissued as Vanguard SRV-290 (1969), LP, and Bach Guild HM-21 (1972), LP.

### Table 2  Pasolini’s motivic design for *Mamma Roma*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pasolini’s description (Siti and Zabagli, Pasolini per il Cinema, 2826)</th>
<th>Relationship</th>
<th>Music (all by Vivaldi)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>‘motif of death’</td>
<td>Mamma Roma/ Ettore</td>
<td>Concerto for viola d’amore and lute in D minor (RV 540), second movement: Largo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘motif of destiny’</td>
<td>Mamma Roma/ Carmine</td>
<td>Concerto for flautino in C major (RV 443), second movement: Largo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘sensual love’</td>
<td>Ettore/Bruna</td>
<td>Concerto for bassoon in D minor (RV 481), second movement: Larghetto¹</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹ The Larghetto from Vivaldi’s Concerto for bassoon in D minor (RV 481) is with the Orchestre de la Suisse Romande conducted by Ernest Ansermet; the soloist is Henri Helaerts. It was first released as SAR643-45 (1952), LP, and in the following year as London LS 591 on Decca LX 3100 (1953), LP.
Music, visual composition, camera movement, and editing here define Vittorio’s psychological state, with soft woodwind and strings deployed as conventional signifiers of empathy and vulnerability. However, in the long sequence at the end of the film when Vittorio, Balilla, and Cartagine draw a cart around the streets of Rome, the same music is used. One can propose a reading of the men’s venture as Vittorio’s sacrificial act for Stella, the closest thing to a job he is ever going to get, and, indeed, the long, edited-and-looped musical sequence comes to an end exactly as he utters ‘Stella mia’.

P. 1–5. Scene 30: Vittorio espies Stella for the first time (all screenshots from Accattone reproduced by kind permission of Eureka Entertainment)
But the seven-minute sequence, the longest in the film, involves much more than this fleeting reference to Stella, incorporating base comedy (the three men laughing about Cartagine’s smelly feet) and suspense (cuts to extreme close-ups of eyes observing the men’s actions), while also fulfilling a transitional function, binding together the various scenes of the plotting and botched execution of a robbery.

The use of the final chorus of Bach’s St Matthew Passion is more convoluted still. It is first heard during the credit sequence where the film’s title is followed by names of cast and crew in black classical serif typeface on a mute grey background.\(^{68}\) Like Pasolini’s later films, music orients and announces both the first scene and the film more generally. In \textit{Il Decameron} (1970), for example, we hear \textit{La zita in cerca di un marito} (\textit{The Maid in Search of a Husband}), a Neapolitan folksong from a modern play in the commedia dell’arte tradition, \textit{Zesa Viola}; and in his final film, \textit{Salo o le 120 giornate di Sodoma} (1976), the music we hear is the savagely ironic \textit{Son tanto tristo}, a sleazy, dinner-jazz-inflected arrangement, conducted by Ennio Morricone.\(^{69}\) In \textit{Accattone}, Bach’s chorus is allied to a quotation from Dante (see Plate 6), clearly establishing the terrain of an arthouse movie, with music an assertion of commentative authorial presence.\(^{70}\)

A contrast with the more explicit use of the same music in the credit sequence of a more recent film, \textit{Casino} (Martin Scorsese, 1995), is instructive. Rather than the impassive, pre-diegetic presentation of \textit{Accattone}, \textit{Casino}’s entire (Saul and Elaine Bass-designed) credit sequence emerges from and engages with diegetic space, erupting from a shot of an exploding car, throwing its occupant, Sam Rothstein (Robert De Niro), across the screen in an engulfing ball of flame. The explosion coincides with the full choral entry (the point of Pasolini’s first cut at b. 13), overtly invoking religiosity, while the garish images of neon signs and hellish conflagration suggest the profane and also Old Testament vengeance.\(^{71}\) Bach’s music in \textit{Casino} thus functions as analogical irony rather than signifying the bestowal of redeeming grace—Vittorio’s ‘more or less redeemed death’—that is promised in \textit{Accattone}.\(^{72}\)

\(^{68}\) Such presentation sets the template of nearly all of Pasolini’s subsequent films, \textit{Medea} (1969) being an exception, its credits superimposed over a landscape.

\(^{69}\) Over sounds of a crowd, a male voice sings ‘E a voi, giovanotti, quando v’accasate aprite gli occhi! Int’agli occhi ngi guardate e vedete che mossa fa’ (‘And you, young men, When you marry, keep your eyes open! Look well into her eyes, And see what kind she is!’). This is followed by a refrain played on brass band with prominent cymbals. The track appears in full on \textit{Italian Folk Songs}, v. Naples and Campania, released in the USA on Folkways Ethnic records, FE 4265 (1972), LP. Presumably the track must have appeared in an earlier pressing though I have not been able to discover it.

\(^{70}\) ‘There is also intellectualism, certainly, in \textit{Accattone}; some verses of Dante’s Purgatory used as epigraphs, Bach’s music, which comments soberly on vulgar laughter, the protagonist’s dream of death obviously inspired by Bergman (even if the themes of death and the afterlife weigh on this world of the hungry from the outset), the impressive anthology of dialects’ (‘C’è anche dell’intellettualismo, sì, in \textit{Accattone}; alcuni versi del Purgatorio dantesco posti a epigrafe, le musiche di Bach che commentano gravemente le rise de la volgarità, il sogno di morte del protagonista visibilmente ispirato a Bergman (anche se il senso della morte e dell’aldilà pesa dall’inizio su questo mondo di affamati), l’impressionante florilegio dialettale’). Ugo Casiraghi, ‘Un lacrimoso melodramma americano e la cruda “opera prima” di Pasolini’, \textit{L’Unita}, 1 Sept. 1961. My translation.

\(^{71}\) The full structure is: b. 13 to b. 50 last beat; cut to last beat of b. 59, thence to the beginning of b. 68. A unison D in chorus and orchestra is overlaid with the first beat and a half of b. 20, a chord of B flat. From here the music plays through to b. 52, where it fades under street noise of Las Vegas, including a car horn. The recording Scorsese uses is by the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Sir Georg Solti on Decca, 421 177–2.

\(^{72}\) Images of religiosity abound in the opening ten minutes. A shot of five mobsters at a table recalls Leonardo’s \textit{Last Supper} (described by Scorsese on the DVD commentary as ‘pagan gods’); Las Vegas is described in Sam Rothstein’s voiceover as a ‘paradise on earth [that] washes away your sins’; a helicopter shot of the desert suggests the wilderness where Christ is tempted; and the count room is ‘the most sacred . . . the holy of holies’. ‘I thought it would be more interesting to blast it and have the sense of the music that is sacred music, in a sense. Sacred music, Saint Matthew Passion. Sacred music which is the soundtrack for a story about people who are profane because the
Seven other iterations of the Bach chorus occur during Accattone, the most strikingly untethered of which accompanies the fight between Vittorio and his brother-in-law. The implied promise of the choral entry denied by earlier edits is finally fulfilled: ‘We sit down in tears / And call to thee in the tomb: / Rest softly, softly rest!’ (Wir setzen uns mit Tränen nieder / Und rufen dir im Grabe zu: / Ruhe sanfte, sanfte ruh!). It is difficult, though, to discover any correlation between the chorus’s plea for peace and Vittorio’s obvious machismo. Given his acceptance of his fate at the end of the film, is the music a prefiguring of his immolation? There is, however, never any real sense of danger in a fight that is more a homoerotic grappling in the dust than a struggle to the death.

Similarly frustrated is a search for significance or symbolism in the use of the same chorus in instrumental form in an earlier scene, when four Neapolitans entice Maddalena into their car. The leader of the gang, Salvatore, turns around from the front passenger seat to speak to her. As he does so, we once more hear bars 1–13, with three beats removed (from the middle of b. 9 to the middle of b. 10), an iteration of the ‘sanfte ruh’ phrase. The music is unquestionably non-diegetic—no one switches on a car radio or in any way acknowledges the music, and the volume level is, to the spectator, the same as that of the dialogue, which, if diegetic, would require the characters to shout over it.

If the chorus symbolizes death, then whose? Magaletta argues that it is Salvatore’s: ‘The music highlights the sense of death that the Neapolitan represents, his tragedy is equal to that of Accattone.’ Whether or not that is the case, the theme migrates to

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Pt. 6. Quotation from Dante

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\[\ldots\] l’angel di Dio mi prese, e quel d’inferno gridava: "O tu del Ciel, perché mi privi?\]

Tu te ne porti di costui l’eterno

\*per una lacrimetta che’l mi toglie \*\ldots\]

Dante, *Purgatorio*, Canto V

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\footnote{134}{La musica ne rileva il senso di morte che rappresenta il Napoletano, la sua tragedia è parte pari a quella di Accattone'; Magaletta, *Pier Paolo Pasolini: Le opere*, ii. 366. My translation.}
Maddalena in the next scene. As the Neapolitans and she drive off in long shot, the music is drowned out by the sound of the car. We cut to waste ground and one of the men and Maddalena go behind the rocks together to have sex. When they return, Salvatore switches on the car headlights, temporarily blinding Maddalena, then the four men begin to beat her. We cut to a long shot from the waste ground of the city at night and Bach’s music returns, mixed with the sounds of fists landing on a body and Maddalena’s cries. We cut back to a shot of the beating, then the men climb into the car and drive off, leaving Maddalena on the ground. Again, there is no real sense that a life is in danger. These are petty criminals, not murderers; the beating is an act of symbolic revenge, a sign to Vittorio. Lino Miccichè broadens the theme of death into ‘virtual or real violence; and death’. But, like the fight scene, music does not so much bear symbolic meaning as provide affective support. As Maddalena lies on the ground, the ‘Ruhe sanfte, sanfte ruh’ plays twice over three shots (see Plates 7, 8, and 9): a medium shot of Maddalena lying on the ground, feet towards us; a close-up of her hand-bag; and a close-up of her shoe, a plangent phrasing that produces a musical gesture of sympathy, irrespective of the (absent, if implied) German text.

The final cue in Pasolini’s schema is the Sonatina from Bach’s Cantata Gottes Zeit ist die allerbeste Zeit, which Pasolini claims denotes ‘mysterious evil’. The theme is used on three occasions: first, when Vittorio steals his son’s necklace; second, when Amore is arrested by the police; and finally, when Amore arrives in prison and meets Maddalena again. In the first case, ‘mysterious evil’ can be related to a notion of Christian predestination and even original sin. The scene is charged with references to Christ’s passion—Vittorio’s betrayal of his son, the Judas-like kiss he provides as diversion when he steals the necklace, the resigned acceptance of divine destiny (‘the things I have to do’). There are, however, no such resonances in the later scenes in which it occurs. Magaletta reaches for the specific history of the cantata, written for a funeral during Bach’s years at Mühlhausen (1707–8): ‘Pasolini uses this sonatina in appropriate manner whereby Accattone’s gesture is that of a man who is waiting to die and who has no future: here is the funereal attribute of the actus tragicus.’ The act of stealing the necklace may well be that of ‘that of a man who waits to die, who has no future’, but Magaletta provides no explanation as to how Amore’s arrest and sojourn in prison can be reconciled with this interpretation. Miccichè offers something different still: ‘Theme: the betrayal (of Accattone towards Jaio [his son], of the Sacristan towards Amore, of Accattone towards Maddalena), but in an understated and undramatic sense.’ The explanation of betrayal in the second of these scenes, however, stretches the point, something that Miccichè acknowledges. Pasolini’s poetic design is once again elusive. The one consistent factor is musical affect: the quiet recorder duet provides an air of tragedy and, by extension, sympathy for Vittorio when he steals the necklace, and the music invokes pity for Amore when she is arrested and jailed.

With Mamma Roma we immediately discover a more coherent and consistent music-filmic design. There is also a greater uniformity of musical material than in Accattone,
Pls. 7–9. Maddalena, her handbag, and her shoe

Pls. 10–12. Vittorio and Stella converse, and Stella stops to explain her past
with all three cues coming from slow movements of Vivaldi’s solo concerti. Once again music broadly expresses sympathy for his sub-proletarian characters—even the emotional blackmailer Carmine is underscored with a gentle theme played on a delicate wind instrument, the flautino (piccolo on the recording used). The bassoon, not an instrument traditionally associated with love, comes to express Ettore’s puppyish infatuation with Bruna, and the viola d’amore draws on obvious cultural associations to augment the film’s central relationship, that of Mamma Roma and Ettore. Pasolini himself offers no account of his design, but Siti and Zabagli provide a convincing taxonomy wherein sensual love, death, and destiny relate unambiguously to the film’s central relationships (see Table 2 above). The motivic schema is both cleaner and less ambitious than Accattone. Only once is there any thematic confusion and even that is easy to explain. It occurs in scene 37, where Ettore learns that his mother is a prostitute. The music used there, the concerto for viola d’amore and lute, had earlier been unambiguously linked to Carmine and Mamma Roma. Though Carmine and Mamma Roma are absent, the music references them, operating as a cruel commentary on the new alignment of Ettore’s feelings for his mother, which echo the contempt that Carmine feels for his ex-wife.

The simple explanation for all of this is that Accattone was Pasolini’s first film and he learned from his mistakes. Indeed, he acknowledged as much in the film forum: ‘[p]ossibly I made a mistake’ he said about the use of Bach. Nevertheless the motivic schemas of both films, useful as they are as precis, are limited. We must also follow the clue that Pasolini’s turning to Vivaldi provides and consider the music of both Accattone and Mamma Roma as representatives of a historico-musical style, a self-absorbed and, relatively speaking, abstract musical mode that, if about anything at all, is about itself. And in this context it is worth noting that the instrumental works that Pasolini chose for Mamma Roma are unencumbered by the programmatic design of some of Vivaldi’s more popular works. All of this invites us to focus more the music’s formal properties whose deployment with the moving image is at times striking.

A case in point is the choral entry from the final chorus of the St Matthew Passion in Accattone. It is withheld for most the film and when it is finally heard it is synchronized exactly with the first clash of bodies in the fight scene. A stinger such as this is a condensed moment of filmo-musical alignment, and used only occasionally in film precisely because it draws attention to musical form. For similar reasons, in conventional film-music practice, music tends to be faded out or end on unresolved chords, maintaining a sense of anticipation and forward ‘narrative’ movement, allowing music to depart unnoticed. The resolution of tonal tension otherwise invites the spectator to contemplate the significance of harmonic culmination and ensuing silence. In Accattone, however, half of the cues align musical cadences with the ends of scenes or segments. An interesting example of this is scene 63, where Vittorio and Stella are walking past empty waste ground. The music, the Andante from the Second Brandenburg Concerto, begins in the previous scene when the couple are talking in front of a church (1:08:32).

78 Siti and Zabagli, Per il Cinema, 2826.
80 See, for example, Peter Larsen’s rereading of Raymond Bellour’s analysis of twelve shots from The Big Sleep (Howard Hawks, 1946), which shows how the music delivers the spectator into the next scene, creating a thirteen-shot sequence. Peter Larsen, Film Music (London, 2007), 118.
We cut to a shot of waste ground (1:09:28) and the camera pans from right to left to reveal a young boy, hanging on an empty oil drum (see Pl. 10). Stella stops to talk (Pl. 11); she needs to tell Vittorio everything about herself ‘so he doesn’t get the wrong idea’ (Pl. 12). He ponders her words, nods, and announces that ‘we will go this way’. They walk off and the camera holds on the space that they have left: the boy, the waste ground, tenements in the background. Now the music cadences (1:10:33) and we are left contemplating a shot of the child playing with his empty oil drum (Pl. 13): It is a potent image of innocence, poverty, resourcefulness, futility, and parental abandonment, all echoes of Vittorio’s life. The finality of musical closure and concomitant silent emptiness amplify the symbolism.

What follows though, is jolting. We cut to a shot of Vittorio and Stella from behind (see Pl. 14), a long shot that has them traversing screen space diagonally from right to left, the same direction as the previous segment. The music begins from bar 35, a point determined by the requirement of synchronizing the final cadence with the end of the scene. However, the prior musical resolution has led us to believe that the shot of the boy marked the end of the scene, which is clearly not the case. It is immediately apparent that all that has happened is that our view of the couple has changed: we now see them from behind. No time has elapsed yet the cadential moment strongly implies that it has. Music thus plays a major part in producing the pregnant poetic image of a boy playing on the waste ground but at the expense of narrative and temporal coherence.

Only twice in Mamma Roma does the music end on a clear cadence. The film is more carefully cut to musical phrasing at the levels of the scene and individual shots, evincing a more convincing and nuanced interrelationship between music and image. We see this clearly in the scene where Ettore first meets Bruna, which is accompanied by the Larghetto from Vivaldi’s concerto for bassoon in D minor (RV 481). An extreme long shot of the six boys opens the scene (see Pl. 15, 28:43–28:50) coinciding with the opening statement of the Larghetto of the concerto, a mournful theme played in unison on strings, solo bassoon, and organ continuo (Ex. 1). The second shot (Pl. 16, 28:50–28:57), a pan from left to right across waste ground, begins as this statement repeats a fourth higher, suggesting the forced optimism of youth. Just before the phrase ends, we cut to another panning shot of the boys (Pl. 17, 28:57–29:17) now right to left, accompanied by a new musical idea (Ex. 2).

Two of the boys peel away from the main group (see Pl. 18) and the panning camera follows them. As the two boys sit down with three girls, the phrase cadences and we cut back to the remaining four boys for another right-to-left panning shot (see Pl. 19). A third musical idea begins, a descending sequential phrase (Ex. 3, 29:17–29:37). The four boys move towards a group of young girls, and one of the boys chases after a girl who is wearing a hat. The two of them disappear behind some ruins and he emerges under an arch wearing the hat, arriving in place exactly as the music cadences (see Pl. 20, 29:37).

The musical material up to this point has been essentially introductory. The first phrase (Ex. 1), while it anticipates the main theme, will not be heard again, though the second (Ex. 2) will return at the end of the movement as part of an ABA schema. Now, though, we hear the first solo bassoon statement of the movement’s main theme (Ex. 4) which perfectly coincides with the narrative focus of the scene: Bruna, playing with her baby (see Pl. 21).

The entire sequence illustrates a considerably more careful alignment of musical form with film form than anything in Accattone, a sensitive and also very obviously

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Pl. 13. The Poetic Image

Pl. 14. Vittorio and Stella walk on
deliberate reciprocity of music, action, and film editing (and the contribution of Nino Baragli, Pasolini’s long-term editor, should be acknowledged). That is not to say that music is always so granularly integrated. In the next scene in which the bassoon concerto is used (scene 15), the entire movement plays and is then repeated, picking up from bar 10 and fading out at bar 23, producing a gentle and more general underscore. Form is less important here than the reminder music provides of the first occasion on which Ettore and Bruna met.

Pts. 15–16 and Ex. 1. The boys approach the waste ground accompanied by the opening of the Larghetto from Vivaldi’s concerto for bassoon in D minor (RV 481) (all stills from Mamma Roma reproduced by kind permission of Mr Bongo Films)

Pt. 17 and Ex. 2. Panning shot of the boys with answering violin phrase

deliberate reciprocity of music, action, and film editing (and the contribution of Nino Baragli, Pasolini’s long-term editor, should be acknowledged). That is not to say that music is always so granularly integrated. In the next scene in which the bassoon concerto is used (scene 15), the entire movement plays and is then repeated, picking up from bar 10 and fading out at bar 23, producing a gentle and more general underscore. Form is less important here than the reminder music provides of the first occasion on which Ettore and Bruna met.
Pt. 18. Two boys peel away from the main group as the phrase continues

Pt. 19 and Ex. 3. End of b. 6 to b. 9, new descending sequential phrase as the four remaining boys walk towards a group of girls
Pt. 20. Unison cadential figure aligned with dramatic arrival

Pt. 21 and Ex. 4. Bruna with her baby accompanied by opening bassoon statement
The extended final sequence of *Mamma Roma* demonstrates a similar understanding of and respect for musical form, though now at a larger level. In contrast to the looped underscore of *Accattone*’s final scenes (scenes 73–7) wherein the alignment of a cadence with the words ‘Stella mia’ is the only significant correspondence, music plays a major part in structuring the extended cross-cutting between Ettore and Mamma Roma. The music is the Largo from Vivaldi’s Concerto for viola d’amore and lute in D minor (RV 540), its original form AABB. The sequence begins with Ettore strapped to a bed in the hospital prison, and the A section ends on a dissolve of him struggling in his restraints and a shot of the skylight above his head (1:35:28–1:36:37). The final two bars of the first A section are repeated, producing an artificial coda (1:36:37–1:36:55) that signals a temporal ellipsis, confirmed by a new overhead shot of a now-quieted Ettore. As the B section begins (1:36:55), the camera retreats down his body, framing him in stark perspective from his feet to his head (the reference to Mantegna’s painting mentioned above). Musical form here marks the beginning of a new episode where the son calls to his mother. As the main refrain begins (end of b. 10, 1:37:17), we cut back to a close-up of Ettore and, as the answering phrase begins (end of b. 12, 1:37:39), we cut to a view from Mamma Roma’s apartment. When she sits down to pour a coffee, the B section begins again (1:38:01) and she expresses sorrow for her son: ‘Solo’ (‘alone’), she says. What follows repeats the earlier pattern: we cut back to a close-up of Ettore precisely as the main theme of the Largo begins at end of bar 10 (1:38:21); and we cut back to Mamma Roma walking along the road when the answering phrase begins at the end of bar 12 (1:38:43). Music plays more than a transitional role here, and Baroque music specifically serves as more than an empathic resource or as neutral underscore; its large-scale form structures and underlines the telepathic communication between mother and son in much the same way that the earlier scene on the waste ground exploited more local musical structures to enhance poetic symbolism.

**CONCLUSION**

I have argued that the use of the music of *Accattone* in *Mamma Roma* cannot satisfactorily be explained merely by reference to the critical reputations of Bach and Vivaldi, or in terms of the original and modern cultural contexts of their compositions. Accounts such as those, beguiling and valid as they may be, direct us away from the more important consideration of the commonalities of the repertorial choice. I have instead focused on the stylistic features of Baroque music, a repertory used only rarely in narrative film, usually in limited contexts and for very specific reasons.

Clearly both *Accattone* and *Mamma Roma* draw on and thereby underline the affective properties of Baroque repertory. Music is used to make an appeal for empathy for the underclass, imbuing its subjects with dignity and nobility, a process that some commentators were unable to accept, insisting instead that the music itself was degraded. Persuasive or not as the strategy may be, the stitching together of musical material to provide a sort of eighteenth-century vamp-till-ready that we occasionally find in *Accattone* challenges the integrity of the musical work. However, the film demonstrates a more nuanced if embryonic appreciation of the formal features of Baroque music, an approach which *Mamma Roma* develops. This later film manifests a more considered awareness of musical form, one that appropriates the symmetries of Baroque music and corrals its balanced phrases and predictable small-scale structures to more integrative ends. An equilibrium is achieved whereby the music, rather than seeming to exist in a parallel and ultimately indifferent space, is braided with narrative and film form,
collapsing and marginalizing the temporal and cultural distance between the original music and its new context.

Pasolini would not recreate the exercise. Aside from the use of Bach in Il Vangelo, occasional uses of Mozart in Teorema (1968) and Il fiore delle Mille e una Notte (1974), the Messe de Tournai in Il Decameron (1971), Chopin and a very small section of Bach in Salò o le 120 giornate di Sodoma (1975), and a handful of very short extracts from other composers, the director moved away from the Western art music canon towards folk-song or more obscure music from Indonesia and Japan, amongst other countries. He also commissioned composers like Ennio Morricone to write music for his films. In so doing, he perhaps accepted that the specific meanings and cultural baggage of extant music too readily distracted spectators and commentators alike.

ABSTRACT

Critics and film theorists have frequently drawn attention to the use of J. S. Bach’s music in Accattone (1961), Pier Paolo Pasolini’s first film. Many have noted the strangeness of the musical choice and in particular its sociocultural disconnection from the film’s setting of the borgate, the deprived areas on the outskirts of Rome. Pasolini’s second film, Mamma Roma (1962), similarly focuses on the lives of an underclass of pimps, prostitutes, and scroungers, yet its use of the music of Antonio Vivaldi has elicited little study. This article explores the imbalance of critical responses in the context of Pasolini’s political aesthetic. I argue that the imposing figure of Bach has distracted commentators, and that Pasolini is less interested in the cultural associations of individual composers and compositions than in the formal properties of Baroque music. Close analysis of the films reveals careful correspondences between film and music that show both the potential and the limitations of Baroque music when applied to the moving image.
### APPENDIX 1

**Music and Scene Outline in Accattone**

All timings are from *Accattone* (Pier Paolo Pasolini, 1961), Eureka Entertainment: EKA 70045, DVD.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scene number</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Music (all by J. S. Bach)</th>
<th>Timings</th>
<th>Music used (bar nos.)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Credits</td>
<td>Final chorus from St Matthew Passion (BWV 244), ‘Wir setzen uns mit Tränen nieder’</td>
<td>00:00–02:11</td>
<td>1–12, 25–36, 1–3 (fade out)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5–6</td>
<td>Vittorio visits Maddalena at his wife’s house.</td>
<td>07:52–08:49</td>
<td>1 to 9 (fade)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>The Neapolitan arrives.</td>
<td>‘Wir setzen’</td>
<td>09:02–09:56</td>
<td>25–35 (quick fade)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11–12</td>
<td>Vittorio visits Maddalena again.</td>
<td><em>Adagio</em> (BWV 1046)</td>
<td>15:52–17:44</td>
<td>16 to 33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Maddalena in the car with Neapolitans.</td>
<td>‘Wir setzen’</td>
<td>20:27–21:17</td>
<td>1 to 12 (with one ‘sanfte ruh’ phrase cut)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>The Neapolitans beat Maddalena and abandon her.</td>
<td>‘Wir setzen’</td>
<td>25:44–26:30</td>
<td>1 to beat 1 of 10 (faded)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Vittorio meets Stella for the first time.</td>
<td>Brandenburg Concerto No. 2 in F major (BWV 1047), second movement, <em>Andante</em></td>
<td>41:03–43:38</td>
<td>23 to 65 (end of movement)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>Vittorio fights with his brother-in-law.</td>
<td>‘Wir setzen’</td>
<td>47:42–49:48</td>
<td>37 to 44 (‘Ruhe sanfte, sanfte ruh!’ phrases cut); 46–8; 25 (with one beat removed from 28) to halfway through 32; 1 to halfway through 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>Vittorio sees Stella again.</td>
<td><em>Andante</em> (BWV 1047)</td>
<td>58:31–01:01:18</td>
<td>Last beat of 1 to 35; 60 to 65 (end of movement)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Continued*
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scene number</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Music (all by J. S. Bach)</th>
<th>Timings</th>
<th>Music used (bar nos.)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>37</td>
<td>Vittorio steals the necklace from his son.</td>
<td>Sonatina from <em>Gottes Zeit ist die allerbeste Zeit</em>, ‘Actus tragicus’ (BWV 106)</td>
<td>01:04:33–01:07:06</td>
<td>1 to 20 (entire movement); 19 and 20 repeated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42–3</td>
<td>Vittorio and Stella walk together.</td>
<td><em>Andante</em> (BWV 1047)</td>
<td>01:08:36–01:12:43</td>
<td>1 to beat 1 of 23; beat 3 of 57 to 65 (end of movement); beat 2 of 35 to 65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>49</td>
<td>Vittorio meets Stella and berates her.</td>
<td><em>Adagio</em> (BWV 1046)</td>
<td>01:20:30–01:24:04</td>
<td>1 to 22; 29 to 39 (end of movement)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>52</td>
<td>Amore is arrested.</td>
<td>Sonatina (BWV 106)</td>
<td>01:28:34</td>
<td>Beat 3 of 3 to beat 3 of 8; beat 4 of 19 to 20 (end of movement)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55</td>
<td>Amore arrives in prison and meets Maddalena.</td>
<td>Sonatina (BWV 106)</td>
<td>01:30:45–01:32:12</td>
<td>Beat 2 of 7 to beat 1 of 18; beat 2 of 20 to 22 (end of movement)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>58</td>
<td>Vittorio brings Stella back to stay with his wife.</td>
<td><em>Andante</em> (BWV 1047)</td>
<td>01:33:31–01:35:38</td>
<td>1 to beat 1 of 23; beat 2 of 57 to 65 (end of movement)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>68</td>
<td>Vittorio returns to the bar and is involved in a brawl.</td>
<td>‘Wir setzen’</td>
<td>01:39:12–01:40:12</td>
<td>25–36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>71</td>
<td>Vittorio at his home with his family and Stella, all of them sleeping.</td>
<td>‘Wir setzen’</td>
<td>01:41:46–01:42:21</td>
<td>25–32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>73–7</td>
<td>Vittorio walks towards Balilla’s bar (observed by an unidentified man). Vittorio, Balilla and Cartagine walk all day, looking for a truck to rob.</td>
<td><em>Andante</em> (BWV 1047)</td>
<td>01:48:22–01:55:11</td>
<td>Beat 3 of 4 to beat 2 of 57; beat 3 of 5 to 65 (end of movement) Various cuts are made in this section: beats 1 and 2 of 34, beats 2 and 3 of 36,</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Continued*
### Music and Scene Outline in Mamma Roma

All timings are from *Mamma Roma* (Pier Paolo Pasolini, 1962), Mr Bongo: MRBDVD038, DVD.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scene number&lt;sup&gt;1&lt;/sup&gt;</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Music (by J. S. Bach)</th>
<th>Timings</th>
<th>Music used (bar nos.)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>and beats 1 and 2 of 37 are all eliminated.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>There is a further cut on the last quaver of 40 to the last quaver of 42</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>25 to halfway through 32 (Vittorio crashes); 25 to halfway through 32; halfway through 34 to 36</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| 78                      | Vittorio steals a motorbike and speeds off. Musical segmentation coincides with two episodes: Vittorio stealing bike and crashing, and the coda to his death, witnessed by Balilla and Cartagine. | ‘Wir setzen’ 01:55:20–01:56:43                |                  |                       |
| 1                       | Description                                                                  | Timings                                    | Music used       |                       |


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### APPENDIX 2

**Music and Scene Outline in Mamma Roma**

All timings are from *Mamma Roma* (Pier Paolo Pasolini, 1962), Mr Bongo: MRBDVD038, DVD.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scene number&lt;sup&gt;1&lt;/sup&gt;</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Music (by Vivaldi)</th>
<th>Timing</th>
<th>Music used (in bar nos.)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Credits</td>
<td>Credits</td>
<td>Concerto for viola d’amore and lute in D minor (RV 540), second movement, <em>Largo</em></td>
<td>00:14–02:01</td>
<td>A (1–8); B (last beat of 8 to 14) (i.e. no repeats)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Music begins as Mamma Roma moves towards the front door to answer it.</td>
<td>Concerto for flautino in C major (RV 443), second movement, <em>Largo</em></td>
<td>17:42–20:25</td>
<td>A (1–5); A; B (6–13); B (6–8, faded out)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Carmine and Mamma Roma talk outside the front door.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<sup>1</sup> The missing number is not specified. It is assumed to be part of a sequence or table, but the provided data does not include it.

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Continued
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scene number</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Music (by Vivaldi)</th>
<th>Timing</th>
<th>Music used (in bar nos.)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Ettore and friends meet with Bruna.</td>
<td>Concerto for bassoon in D minor (RV 481), second movement, Larghetto</td>
<td>28:43–32:15</td>
<td>1 to last beat of 38. Fades under sound of siren</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Ettore on waste ground, aimless. He meets Bruna. They have sex.</td>
<td>Larghetto (RV 481)</td>
<td>33:53–38:49</td>
<td>1–40 (full movement); upbeat to 10 to b. 23 (fade)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Ettore at home, bored, thinking of Bruna.</td>
<td>Larghetto (RV 481)</td>
<td>44:02–45:22</td>
<td>1–14 (fade)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Ettore talking to Bruna, then mocked by other boys.</td>
<td>Larghetto (RV 481)</td>
<td>53:12–54:55</td>
<td>Beat 4 of 10 to b. 28 (quick fade)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>Mamma Roma wakes</td>
<td>Largo (RV 540)</td>
<td>1:05:15–</td>
<td>A (1–8); A (1 to 8); B (8–12, overlapping with car horn and Mamma Roma shouting)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td>Ettore. She shows him the motorbike she has bought him and they test drive it.</td>
<td></td>
<td>1:09:25</td>
<td>B (8–12, overlapping with car horn and Mamma Roma shouting)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32</td>
<td>Carmine searches for Ettore.</td>
<td>Largo (RV 443)</td>
<td>1:13:06–1:14:03</td>
<td>A (1–5); A (1–3. Fade)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34</td>
<td>Carmine approaches and enters Mamma Roma’s apartment. They argue.</td>
<td></td>
<td>1:15:41–1:19:38</td>
<td>A (1–5); A (1–5); B (6–13); B (6–13); abrupt cut; B (6–8, fade)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35</td>
<td>Ettore learns his mother is a prostitute. He rides off on his motorbike with friends.</td>
<td>Largo (RV 443)</td>
<td>1:27:41–1:29:00</td>
<td>A (1–5); A (1–5).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43</td>
<td>Ettore in hospital, strapped to a bed.</td>
<td>Largo (RV 540)</td>
<td>1:35:28–</td>
<td>The entire musical cue to 1:40:15 is as follows: A (1–8); beat 2 of 7 to b. 8; B (8–14)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45</td>
<td>Mamma Roma in her kitchen, talking to herself.</td>
<td></td>
<td>1:37:39</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>47</td>
<td>Ettore.</td>
<td></td>
<td>1:38:22</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>48</td>
<td>Mamma Roma, walking to the market.</td>
<td></td>
<td>1:38:43</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>49</td>
<td>Ettore, dead.</td>
<td></td>
<td>1:39:43</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50</td>
<td>Mamma Roma at the market.</td>
<td>Largo (RV 540)</td>
<td>1:40:16–1:41:32</td>
<td>Bar 1 of A fades in at</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scene number¹</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Music (by Vivaldi)</td>
<td>Timing</td>
<td>Music used (in bar nos.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51</td>
<td>Mamma Roma runs back to her apartment.</td>
<td></td>
<td>1:40:20 over the noise of the market.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>52</td>
<td>Mamma Roma mounts the stairs to her apartment.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Continues to end of A (b. 8)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>53</td>
<td>Mamma Roma in her kitchen.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹ Like *Accattone*, there were two screenplays, one published when the film was released in 1962—Pier Paolo Pasolini, *Mamma Roma* (Milan: Rizzoli Edizione, 1962)—the other Pasolini’s revised screenplay in *Alì Degli Occhi Azuri* (Milan: Garzanti Editore, 1965). Scene numbers follow Magaletta’s, which are based on the film itself. See Magaletta, *Pier Paolo Pasolini: Le opere*, ii. 383–91.