autori mostrano come narrativa e fotografia si influenzino a vicenda e si compenetrino serve a stimolare l'interesse dei lettori e a spronare gli studiosi a portare avanti questa importante linea di ricerca.

GIULIANA SANGUINETTI KATZ

University of Toronto

Dana Renga. *Unfinished Business. Screening the Italian Mafia in the New Millennium*. Toronto, Buffalo and London: University of Toronto Press, 2014. Pp. 264. ISBN 978-1-4426-1558-8. (Paper) \$ 29.95

Dana Renga's book *Unfinished Business* continues to explore mafia-themed films produced in Italy since the turn of the millennium, following the author's earlier edited volume *Mafia Movies: A Reader* (Toronto UP, 2011) on screen representations of American and Italian mafia. This new volume offers a more focused overview of some of the most celebrated contemporary feature films produced in the new millennium, through the framework of trauma theories and gender studies.

Renga addresses Mafia as an on-going phenomenon and still unsolved matter embedded in Italian society, politics and history. The overarching term Mafia includes different forms of organized crime originated in clearly identified southern regions and permeates in the broader Italian socio-economic and political tapestry. The author specifically laments that Italian filmography continues to sensationalize Mafia violent characters, unlawful codes and criminal practices, thus reproducing melodramatic and noir narratives generating relief through the emblematic condemnation of female and homosexual characters, whose "identities are elided in order to solidify traditional modes of viewer identification and assure narrative closure so that the image of the nation is left unblemished" (4).

Interested in how Italian directors have represented Mafia in the past decade, the author focuses on ten carefully selected films. Following a rigorous chronological order, these feature films are discussed in individual chapters, and are treated as both independent and interrelated case studies: *I cento passi/The Hundred Steps* (Giordana, 2000), *Placido Rizzotto* (Scimeca, 2000), *Angela* (Torre, 2002), *Le conseguenze dell'amore/The Consequences of Love* (Sorrentino, 2004), *L'uomo di vetro/*

The Man of Glass (Incerti, 2007), *Galantuomini/ Brave Men* (Winspeare, 2008), *Fine pena mai: Paradiso perduto/Life Sentence: Paradise Lost* (Barletti and Conte, 2008), *Gomorra/Gomorrhah* (Garrone, 2008), *La siciliana ribelle/The Sicilian Girl* (Amenta, 2009), *Una vita tranquilla/A Quiet Life* (Cupellini, 2010), and *Cesare deve morire/Caesar Must Die* (Taviani and Taviani, 2012). In her analysis Renga explains that the phenomenon of Mafia is a central theme of contemporary Italian cinema and “is a versatile subject with which to tell stories of heroism, resistance, corruption, romance and family drama” (182).

The author draws from both individual trauma theory (Freud, Leys, Caruth), and on collective trauma studies (Erikson, Alexander, Eyerman) focusing on the socio-cultural sphere, and she concludes that “mafia certainly causes individuals and groups injury, but does not allow them to articulate traumatic responses and create a discourse of trauma in a way that recovers memory and enables the critical process of mourning to take place” (7). Italian history has been marked by a number of collectively traumatic events: World War I, Fascism, World War II, and the years of political terrorism (between the Piazza Fontana massacre in Milan in 1969 and the Bologna train station bombing in 1980). Renga regards these periods as completed and resolved, while the Mafia presence persists generating an everlasting source of trauma which inevitably does not bring Italy to “a post-traumatic state during which time traumatic injury is understood and articulated as cultural trauma” (11). The author also points out that, when referring to Mafia, the simple distinction between perpetrators and victims cannot be defined in clear categories, since Mafiosi operate as members of a structure in which they “hold a liminal status within the organization” (10) to which they are duty-bound by honour codes, fear and threats.

Renga’s critical analysis is also informed by gender studies and feminist theory. Her book represents a significant contribution to the portrayal of women in contemporary Mafia films, in context of more central women’s roles brought to light by Mafia studies (Siebert). More specifically, the author interprets the similar outcomes and narrative patterns at play in three films, *Angela*, *Galantuomini*, and *La siciliana ribelle*, as a discussion of the melodramatic tradition of blaming and condemning deviant women. Therefore, even though there has been a shift in their representations, Renga demonstrates that women continue to be silenced.

All the films discussed in this volume share some form of closure in the depiction of trauma with healing endings such as commemorative gestures celebrating the anti-Mafia hero like in *I cento passi*, *Placido Rizzotto*, and *L’uomo di vetro*.

However, in other films, such as *Angela*, *Galantuomini*, and *La siciliana ribelle*, female protagonists are brutally punished for attempting to subvert the Mafia male hierarchy, thus implying, in Luce Irigaray's words, that "dominant phallic economies" (183) remain unchanged and unresolved in the narrative dynamics of these films. On the other hand, in the male noir melodramas, *Le conseguenze dell'amore*, *Fine pena mai: Paradiso Perduto* and *Un vita tranquilla*, male characters are equally and severely penalized by the Mafia.

Most stories are biopic feature films, *I cento passi* (Giuseppe Impastato 1948–1963), *Placido Rizzotto*, (1914–1948), *Angela* (set in 1984 in Palermo), *L'uomo di vetro* (Leonardo Vitale 1941–1984), *Fine pena mai: Paradiso perduto* (Antonio Perrone, set in the 1980s), *La siciliana ribelle* (Rita Atria 1974–1992), referring to real events which took place in the twentieth century, thus historicizing true Italian Mafia individuals and groups in the context of clearly demarcated regional boundaries. Films like *Galantuomini*, *Le conseguenze dell'amore*, *Una vita tranquilla* and *Gomorra* instead, explore the relatively more recent expansion of the Mafia influence beyond Italian borders. The chronologies and geographies of these dramas, both biographical and fictional, give a sense of the pervasive presence and control of Mafia in the Italian and global organized crime landscape. These films, all accurately documented, lucidly discussed and thoroughly analyzed, trace the progression of Italian Mafia organizations, their cultures and structures, illegal activities and areas of influence in the international economic and political sectors.

Renga has gained a scholarly reputation for being a pioneer in Mafia film studies. She might consider exploring representations of gender in television fiction, such as the serial *Squadra antimafia-Palermo oggi* (produced by Mediaset, aired on Channel 5, seven seasons 2009–2015), with a range of tough women emerging on both sides, law enforcement and organized crime, thus developing newer, damaging images of women in command. These television Mafia dramas further problematize the representations of gender and trauma, while also broadening the discussion on the reasons for the proliferation of these successful Mafia-themed series.

Unfinished Business holds as a well-organized and cohesive text. The author's analysis represents an original contribution to scholarship on Italian Mafia films through the lens of national trauma and gender theories, and fills a void in the neglected area of women's studies in the field of Mafia films. The book is a rich text for its complex content and in-depth critical investigation, useful both as an

academic resource for scholars and as a textbook for graduate courses on Mafia films.

FLAVIA LAVIOSA

Wellesley College

Paolo Balboni, Giuseppe Caruso e Annamaria Lamarra, a cura di. *Scuola di Formazione di Italiano Lingua Seconda / Straniera competenze d'uso e integrazione. Quarta edizione, 8–12 luglio 2013. Roma: Carocci editore. 2014. Pp. 158. ISBN: 9788843074525. € 21.*

Il presente volume interessa chi intende capire meglio il processo teorico pratico, seguito oggi in Italia nella didattica dell'italiano come lingua seconda o lingua straniera. Esso raccoglie gli interventi della IV edizione della Scuola di formazione di italiano lingua seconda/straniera tenutasi tra l'8 e il 12 luglio 2013 a Napoli. Comprende undici saggi, a partire da un'introduzione ai quaderni del CLA di A. Lamarra e da un'inquadratura del volume stesso ad opera di P. Balboni. Paola Begotti, che lavora dal 2000 presso il CLA e dal 2014 presso la Ca' Foscari, con "L'utilizzo del cinema nella didattica" (11–19), svolge una riflessione dettagliata suddivisa in sette sezioni che inizia dalla definizione di materiale autentico, sia video che spezzoni di film, e termina fornendo indicazioni utili per l'unità didattica. Giuseppe Caruso, insegnante d'italiano L2 e formatore DITALS, arricchisce la discussione sull'uso dei media con il saggio dal titolo "La televisione nell'insegnamento dell'italiano a stranieri: utilizzo e strategie didattiche" (21–39). Caruso offre suggerimenti per attività di carattere analitico e sintetico che includono, per esempio, il dettato, il riassunto ed il *role-play* così come per diversi tipi di verifica. Il contributo di Anthony Mollica, *professor emeritus* presso la Facoltà di Pedagogia della Brock University in Canada, ha per titolo "Ludolinguistica e glottodidattica" (41–54), e offre sia un'impalcatura teorica sia molteplici esemplificazioni pratiche. Mollica tratta di anagrammi, palindromi, crucipuzzle, cruciverba e ne elenca una serie di originali applicazioni didattiche, mostrando come qualsiasi tema, culturale o strutturale che sia, si può arricchire puntando sulle attività ludolinguistiche. Fabio Caon, ricercatore presso l'Università Ca' Foscari di Venezia propone una riflessione sull'insegnamento a studenti di cittadinanza non italiana (CNI), come ad esempio, a studenti di origine cinese. Il suo intervento, dal titolo "La dimensione cognitiva