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To cite this article: Stephen Gundle (2020): 'We Have Everything to Learn from the Americans': Film Promotion, Product Placement and Consumer Culture in Italy, 1945-1965, Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television, DOI: [10.1080/01439685.2020.1715596](https://doi.org/10.1080/01439685.2020.1715596)

To link to this article: <https://doi.org/10.1080/01439685.2020.1715596>



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Published online: 29 Jan 2020.



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‘WE HAVE EVERYTHING TO LEARN FROM THE AMERICANS’: FILM PROMOTION, PRODUCT PLACEMENT AND CONSUMER CULTURE IN ITALY, 1945-1965

Stephen Gundle

*The relationship between film promotion and the wider economy has scarcely been studied in Italy. This article explores the influence of American exploitation techniques in the peninsula in the years following World War Two and the responses of the Italian film industry. It is shown that, though many advocated imitating American practices in the fields of advertising and promotion, over time the industry learned not only to appropriate successful techniques but to adapt them in ways that were better suited to products that were often presented as being more ‘cultural’ than ‘commercial’. Attention is paid to the way film directors were drawn into campaigns to underline the cultural value of their works. By the same token, Italian stars were not cast as cheerleaders for the developing consumer economy in the way that American stars had been. Yet linkages between film making and advertising were nevertheless forged through practices of product placement that exploited the loophole of ‘verisimilitude’. Hollywood runaway productions like *Roman Holiday* set the tone for the insertion of Vespa scooters, automobiles and other goods in feature films. The article evaluates the interplay of the cultural and the commercial in Italy’s postwar economic revival and the role of cinema in its development as a mass consumer society.*

The relationship between film promotion and the expansion of the consumer economy has been studied in some depth, although most work on ‘ballyhoo’,

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exploitation and product placement has focussed on the United States, with European film industries receiving little attention.¹ Italy is no exception in this regard. While leading film historian Gian Piero Brunetta has written about the promotional practices of American companies in the peninsula in the 1930s, there is almost nothing on the continuation of these in the postwar era, the efforts of Italian production companies to imitate or adapt these to raise the profile of their own films, or the responses of cinema owners and the public to such initiatives.² Very little indeed is known about tie-ups between producers and manufacturers prior to the 2000s.³ The studies which exist of the relationship between cinema and the developing mass consumption economy in the 1950s and 1960s are almost entirely concerned with filmic representations of changes occurring in transport, leisure and the mass media.⁴ Questions which have been explored by Janet Staiger in her study of film advertising in the United States in the 1910s and after have barely been touched at all.⁵ This is a surprising lacuna for the contribution of cinema to Italian modernization is widely acknowledged, as is cinema's central place in mass leisure.⁶ It may be suggested that the problem lies, first, in the widespread focus on the auteur that historically marked the study of film in Italy. This cultural bias against the commercial led, for many years, to a disinterest in popular cinema as well as the work of producers and production companies.⁷ This has no longer been the case for some time, but there has been little work on this specific topic.⁸ Second, the medium most often seen as central to Italy's postwar economic development is not cinema but television. Thus, while the television advertising container *Carosello*, which debuted in 1957, is accorded a central place in the history of the nation's consumer culture, very little attention indeed has been devoted to film advertising and promotion, and even less to the insertion of manufactured products or brand names in films (product placement) and to the impact of cinema on consumer behaviour.⁹

This article will draw on archival sources and the trade press to explore the world of Italian film promotion and shed light on its contribution to the development of consumer culture. A significant place is granted to the role of American film companies, which first established a dominant position in the Italian market in the 1920s and which imported a variety of practices. It will also be shown that, especially after World War Two, there was a great deal of attention to cinema as a possible advertising vehicle. Producers took an interest in improving techniques of film promotion and in applying practices that American companies had deployed in Italy as in other foreign markets. Within the sector, voices repeatedly called for more and better publicity and lamented that Italy lagged well behind the United States in this as in other fields. Yet, cinema, though expanding as mass leisure at the same time that consumer goods were entering the collective imagination and impacting on practices of the self,¹⁰ was also considered to be part of the cultural sphere in a way that was not consistently the case in the USA.¹¹ It was only when Italian cinema found techniques of its own, that were attuned to a civil society in which the cultural, and indeed the political, weighed more than the commercial, that it was able to challenge the Americans. This cultural emphasis did not preclude greater interest in tie-ins and product placement, though it certainly overshadowed, and indeed masked, it.

The focus here is on the complex patterns inter-cultural definition and commercial penetration that marked Italian cinema in a long phase in which it sought simultaneously to imitate some American practices and to establish a distance from others. After first considering the relationship between American cinema and commercial culture as it developed in the United States and then in foreign markets, before and after the Second World War, the article explores the way Italian companies responded to the various challenges laid down by the Americans in the areas of promotion and economic tie-ins.

Cinema, advertising and commercial culture

In the United States, promotional strategies were developed early in the history of the film industry. Staiger's account of film promotion in the early twentieth century indicates that many techniques were in operation before World War One.¹² Lobby cards and posters were in use by 1909, press books by 1915 and star-based publicity by the same year. Once distribution was stabilised, there was a rationalisation of promotional practices, with publicity agents and advertising agencies becoming involved. In the 1920s, which saw the rise of a multitude of new practices of mass communication and opinion management, American film companies were keenly attuned to the importance of marketing and promotion. At the same time, movies became implicated in changing relations between manufacturers and the public. The growth of mass consumption in the 1920s, and its emergence as the primary channel for turning immigrants into Americans, provided a context in which opportunities existed for tying film promotion to other commercial activities, practices and products.¹³ Charles Eckert has argued that there was a general coincidence of purposes in a specific economic conjuncture,¹⁴ while another author has confirmed that 'both Hollywood and consumer culture emerged in the 1910s and 1920s, enriching one another in convenient symbiosis'.¹⁵ This close early alignment of the movies with consumerism was quite specific to the United States but the implications were felt more widely on account of American cinema's international impact.

The connection between cinema and consumerism was conditioned by the nature of film as an 'experience good', that is to say 'a product or service whose attributes are difficult to evaluate before purchase' and which can only 'be ascertained upon consumption'.¹⁶ Consumers of cinema were not being sold anything tangible; they paid for a temporally-limited experience which left them solely with memories. Film advertising therefore was different from regular advertising in that it anticipated, accurately or otherwise, the substance of the promised intangible experience. It could also sur-charge the promise of the experience by packaging and presenting it with further immaterial suggestions, some of which – glamour, for example – might be connected with the type of visual experience on offer, while others functioned externally, for example by creating a Boorstinian 'pseudo-event', or the sense of participation in a community of taste, all of which, however, ultimately became part of the spectatorial experience.¹⁷

American cinema advertising offered a mixture of different addresses and appeals, ranging from the predictable to the sensational. In the studio era, publicity

was conceived and planned at national level and was conditioned by the concern for institutional respectability on the part of the industry and its public figures, whether that be the producer or the cinema owner. Advertising entailed the rational promotion of a manufactured product and the reinforcement of cinema as a regular leisure activity. However, this did not always sit comfortably with the taste for what was termed 'ballyhoo' or 'hoopla', which derived from what Staiger refers to as the persistent influence of the type of hyperbolic promotion pioneered in the nineteenth century by the showman P.T. Barnum. Noisy and eye-catching advertising of this sort left a legacy on the way all mass entertainments were publicised.¹⁸ The tension between these impulses would be a permanent feature of film advertising and would present themselves in new ways abroad, for publicity techniques developed and refined in the American market formed part of the armoury of Hollywood as it moved aggressively into foreign markets from the late 1910s. It exploited post World War One weaknesses of the European film industry to quickly establish a dominant position.¹⁹ It was supported in this drive by the government, whose trade experts provided market assessments to assist companies, including film ones, on the basis of the Department of Commerce's conviction that 'trade follows the film'.²⁰ However, the European context presented a number of differences with respect to the United States, in terms of economics, politics and culture. In many countries, the state was centralised and a strong factor in the organisation and regulation of civil society. Where authoritarian regimes were in place, cinema was seen not so much as an entertainment industry as a tool for the promotion of other ends. Religious institutions limited the scope for transgressions of established values and for certain types of colourful initiative or provocative display. 'Exploitation', or American-style publicity campaigns and strategies, clashed with an established European preoccupation with aesthetics and taste. In any event, the level of economic development was often lower and this bore on the size of the market for cinema and the potential for mutually beneficial synergies with other consumer sectors, with the consequence that opportunities for close tie-ups were fewer than at home.

The Italian market was important because the country had seen the development of a significant film industry though only in the cities of the centre and north, where there was a fruitful market for consumer goods,²¹ was it truly a mass entertainment.²² Domestic film production, weakened by the war and a loss of competitiveness in foreign markets, went into crisis in the 1920s. This left the way open for the Americans to secure a dominant position. However, despite the fact that the first American advertising agencies opened in Milan in the later 1920s (J. Walter Thompson inaugurated its office in 1928), the urban environment was less receptive to the full-blown campaigns that were the norm at home,²³ and isolated attempts to import tie-ins did not meet with success. Italian advertising typically sought to blend in with a prevailing iconography and patterns of taste rather than stand out or startle.²⁴ American companies proved adept at adapting to local conditions, even forging links with Mussolini and his regime.²⁵ The Hollywood studios' agencies in Italy were, for the most part, run by Italians with sound local knowledge.²⁶ Posters were not imported pre-prepared; rather Italian artists were commissioned to produce materials which adapted a film's themes to local tastes

and preferences.²⁷ Brunetta has observed that the basic format by the 1930s was fairly standardised.²⁸ While some national campaigning was undertaken, for example, through the film press and prize competitions, most activity was devolved to local branches of studio-linked distribution companies that would supply promotional material and publicity guides and work with cinema owners to ensure that posters and other visual material were prominently displayed.

In the second half of the 1930s, the Fascist government took steps to reduce Hollywood's hegemony in the domestic market, enacting protectionist measures which led the American companies to withdraw in protest in 1939. However, the prewar experience would prove invaluable when Hollywood re-entered the market during the Allied occupation and re-asserted its dominance during postwar reconstruction. Often, the same people as before were hired by the American companies; their market knowledge was vital as they re-established a presence in the peninsula. From 1947, the first year in which large quantities of American films were released in Italy, the full armoury of publicity was deployed. Cities were invaded with loudspeaker vans, street parades, publicity handouts and gigantic decorative displays on cinemas as well as press and poster advertising.²⁹

The war created the premises for America to become a super-power and, especially in countries which had experienced dictatorship, it stood as both a political ally of pro-western forces and an economic model.³⁰ Hollywood films were part of this; they were not only distributed for profit; they were also invested with the higher mission of promoting 'world understanding' as well as preparing people for growth and economic and political stability.³¹ The complex interplay between political and economic concerns, and between foreign and domestic practices and cultures, would be a key hallmark of the way cinema was positioned in relation to the state and democratic civil society. Once the Italian film industry started to recover, its products not only had to win a place in the market but also be presented effectively. This was no easy matter as marketing and promotion were central to the way that Hollywood was organised. In the realm of publicity, no less than in film content, Italian cinema was faced with a powerful model. The question of what Italian movie companies copied, and what different marketing strategies they evolved, is one that bears on the very nature of Americanisation, which observers such as David Ellwood, Mary Nolan, Paolo Scrivano and others have seen more in terms of 'hybridisation' and selective appropriation than straightforward absorption or imitation.³²

Italian film promotion and the American model

The scale of the challenge can be gauged not just from the vast numerical presence of American films in the postwar years, which meant that many people's very understanding of cinema was bound up with American film genres and Hollywood stars. Also important was the promotional effort supporting American releases. For one Italian observer, 'the signs are everywhere: from the enormous series of multi-coloured posters that cover even the remotest corners of the city, to the lettering painted on pavements and every well-trafficked walkway, to the thousands upon thousands of flyers distributed in centres and suburbs alike by motorcycles,

cars and even planes, to the deafening loudspeakers placed in key locations that bellow in every moment the latest news and novelties. And all this to describe, praise, exalt, worship or sanctify a given actress or film'.³³ The return of Hollywood, with its spectacular products, the glamour of its stars and the images of prosperity, keyed into aspirations that found an outlet above all in raised expenditure on commercial leisure.³⁴

The Italian cinema which emerged after the conflict was not solely an entertainment; it was at least as attuned to civil society as to commercial imperatives. It won international recognition with classics of neorealism such as *Roma città aperta* (Rome Open City, Roberto Rossellini, 1945) and *Ladri di biciclette* (Bicycle Thieves, Vittorio De Sica, 1948), which even diegetically eschewed commercial appeals and repudiated fantasy (witness the role of the poster for *Gilda* starring Rita Hayworth in De Sica's film) to establish a different type of dialogue with audiences.³⁵ While the Americans were absolutely clear that a film, no matter how magnificent or appealing, could not be left to fend for itself in the market - 'A film becomes a good one when it is launched well' ran one slogan³⁶ - the Italians did not share this view. There was no sense that the public had to be convinced by a well-planned and carefully-executed campaign that a film was un-missable due to its qualities, its scale, the accuracy of its historical reconstructions, the splendour of its stars, the enthralling nature of its plot and the entertainment value it offered. There was a belief, dating back at least to the early 1940s, that only the Americans fell for ballyhoo, while 'in Italy, the audience is not so easily duped'.³⁷ This led to a neglect of publicity that could be damaging. In the trade press, an 'Italian Film Week' held in 1947 to promote recent national releases (a formula that was also used abroad to raise the profile of Italian films) was criticised on the grounds that what 'should have been prepared on the basis of an intelligent and forceful publicity campaign employing radio, newspapers, posters and all the most suitable and effective means',³⁸ instead 'caught people unawares'.

In the late 1940s, competition for influence in civil society was a driving force in the growth of audiences. Italian society was highly politicised and the onset of the Cold War not only ended the postwar government of national unity; it also saw an intensification of the battle for influence in the community between the various political forces. The targets of these efforts were citizens as political subjects. Though commercial entertainments were popular, postwar Italy's two great forces, the Catholics and the Communists, both actively engaged in mobilising audiences as they sought to extend their influence over leisure by catering to the popular enthusiasm for cinema in all its manifestations.³⁹ The vast majority of beauty contests, screen test competitions and new faces searches that were launched in the postwar years were sponsored by the press, political parties or trade unions rather than production companies. In the run-up to the watershed election of 1948, which was decisively won by the American-backed Christian Democrats, both forces made extensive use of posters in their propaganda. With their bright colours and polarising slogans and images, these were deemed a highly effective way of arousing and channelling the passions of voters. As a result, this medium, which had been the main urban medium of advertising since the late nineteenth century,⁴⁰ was reinforced at a time when other forms of

communication were on the ascendant. This had the consequence for cinema advertising of confirming a heavy reliance on artist-designed posters. with the result that a field which - in other countries - was at the forefront of developments in publicity lagged behind other sectors. The most memorable and innovative domestic commercial initiatives of the period were related not to cinema but to radio and sport.⁴¹

Despite the efforts of production companies to devise new formulas, and the support given to Italian cinema and its most acclaimed veristic films by left-wing parties and trade unions, winning more than a foothold in the market proved difficult. The growing crisis of the film industry led to urgent pleas for support. In early 1949, there was even a large public protest in Rome against the Hollywood invasion and the lack of backing for Italian production. Anna Magnani and Vittorio De Sica were among many representatives of the industry to take part.⁴² Shortly afterwards, the cinema minister Giulio Andreotti piloted passage of a law which, with the approval of an American government that opted to prioritise the recovery of an ally instead of backing the claims of Hollywood in a foreign market,⁴³ reinstated some of the types of support which assisted the film industry in the period, thereby creating the premises for the growth of the sector.⁴⁴ In consequence, a raft of new companies, several of them with long experience of film distribution, entered the production sphere. This was decisive in bringing about more systematic investment and moves towards more multi-faceted campaigns. In this phase of development, strong voices in the trade press advocated taking a leaf from the Americans' book; some went so far as to urge wholesale adoption of the American model. One of these, Alessandro Ferrà, the founder and editor of the trade magazine *Cinespettacolo*, argued that 'in the matter of film advertising, we have everything to learn from the Americans'.⁴⁵ He urged the adoption of promotional catchphrases, wider use of colour on posters, events to stimulate the curiosity of film-goers and greater stress on the physical attributes of actors. Exhortations of this type had some effect. Cinema owners, who had seen little point in spending money on advertising since they counted on a regular captive audience with predictable tastes, were targeted more assiduously by production companies.⁴⁶

The first big publicity campaign for an Italian film that displayed a 'learning from the Americans' in terms of investing in promotion and establishing closer links with distributors and exhibitors was that organised by Universalialia for the ancient-world blockbuster *Fabiola* (Alessandro Blasetti, 1949), which was partly financed by a French company.⁴⁷ Much was made of the scale of the film and the casting of Michèle Morgan and Henri Vidal in the lead roles. This was treated as a coup and publicised by sky-born banners and plane-drops of leaflets and booklets. Street parades and ballyhoo also accompanied its opening, leading critic Gian Luigi Rondi to comment that an 'American-style atmosphere' had been created around the film.⁴⁸ However, despite the fact that Universalialia, which as born as an offshoot of the Catholic company Orbis, enjoyed the backing of the Vatican, it was not a strong company and *Fabiola* would be its last big-budget production. Instead, Lux, founded in the mid-1930s by the industrialist Riccardo Gualino, emerged at this time as the leading production company, as well as a key player in distribution. The company's own brand image - fireworks exploding against a stylised

night sky - soon became as familiar as the roaring lion of Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer. Its press office, headed by Vittorio Calvino (who later passed to the Titanus company), was regarded as the best in the business. Lux was the first company to engage regularly in promotional campaigns and to produce launch materials on the American pattern. Like the Americans, it indulged in ballyhoo and published its own bulletin, *Lux film notizie*. This urged the use of imaginative signage and the eye-catching decoration of cinema exteriors and interiors (Figure 1). For the pirate film *I tre corsari* (The Three Pirates Mario Soldati, 1952), it was suggested that treasure chests should be employed to attract spectators with the display of fake jewels. In one issue, it was reported that, in Milan and Rome, young actors from the Lux-distributed film *Angeli del quartiere* (Local Angels, 1952), directed by Carlo Borghesio, had handed out presents from 'two luxurious carriages pulled by beautiful white horses crossed the centre of the two great cities full of toys of every type to the delight of thousands of children'.⁴⁹

The Americans proved adept, as they had been before the war, at inserting themselves in the interstices of civil society, appearing not as foreign but local.⁵⁰ However, Italian companies were no less effective at winning institutional approval and securing political backing. Several producers, including Salvo D'Angelo (head of Universal) and Fulvio Lucisano, had close links to the Vatican and to the ruling Christian Democrats and they used these connections to their advantage. Others, including Titanus's Goffredo Lombardo, curried favour with the Communists or forged links in several quarters at once. Even though they were politically marginalised, the Communists took great interest in cinema and had the potential to reach a wide audience through their press organs. Aldo Fabrizi, director and star of the emigration drama *Emigrantes* (1948), personally invited Christian Democrat politicians to the opening of his film. Even a small company like Mambretti Film got in on the act. For the release of *Caccia eroica* (Heroic Hunt, 1952), a dramatic war film directed by Francesco De Robertis that was inspired by the heroism and sacrifice of the Italian soldiers on the Russian front, a special promotional showing of the film was attended by members of the army high command, as well as deputies and senators.⁵¹

Italian cinema also made the most of the place it had secured in cultural and political life. It drew explicitly on 'cultivated' rather than the 'commercial' impulses in national culture to elaborate a distinctive identity - to borrow a distinction developed in a different context by Daniel LeMahieu.⁵² One of the most frequent criticisms of Americanism in Europe, despite growing appreciation among European cinephiles of the rising artistic value of American films, was that it was that it was organised around the primacy of economics and consumption and the devaluation of high culture.⁵³ For ideologically-motivated critics, it was materialistic and uninterested in quality. Following the emergence of the auteur-director and the civic engagement of neorealism, continental films were connected to high cultural pursuits and seen as cultural artefacts first and commodities second.⁵⁴ Thus they stood, to some degree at least, in opposition to the desire of what Victoria De Grazia has termed the American 'market empire' to turn citizens into consumers.⁵⁵ This had an impact on the style and form of film publicity since production companies sought to maintain a high tone for serious films and disdained



Figure 1. Advertising in the entrance to a first-run cinema in Italy c.1954, with images left and above relating to *From Here to Eternity* (Fred Zinneman, 1953) and, to the right, *Il grande gioco/Le grand jeu* (Robert Siodmak, 1954), starring Gina Lollobrigida. (Author's own collection).

ballyhoo. Press offices ran promotion for Italian companies, furnishing pressbooks to which known artists and intellectuals contributed,⁵⁶ while Hollywood entrusted these matters to publicity departments. Journalists were encouraged to visit film sets, write features on films during their making and interview directors. The booming illustrated press of the period was harnessed to offer readers insights into behind-the-scenes processes that, if they were revealed at all in the case of Hollywood films, only reached the public when a film was completed and was in the phase of release. In the case of the Rizzoli company, a magazine publisher which had a film production arm, the linkages were complex and systematic, with cinema appearing in different ways in the columns of the magazines, from the arts pages to celebrity and fashion features.⁵⁷

Within this increasingly complex publicity environment, posters retained a central role. Though the increasing volume of work entailed some standardisation, Italian illustrators, it has been asserted, 'were second to none in this sphere, consistently creating images of great flair and artistry which perfectly fulfilled their task of engaging and intriguing the viewer'.⁵⁸ Posters were 'a synthesis of art and

marketing' that prospered thanks to the strong and continuing legacy of the class model of consumption dating from the Belle Epoque. This remained influential despite the spread of American ideas of mass consumption and the use of photographs in advertising.⁵⁹ Poster artists like Silvano 'Nano' Campeggi, who was known for his imaginative compositions and ample use of the colour red, worked for both Italian and American companies. The distinctive creative flair of the artists was widely deemed to reflect specifically Italian pictorial qualities and to contribute to the aesthetic experience that in Italy had always been part of the filmic spectacle.⁶⁰ Campeggi, for example, was regularly employed by the Italian branch of Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer. For Italians, by contrast, the artists' work was not so much a local resource as an aspect of the cultural value of cinema. 'Italian advertising is the most "artistic" in the world because poster design, which is at its core, while never forgetting the need to reach a commercial end, is the aspect that most approximates to Art',⁶¹ asserted one author in *Cinespettacolo* with evident pride.⁶² Although the censors were alert to transgressions and the pecking order of the star system had to be respected, artists worked creatively to communicate the content of film as well as add value to them, sometimes producing sophisticated images for cities and less complicated enticements in bright bold colours for the provinces,⁶³ a diversification that was widely practised in the United States and other countries.

Stars and advertising

Conceived as a form of 'product branding',⁶⁴ the American star system turned actors into sales agents with a quantifiable merchandising value.⁶⁵ To capitalise on this, Italian branches of American companies supplied huge quantities of star material to the film press, with some postwar titles such as *Star* and *Hollywood* featuring it programmatically. From Douglas Fairbanks and Mary Pickford in 1926 onwards,⁶⁶ American stars had supported film exports with personal visits to the peninsula. Such publicity-driven appearances were examples of what Boorstin would dub 'pseudo-events'.⁶⁷ Despite their origin as publicity stunts, they provided a striking illustration of the enthusiasm stars unleashed. An early postwar visitor to the country was Fox star Tyrone Power, whose Rome wedding to the starlet Linda Christian in January 1949 was widely seen as an event staged for the cameras to promote *Prince of Foxes*, a recently-made film about the Borgias. The event was carefully built up in the press and newsreels and billed as 'the wedding of the century'. It attracted thousands of young fans, who were identified in the press as avid consumers of fashion as well as film.⁶⁸

Italy had seen the development of a star system of its own after the withdrawal of the Americans in 1939, but few actors conserved their appeal following the war. Moreover, the most prestigious part of Italian cinema, that associated with neorealism, was hostile to the very idea of the exceptional individual or the star. Yet, in the aftermath of the war, there was a widespread interest in the idea of stardom. Young people especially were enthralled by the prospect of fame and this fuelled a range of competitions and publications. Unlike many of its sister parties, the Italian Communist Party preferred to harness popular interests to its cause rather than rant against them.⁶⁹ Its press organs ran competitions, such as the

various 'stelline dell'Unità' and the annual Miss *Vie Nuove* pageant, which promised the winner a screen test.⁷⁰ Directors, actors and sometimes producers served on the juries. Beauty contests were to become an important device for the primary selection of future stars, in contrast to Britain and elsewhere, where the winners usually did not achieve fame.⁷¹ They offered a supply of raw potential talent to producers, who had long looked with envy on the American stars and their unique capacity to fascinate the public. Italian cinema also found ways of forging national stars through synergies with popular theatre and by drawing on the world of photoromances.

The sophisticated and long promotional campaign which one of the most enterprising young producers, Dino De Laurentiis, organised for the Lux film *Riso amaro* (Bitter Rice, Giuseppe De Santis, 1949) and the launch of its star, Silvana Mangano, testified to the Italian film industry's ambitions. The film itself was widely seen as a hybrid that incorporated American-style sex appeal as well as Italian realism. The launch involved the engagement of photographers – Spanish civil war photographer Robert Capa took memorable pictures of the eighteen-year-old Mangano scantily-clad in the working environment of the rice fields of northern Italy – which caused a sensation around the world. Painters, including Campeggi and the prominent realist Renato Guttuso, were invited to visit the set and paint whatever inspired them. The campaign, centred on Mangano's physical attractiveness, was fully supported by the film's Communist director, Giuseppe De Santis, who, unlike some of his colleagues, believed stars were an effective way of reaching popular audiences.⁷² Already De Laurentiis had paired *Roma città aperta* heroine Anna Magnani with the biggest star of the Fascist period, Amedeo Nazzari, in *Il bandito* (The Bandit, Alberto Lattuada, 1946) and he would recall the latter from Argentina three years later to co-star with Mangano in her second film, *Il lupo della Sila* (The Wolf of the Sila, Dullio Coletti, 1949).⁷³ The Titanus company also harnessed Nazzari's star power to a series of popular melodramas and expressly built up stars as part of its effort to win a market share.⁷⁴ De Laurentiis's close associate Carlo Ponti would follow his lead in guiding his own protégé, Sophia Loren, from photoromances to the screen. Other producers would follow suit. Few female stars – the runner-up in the 1947 Miss Italia contest, Gina Lollobrigida, would be the most successful – managed to build a screen career without the benefit of the personal interest of a powerful patron.

In general, Italian stars did not possess the magnetic glamour of the Americans. The 'polished veneer' that functioned both as 'entertainment value' and commercial lure could only be approximated imperfectly.⁷⁵ American stars were conceived and created in relation to the mass market that had begun to take shape after World War One. In the booming 1920s, when modern mass consumerism was born, spectators were encouraged to see stars as models for self-projection and self-fashioning, or what Giorgio Bertellini calls 'the commodified democratisation of their lives'.⁷⁶ The studio system worked to burnish and groom stars, who emerged at a time when the highly heterogeneous American society of the period was seeking ways of achieving the orderly domestication of disruptive sexualities.⁷⁷ Though younger female stars in Italy seemed to possess common backgrounds and similar physical characteristics, there was a lack of standardisation in star

creation that reflected the way the film industry developed, without big studios or any factory system of production. Their main selling point was their apparently natural, unvarnished beauty. They had a certain unspoilt authenticity to them that was distinctive. Neorealism played a part here but so too did the fact that, in Italy, there was virtually none of the grooming, training and fashioning that was practised by the major American studios. Though some stars would serve an apprenticeship in small parts before achieving stardom, others were catapulted, like Silvana Mangano, into leading roles. The gap between starlet and star was thereby abolished, temporarily anyway,⁷⁸ leaving many to face the exposure of stardom with little of the moulding and refinement that were features of star manufacture in the USA. With their voices dubbed, Italian cinema's new stars could scarcely even act, it was sometimes lamented.⁷⁹ One 1950s Italian observer commented of the major studios: 'their films seem to be made expressly to showcase ways of dressing, of speaking, of declaring love, of threatening, or of driving an automobile'.⁸⁰ In Italy, things did not work in the same way. An article in *Cinema* noted that, 'it is far easier to act like Rita Hayworth, even when she lets her hair down in *Trinidad*, than it is to act like Eleonora Rossi Drago in *Sensualità*'.⁸¹

Yet the specific qualities of Italy's female stars were quickly perceived by the American press, which was alert both to international pin-up culture and the feminine appeal of European stars, and American producers, who signed some of them up for international productions.⁸² Before the war, only Isa Miranda had made the trip across the Atlantic when she was recruited by Paramount as a replacement for Marlene Dietrich. After the conflict, the first actress to be placed under contract was not in fact a new face but an actress who had achieved national prominence in the late Fascist period. Recruited by David O. Selznick as a new Garbo, or a new Bergman, both stars with whom he had worked, Alida Valli was subjected to extensive re-fashioning on her arrival in the United States to ensure that she was packaged in a glamorous way.⁸³ In line with the American idea of stardom, this entailed the establishment of a range of commercial tie-ins, as Valli appeared in promotions for Chesterfield cigarettes and other branded products. In keeping with an established American understanding of the political roles of stars, she was also harnessed to the American campaign to persuade Italians to vote for anti-communist candidates in the parliamentary elections of 1948, to highlight the American aid effort to Italy and for the new Italian edition of *Reader's Digest* magazine.⁸⁴ Such systematic link-ups were unknown in Italy. Not even the Fascist regime had overtly turned the stars into cheerleaders. Before the war, a handful of actresses had appeared in occasional press advertisements for Fiat automobiles or Guizzo and Guizzociglia beauty products, but that was all. Despite heavy Communist and Catholic engagement with cinema, political involvement by actors was rare. In the late 1940s, a handful of male stars threw in their lot with the political parties of the left, but they were certainly not obliged to do so as Valli was. A prominent figure like Anna Magnani went further than most when she appeared in newsreels encouraging Italy's newly-enfranchised women to exercise their right to vote.⁸⁵

In the early 1950s, the stars began to undergo changes in appearance and public image. While Magnani maintained her distinctive down-to-earth profile, Mangano,

Lollobrigida and Loren all underwent a process of glamorisation that followed - instead of preceding - their affirmation as stars. Though there were American influences on this, the process followed a specifically Italian route that took account of national conditions, customs and aesthetics.⁸⁶ This affected off-screen image more than screen roles, though these too, in time, would change. It saw them establish links with a high-end luxury sector and present themselves as flag-bearers for Italian taste. Through their wardrobes, created by Roman designers like Emilio Schubert and the Fontana sisters, and their acquisition of jewellery (usually from the Roman company Bulgari, which had established an international profile before the war), they sought to develop a style that had connotations of history and material beauty. Because of their close links to civil society, this re-articulation of their profiles occurred in tandem with conformity to conservative social pressures. Reka Buckley has highlighted how female stars sought to off-set their profile as high-earning career women with conventional familial imagery that cast them, where possible, as ordinary wives and mothers.⁸⁷ The illustrated weekly press played a vital role in communicating to millions of readers the progress of the stars, as they became fashionable, married, furnished lavish homes, travelled abroad and won recognition.⁸⁸ As the economy developed, the stars became symbols of the progress of the country and the spread of personal and familial desires for material improvement. This had demonstrable benefits for film publicity. Though some commentators including, notably, Ferrà in *Cinespettacolo*, complained that visibility in magazines did not always signal genuine box office appeal,⁸⁹ by mid-decade, the press agent Vittorio Calvino could affirm that 'for years now, film advertising has been proceeding along the steady track of stardom'.⁹⁰ 'From a commercial point of view', he continued, articulating a view that would have resonated with his American colleagues, 'a film's worth is determined by the standing of the actors who appear in it'. Since stars embodied the dreams and desires of the masses, in his view 'creating or reinforcing the aura of the star: this is the main task of those who are concerned with film advertising'.⁹¹

In fact, the way film publicity was working was becoming more complex than this. It was not just a matter of hinging promotion on star names so much as creating a promotional context in which the star aura was related to a series of other elements. Many Italian campaigns took special account of the specificities of the domestic context in a way that American films could not. The director Alessandro Blasetti, a key industry innovator since the 1920s, took a leading role here, as can be seen in his input into campaign that the medium-sized company Documento Film organised for his light comedy about petty thieves and a taxi driver *Peccato che sia una canaglia* (Too Bad She's Bad, 1954). This early example of the pairing of Sophia Loren and Marcello Mastroianni benefitted from ample publicity material for exhibitors, a highly inventive pressbook and various little competitions (Figure 2).⁹² By adapting American-type exploitation to national tastes and combining these with personal appearances and declarations on the part of the film's stars, it turned an ostensible 'pseudo-event' into something more dignified and authentic. It injected a strong Italian, not to say Roman, flavour into proceedings by linking the promotion to topical issues and concerns, for example by organising gatherings in the most important cities of taxi drivers like those depicted in the film. Also significant with a film like *Peccato che sia una canaglia* was the role of the director. Blasetti did not fade into the background during the promotion but was



Figure 2. Publicity brochure featuring the diary of the shoot of *Peccato che sia una canaglia* (Too Bad She's Bad, Alessandro Blasetti, 1954), one of the first films to star Sophia Loren and Marcello Mastroianni. (Author's own collection).

ever present with his stars and took the lead in presenting and explaining the film in the press, lending proceedings a cultural dimension that matched the emergence of the art film.⁹³ The director, rather than the production company, the stars or the genre acted as the principal guarantor of the film's qualities before the public. While American companies encouraged virtually any sort of attention-grabbing initiative, with Paramount heaping praise on an exhibitor in Catania, Sicily who organised a procession of circus animals borrowed from a zoo to draw attention to *The Greatest Show on Earth*,⁹⁴ Italian companies learned that ballyhoo was not a promotional tool that was always appropriate, especially if the principal intended audience was more sophisticated. In practice, what often occurred was that companies developed promotional strategies that combined culture and commercial appeals, or which ran them side by side as with a middle-brow product like *Peccato che sia una canaglia*. This bifurcation fitted with a hierarchical diversification within the press, with popular magazines providing star-led coverage and news and feature magazines focusing more on the director's vision or the relation of the film to other arts or to intellectual debate, reflecting cinema's new high cultural legitimacy.

Tie-ins, product placement and consumption

The elevation of the profile of the director as auteur occurred in a phase in which economic growth and improvements in film advertising raised the question of possible links between film-makers and producers of consumer goods. This was not

an issue many were well-placed to address. During and after the reconstruction period, there was a widespread rejection of large-scale industry and fast urbanisation on the part of Italian political, religious and economic elites, which extended even to Angelo Costa, the head of Confindustria, the principal industrialists' association.⁹⁵ As in other countries, many felt that mass production and mass consumption were off the agenda for the foreseeable future because of the lack of markets and capital, combined with widespread unemployment and low wages. In their different ways, many Catholics and the Communists anyway felt that rapid change would be disruptive to social patterns and traditional businesses. The Americans sought to shake up and bypass these cautious views through the European Reconstruction Programme, or Marshall Plan, which propagated a doctrine of productivity and consumerism.⁹⁶ The promise that 'You too can be like us', with its message of growth and prosperity, was a key platform of the Plan that was sold not to the elites but directly to the people through propaganda films and travelling exhibitions.⁹⁷ It was underlined by the imagery of American life supplied by Hollywood films, whose material quality was an indisputable part of their appeal. Indeed, for Mary Anne Doane, in Hollywood movies, the film frame of itself acts as 'a kind of display window' with spectatorship functioning as 'a form of window-shopping'.⁹⁸ This materiality was encouraged in publicity brochures which pushed cinema owners to involve the local press, seek accords with shops and businesses and find ways to attract categories that might be especially interested in the theme of a film. Many tie-ups were established between large studios and manufacturers to provide for the display of goods in films.⁹⁹ According to Newell, Salmon and Chang, from as early as the 1910s and 1920s, product placement functioned as 'a method of reducing the cost of motion picture production while providing no-cost exposure for products [to the consumer market]'.¹⁰⁰

Italian advertisers were aware of the close connections between American film companies and industry, though they did not always appreciate the extent of them. In the prewar years, there had been some high-end tie-ins in terms of designer furniture and a not very successful attempt to harness cinema to the promotion of Italian fashion.¹⁰¹ Dino Villani, the inventor of many artful publicity events, including the popular Miss Italia beauty contest, spoke for the sector as a whole when he addressed the question of the relations between the cinema and consumption. He acknowledged the influence of cinema on the aspirations and desires of the public, but this did not mean, in his view, that advertisements could be inserted in films; it was necessary to be intelligent and discreet.¹⁰² Commercial advertising, he explained, referring both to American and Italian cinema, was present in films 'but far less often than is often assumed'.¹⁰³ Villani was not persuaded that the practice of product placement could have useful results in a country like Italy, that is 'a country in which the power of absorption of the market is not high (and thus you cannot see large increases in the volume of sales in a short time; that is, during the period a film remains in distribution, as happens in America)'.¹⁰⁴ The risk therefore was that a product that was 'placed' disappeared from the market or lost the visibility it had acquired as soon as the film to which it was linked completed its distribution cycle. Such a view, coming from one of the sector's most inventive advocates, reflected the persistence of prewar

conceptions that would diminish as new ideas and practices were imported to the country.

Italians would experience American movie-making practices directly after the Andreotti law of 1949 reintroduced government support for the film industry and compelled the studios to embark on a programme of location – or ‘runaway’ – production in Italy.¹⁰⁵ The extensive involvement of the United States in the economy and the film industry signalled the importation of new techniques and practices that would acquire particular relevance when the economy began to grow faster than politicians and the business community had expected. In a context in which the USA was favouring the recovery of the Italian economy along new lines, and the hardships of war had led to what would later be termed a ‘revolution in rising aspirations’,¹⁰⁶ there was a concern to communicate an upbeat image of a country that was eager and ready to embrace prosperity and consumption. One way in which this occurred was by bringing directly into play the sort of attention to the developing consumer market that was commonplace in Hollywood. The Italians of the postwar years dreamed of prosperity, but their idea of it was necessarily vague. The dreamscapes of Hollywood movies were alluring fantasies remote from everyday aspirations. The sort of goods Italians found most tempting were rather mundane, like the domestic radio set, which had become a feature of some better-off homes before the war, or new objects which came on to the market after the conflict and which somehow captured the spirit of the time.¹⁰⁷

The Vespa scooter developed by the Piaggio company was one of these. Like its rival, the Lambretta, manufactured in Milan by Innocenti, it was an invention of the impoverished postwar years; a motorised vehicle that was accessible to those who could not afford an automobile. Piaggio astutely did not pitch the vehicle as cheap and utilitarian. It conceived the Vespa as a feminine product with strong leisure appeal in contrast to the male-connnotated motorcycle with its residual fascistic associations.¹⁰⁸ With an eye to the impact of Hollywood, it invested considerable resources in order to construct an aura of glamour around it, using coloured, American-style pin-up illustrations of beautiful young women aboard the scooter.¹⁰⁹

The Vespa appeared prominently on screen in one of the first contemporary-set runaway productions to be made on location in Italy, William Wyler’s Paramount film *Roman Holiday* (1953), a movie that was carefully prepared with significant Italian input.¹¹⁰ A romantic comedy featuring Audrey Hepburn as a truant princess and Gregory Peck as an expatriate American journalist who pretends to be unaware her identity, the film had many of the qualities of a picture postcard. It presented a vision of Rome tailored to American perceptions in that there are no references to Fascism or war and the Italians are depicted as cheerful and romantic, poor but confident about the future. In one of the most memorable scenes of the film, Hepburn and Peck undertake a chaotic journey around central Rome on a Vespa (Figure 3). What is of interest here is how this branded product came to be selected for the scene, what relationship – if any – was established between Piaggio and the production company, and what consequences this had for broader relations between the film industry and manufacturers in Italy.



Figure 3.. Audrey Hepburn and Gregory Peck (partially concealed) on their madcap tour of central Rome on a Vespa scooter in *Roman Holiday* (William Wyler, 1953). The Piaggio company gave two scooters to Paramount for the film and then requested their return at the end. (Screenshot).

The scooter scene was identified early in the course of script development as a crucial one and the director Wyler considered various possible vehicles before selecting the Piaggio-made Vespa, as it caught his eye as being something specific to the Italy of the time.¹¹¹ It was a novelty element rather than a selection based on any understanding of the dynamic economic role it fulfilled in a hard-up country. By the same token, a pre-war Fiat 500 'Topolino' compact motor car was turned into the butt of comedy when the tall Peck tries to work out how to get in and out of it. Nonetheless, Paramount was well aware that considerable commercial benefit would accrue to Piaggio and it approached the matter rather as it would have done with a regular studio production. The transport department of the production team in Rome made contact with Piaggio's office in the capital, proposing a trade that was so straightforward as to not require any written agreement: free vehicles in exchange for free advertising. However, while Piaggio complied and provided two of its scooters, it did not grasp the situation fully. At the conclusion of filming, much to the astonishment of Paramount, it requested the return of the scooters, which by this time were in a poor state. In response, Paramount's Italian lawyer, Emanuele Del Giudice, wrote to the company to inform it of 'the disappointment felt by Mr Wyler, not so much on account of the, let us say, material aspect of the matter, as the lack of understanding of the implications of his choice from an advertising point of view':¹¹²

'The film, in fact, - he continued - will have a worldwide distribution and the Vespa is amply represented in all its best aspects due to the two leading players. It would have been more than legitimate for Mr Wyler to have stipulated a precise agreement - for a value far higher than the price of two

scooters – with a manufacturer of motorscooters, had he not accepted with pleasure the offer of a gift which was made to him with a spontaneous gesture on your part’.

Piaggio, in short, had failed to see that the vehicle’s inclusion in the film was an advantage rather than a concession on its part. Del Giudice spelled out that, in order to remedy the offence caused, the company would need to make a reparatory gesture by instructing one of its American concessionaires to present a brand new Vespa to the director at the Paramount studio in Hollywood.¹¹³ If Piaggio initially showed little appreciation of the power of cinema, it soon changed its view. The film not only brought enormous publicity to the scooter; it turned it into something of a symbol of Italy. Extraordinary benefit accrued to the Italian manufacturer as the film brought the Vespa worldwide visibility and conferred on it an authentic - rather than a borrowed - Hollywood patina.¹¹⁴

After this initial memorable insertion, it became almost an obligatory presence. ‘It became impossible not to have Vespas in films, as a symbol of Italy’s streets and squares’, wrote Lina Wertmüller.¹¹⁵ They were a symbol of the new democracy and of the reconstruction.¹¹⁶ ‘Those likeable curves immediately and indissolubly became part of the cinematic panorama’, Wertmüller continued; ‘for years, Vespas smiled at us from the most popular, diverting and successful films as well as catching our eye in the pages of magazines and newspapers. There was not an important individual in the theatre, cinema, politics or the jet-set who did not end up mounting those curves and who was not happy to be photographed in a youthful, sporting and amusing context’.¹¹⁷ From an advertiser’s point of view, this sort of unpaid endorsement was invaluable because it signalled that a product had become an icon.

The option of placing branded goods in films was of interest in Italy because the official system of cinema advertising, which had been in force since the prewar years, was inflexible and constraining. Through the 1940s and 1950s, companies seeking to present products to cinema audiences mainly had to rely on the spaces that were reserved to them by law; that is to say, the minutes preceding the start of a programme which were principally occupied by newsreels. The advertisements consisted either of promotional short films, often employing cartoons or puppets, or advertising slides – known as ‘diapositive di *réclame*’ - that were shown one after the other up to a maximum of twenty.¹¹⁸ The latter, which generally publicised not so much nationally-known goods as local shops and services, were widely regarded by film-goers as an unwelcome imposition. To off-set this sensation, they were often shown with the lights in the auditorium only partially lowered. Alert to this hostility from those who had paid for entertainment, advertisers learned that announcements had to be subtle to avoid rejection. As Michele Quirico wrote in the magazine *Cinema*, messages needed to be in some way dressed up or disguised: ‘rather than an imposition, [they] should seem like a friendly piece of advice, a whisper in the ear rather than something shouted in your face’.¹¹⁹ Advertisers also had to cope with the stern censorship to which their short films were subjected, like all fiction films. In the Italy of the Christian Democrats, this was primarily concerned to suppress the salacious and the suggestive. An advertisement for the aperitif Pill was rejected by censors because it

included 'an illustration with a provocative pin-up', one for Max Factor No. 2 featuring a married couple ran into trouble because 'the husband's cheek touches that of the wife' and one for a weight-reduction cream named Sveltor was censored on the grounds of the suggestive presence of 'a young lady in a nightdress'.¹²⁰

Product placement as such was not legal (it would only become so in 2004),¹²¹ but product infiltration occurred in Italy more readily than it would have in the USA because there was no objection on the part either of officialdom or the film industry to the inclusion of advertising, signs or products that occurred naturally in the real environments that served as film sets.¹²² 'Verisimilitude' was acceptable and this led both to directors pursuing to a policy of what may be termed 'organic inclusion' and to manufacturers and advertisers proposing goods.¹²³ For companies, the opportunities to exploit verisimilitude multiplied as Italy entered a phase of accelerated economic growth, leading to an ever-wider range of products, including domestic electrical goods, cigarettes and alcoholic drinks finding their way on to the screen.¹²⁴ The success of the Piaggio tie-up led other companies to review the opportunities that cinema offered. The motor manufacturer Fiat, which had undertaken limited film-related advertising in the 1930s, would seek to copy Piaggio's success by supplying vehicles wherever the opportunity presented itself. The company house magazine, *Illustrato Fiat*, featured numerous articles with mostly female stars at the wheel of its models,¹²⁵ or drawing attention to the appearance of Fiats in films including *L'intrigo* (Dark Purpose, Vittorio Sala, 1964), a mystery starring Rossano Brazzi and George Sanders.¹²⁶

This whole story is, to say the least, little known. Few Italians realised that there was any product placement in films since there was little of the sort of overt accompanying exploitation (for example, magazine advertisements in which the stars of a film were shown using products that had perhaps only appeared fleetingly on screen) that occurred in the USA. Yet the practise became widespread because it worked to the advantage of all parties, starting with production companies.¹²⁷ It has hardly ever been acknowledged that the veristic approach in relation to urban environments that directors continued to pursue after the heyday of neo-realism disguised that fact that the advertising posters and commodities which appeared in those very environments increasingly did so because producers, who were preoccupied with costs, forged deals with publicity-hungry manufacturers to secure cars, furniture and other objects for their films.¹²⁸

By this means, cinema played a key role during a crucial phase of modernisation and retained a dominant position within the Italian media system. To use the words of Paola Valentini,¹²⁹ it 'was configured as the "typical entertainment" of the improving standard of living of the Italian population'.¹³⁰ Jeanne Allen has argued that upscaled life visions of the type regularly offered by Hollywood catalysed and mobilised desires for betterment: 'Beyond the purchase of leisure-time diversion – the motion picture also offered access – ownership by viewing – to an inaccessible standard of living', she argues.¹³¹ Something similar occurred in Italy. More than any other medium, cinema offered an illustration of changes in urban consumer habits, leisure, lifestyles and aspirations. It provided its audience with 'a model towards which it feels attracted: it is the ideal life of exceptional people which we would all like to imitate'.¹³² 'We try', Villani commented, 'to think, to

dress and to behave like the characters who feature in our dreams and who are placed before us as models'. Over time, various forms of what was termed 'subliminal' advertising were adopted which focussed on brands; one of the first examples, for the whisky brand J&B was dreamed up by the Bosnian Mladen Music, who was also art director of the *Diners Club* magazine.¹³³ Through the 1960s and 1970s, such types of placement invaded much of popular cinema and would even become something of a cliché, to be cited self-reflexively in a parodic moment of Nanni Moretti's offbeat film comedy *Io sono un autarchico* (I Am Self-Sufficient, 1976).

What impact did this have on the stars? Inevitably, the question arose as to whether the stars' personal appeal could be harnessed to commercial needs, whether their capacity to sell films was transferable to other products in the American way.¹³⁴ In fact, the impact was less than might be expected due to the consolidation at precisely this time of an idea of film as art. Most major stars remained aloof from the sphere of mass consumer products. It was left mainly to secondary figures and television stars to endorse mass market products in the *Carosello* television advertisements that were aired from 1957.¹³⁵ This was a consequence of the increasingly cultural focus of film advertising, especially at the higher end of the market. Promotion explicitly stressed the cultural value of the product and configured the director as an artist. In the new context, specialist agencies, like De.si.ca - Organizzazioni pubblicitarie di Milano, organised promotional events around films and engaged directors in them.¹³⁶ The emphasis on the auteur, which had begun in the heyday of neorealism, became a trademark of the higher end of Italian film production. Directors were names, brands almost, that functioned as guarantees of quality.¹³⁷ This authorial prominence became a distinctive feature of Italian cinema's international profile and the way it was promoted abroad to bourgeois audiences. While campaigns such as those of the Cineriz company (an offshoot of the magazine and book publishing company Rizzoli) for *La dolce vita* (Federico Fellini, 1960), *Otto e mezzo* (Federico Fellini, 1963) and *Deserto rosso* (Red Desert, Michelangelo Antonioni, 1964) did not dispense with pressbooks and the like, these were integrated into a specific pattern that gave pride of place to gala evenings, elite events and intellectual discussions designed to turn auteur films into 'a cultural fashion specific to the upper bourgeoisie' which would then 'trickle down' to lower middle-class strata according to the cycle of product adoption theorised many years earlier by Thorstein Veblen.¹³⁸

In this context, the top stars did not contaminate or diminish their appeal with commercial endorsements, even during the rapid economic development of the late 1950s and 1960s. Lollobrigida, perhaps the preeminent star of the 1950s, moved in a higher realm. When she travelled, she did so as unofficial roving ambassador and was received by presidents and monarchs alike.¹³⁹ The way Claudia Cardinale, an actress who emerged slightly later, was groomed and presented reflected this type of exclusive approach. Although her star persona was shaped by the producer Franco Cristaldi, who began his career making advertising shorts for companies in the Turin area including the textile company Marzotto, and who used his business know-how to turn her into the house star and chief

asset of his Vides company,¹⁴⁰ she was never marketed in conjunction with consumer goods. Nevertheless, the cultural capital that stars accumulated in the 1950s would over time acquire commercial connotations. By the 'second industrial revolution' in the 1980s, the distinctions in Italy between the commercial and the cultural were no longer so pronounced. Loren, who had over the course of three decades, become a symbol of Italy's affirmation and success, off-set a waning screen career at this time with a series of endorsements of Italian fashion.¹⁴¹

Conclusion

Mary Nolan has observed that, while the war might have 'marked the end of the European global era', it did not eradicate 'European nations' efforts to retain their distinctive identities'.¹⁴² This regarded not only government action but cultural practices too. The specificity of Italy's adaptation to mass consumerism entailed a trajectory that hybridised the American model rather than copying it. This was critically articulated through cinema, which maintained a central place in leisure and culture at least until the mid 1970s. The medium was crucial in crystallising material desires and providing a visual representation of their fulfilment.

Cinema's promotional techniques were part of a developing commercial sphere and as such they encountered forces of the consumer economy. Yet, as Adam Arvidsson has observed, the European socio-economic model placed more emphasis on the state and the citizen rather than the market and the consumer.¹⁴³ Art and culture were not secondary but central. Promotion and advertising were influenced by this, suggesting that the relations between film production and consumption were complex and often mediated in original ways. While American activities were an undeniable reference point, film promotion also took specific routes as a consequence of political and cultural factors, the conditions of the economy and the purposes of film companies. As it hybridised and filtered American practices, Italian cinema found ways of bridging and combining the commercial and the cultural to suit domestic conditions and its own particular development, in which national specificity fed into cultural identity to find a distinctive market appeal.

Acknowledgements

Research for this article was conducted as part of the AHRC project on 'Producers and Production Practices in the History of Italian Cinema'. The author is grateful to the staff of the Biblioteca Sormani (Milan), of the Cineteca di Bologna library, and of the Margaret Herrick Library, Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, Los Angeles.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author.

Notes

1. For a rare example of a treatment of the British film industry from the promotional point of view, see S. Chibnall, 'Banging the Gong: The Promotional Strategies of Britain's J. Arthur Rank Organisation in the 1950s', *Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television* 37, no. 2 (2016): 242–71.
2. G. P. Brunetta, *Il ruggito del leone: Hollywood alla conquista dell'impero dei sogni nell'Italia di Mussolini* (Venice: Marsilio, 2013).
3. See G. Conti, *Occulta sarà tua sorella! Pubblicità, product placement, persuasione: dalla psicologia subliminale ai nuovi media* (Rome: Castelvecchi, 2004).
4. See, for stimulating examples of this, N. Fullwood, *Cinema, Gender and Everyday Space: Comedy Italian Style* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015); and A. Bertolotti, 'Bisogni e desideri: società, consumi e cinema in Italia dalla Ricostruzione al Boom' (Università della Tuscia, doctoral thesis, 2017).
5. J. Staiger, 'Announcing Wares, Winning Patrons, Voicing Ideals: Thinking about the History and Theory of Film Advertising', *Cinema Journal* 29, no. 3 (1990), 3–31.
6. D. Forgacs and S. Gundle, *Mass Culture and Italian Society from Fascism to the Cold War* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2007), 42–53.
7. The most significant works on Italian popular cinema are G. Manzoli, *Da Ercole a Fantozzi: cinema popolare e società italiana dal boom economico alla neotelevisione (1958–1956)* (Rome: Carocci, 2013); and L. Bayman and S. Rigoletto, eds. *Popular Italian Cinema* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013). Industrial questions have been addressed periodically, starting with volumes published by Marsilio in the 1980s, including E. Magrelli, ed., *Sull'industria cinematografica italiana* (Venice: Marsilio, 1986).
8. I have addressed some aspects of the issue in the following three pieces: 'Visions of Prosperity: Consumerism and Popular Culture in Italy from the 1920s to the 1950s', in *Three Postwar Eras in Comparison: Western Europe, 1918 – 1945 – 1989*, ed. C. Levy and M. Roseman (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2002), 151–72; 'Tecniche e pratiche di pubblicità nel cinema italiano tra gli anni '30 e '50', *Quaderni del CSCI* no. 13 (2017), 33–43; 'Cinema e mondo dei consumi', in *Annali Einaudi 27: I consume*, ed. S. Cavazza and E. Scarpellini (Turin: Einaudi, 2018), 546–64.
9. On the place of *Carosello* in Italian consumer culture, see E. Scarpellini, *Material Nation: A Consumer's History of Modern Italy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 163, 180–81. More generally on the media and consumer culture, see F. Anania, ed., *Consumi e mass media* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 2013) and F. Fasce, E. Bini, and B. Gaudenzi, *Comprare per credere: la pubblicità in Italia dalla Belle Époque a oggi* (Rome: Carocci, 2016).
10. See Forgacs and Gundle, *Mass Culture and Italian Society*, Chap. 2.
11. In 1915, the US Supreme Court ruled that 'the exhibition of moving pictures is a business, pure and simple'. Movies were not seen as cultural artefacts or legitimate vehicles of opinion. See G. Bertellini, *The Divo and the Duce: Promoting Film Stardom and Political Leadership in 1920s America* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2019), 19. By contrast, in Europe movies were seen as having cultural consequences. See, for one example, M. Nolan, *Visions*

- of *Modernity: American Business and the Modernization of Germany* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), 108, 113.
12. Staiger, 'Announcing Wares', 6–10.
 13. Compare S. Ewen and E. Ewen, *Channels of Desire. Mass Images and the Shaping of American Consciousness* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1992).
 14. C. Eckert, 'The Carole Lombard in Macy's Window', in *Stardom: An Industry of Desire*, ed. C. Gledhill (London: Routledge, 1991), 35.
 15. H. Addison, 'Hollywood, Consumer Culture, and the Rise of Body Shaping', in *Hollywood Goes Shopping*, ed. D. Dresser and G. S. Jowett (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2000), 3.
 16. J. Cha, 'Product Placement in Movies: Perspectives from Motion Picture Firms', *Journal of Media Business Studies* 13, no. 2 (2016): 95–116, 97.
 17. D. Boorstin, *The Image: A Guide to Pseudo-Events in America* (New York: Random House, 1962).
 18. Staiger, 'Announcing Wares', 10. See also, R. S. Sennett, *Hollywood Hoopla: Creating and Selling Movies in the Golden Age of Hollywood* (New York: Billboard Books, 1998).
 19. Bertellini, *The Divo and the Duce*, 74.
 20. J. Newell, C. T. Salmon, and S. Chang, 'The Hidden History of Product Placement', *Journal of Broadcasting and Electronic Media* 50, no. 4 (2006): 575–94, 581–82.
 21. A. Arvidsson, *Marketing Modernity: Italian Advertising from Fascism to Postmodernity* (London: Routledge, 2003).
 22. In Forgacs and Gundle, *Mass Culture and Italian Society*, it is argued that it only becomes possible to speak of 'mass culture' in Italy after World War Two. See pp. 2–4.
 23. See Gundle, 'Visions of Prosperity', 166, for discussion of a Shirley Temple department store tie-in. The original source is *Bollettino 20th Century Fox Film*, September 1936.
 24. Arvidsson, *Marketing Modernity*, 16.
 25. Brunetta, *Il ruggito del leone*, 67–88.
 26. See S. Gundle, *Mussolini's Dream Factory: Film Stardom in Fascist Italy* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2013), 45–8, 73–4, 106.
 27. See, for example, E. Mucci, ed., *Il cinema nei manifesti di Silvano Campeggi, 1945-69* (Florence: Giunti/Opus, 1988).
 28. Brunetta, *Il ruggito del leone*, 135–60.
 29. See, for example, the testimony offered in M. Onorati, 'Il lancio del film in Italia', *Cinespettacolo*, November 1947, 4.
 30. M. Nolan, *Transatlantic Century: Europe and America, 1890-2010* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 154.
 31. K. Schoonover, *Brutal Vision: The Neorealist Body in Postwar Italian Cinema* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2012), 94.
 32. D. W. Ellwood, *The Shock of America: Europe and the Challenge of the Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 393–417; Nolan, *Transatlantic Century*; P. Scrivano, 'Signs of Americanization in Italian Domestic Life: Italy's

- Postwar Conversion to Consumerism', *Journal of Contemporary History* 40, no. 2 (2005): 317–40.
33. Onorati, 'Il lancio del film in Italia', 4.
 34. See Forgacs and Gundle, *Mass Culture and Italian Society*, Chapter 1.
 35. *Bicycle Thieves* and some other neorealist films featured movie and advertising posters in their mises-en-scene and positioned them as fantasy in opposition to the main narrative thrust of the film. On this, see A. Villari, 'Rita Hayworth e Lamberto Maggiorani', 8 1/2 44 (2019): 50–1.
 36. In *Il ruggito del leone*, Brunetta asserts that this slogan 'Un film diventa ottimo se lanciato bene' appeared regularly in the Italian publicity brochures of Metro Goldwyn Mayer, 146.
 37. M. Roddolo, 'Chiacchiere dell' esercente', *Primi piani*, n. 2, June 1941, 45–6.
 38. Anon., 'Pubblicità', *Araldo dello spettacolo*, February 6-7, 1948, 2.
 39. See Forgacs and Gundle, *Mass Culture and Italian Society*, 254–68.
 40. Arvidsson, *Marketing Modernity*, 16.
 41. See Gundle, 'Cinema e mondo dei consumi', 557–8.
 42. See S. Gundle, *Fame amid the Ruins: Italian Film Stardom in the Age of Neorealism* (New York: Berghahn, 2019), 42–4.
 43. See E. Di Nolfo, 'La diplomazia del cinema americano in Europa nel secondo dopoguerra', in D. W. Ellwood and G. P. Brunetta, eds., *Hollywood in Europa: Industria, Poitica, Pubbico del Cinema 1945-1960* (Florence: La casa Usher/Ponte alle Grazie, 1991), 29–39.
 44. See B. Corsi, 'La ripresa produttiva', in *Storia del cinema italiano, Vol. VIII, 1949-1953*, ed. L. De Giusti (Venice/Rome: Marsilio/Edizioni Bianco & Nero, 2003), 151–2.
 45. A. Ferraù, 'La pubblicità', *Cinespettacolo*, July-August 1947, 17–18.
 46. D. L., 'Una povera Cenerentola la pubblicità', *Cinespettacolo*, March-April 1948, 8.
 47. Corsi, 'La ripresa produttiva', 146.
 48. G. L. Rondi, *Le mie vite allo specchio: diari 1947-1997* (Rome: Edizioni Sabinae, 2016), 28–9.
 49. *Lux film notizie*, November 1, 1952, 4–5.
 50. This has been a common practice of American businesses abroad throughout the twentieth century. See. R. Kuisel, *The French Way: How France Embraced and Rejected American Values and Power* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2012), 153.
 51. *Lux film notizie*, November 15, 1952, 4.
 52. See D. LeMahieu, *A Culture for Democracy: Mass Communication and the Cultivated Mind in Britain between the Wars* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988), Chapter 3. The issue is discussed in Ellwood, *The Shock of America*, 107–13.
 53. Nolan, *Transatlantic Century*, 241–42.
 54. On the civic aspects of neorealism and the high cultural aspects of European films, see Schoonover, *Brutal Vision*, Chapter 2, especially 74.
 55. V. De Grazia, *Irresistible Empire: America's Advance though Twentieth-Century Europe* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2005), 4.

56. On this phenomenon, see E. Mosconi, 'Segnali d'autore nel press-book cinematografico', in *Il racconto del film: la novelizzazione dal catalogo al trailer*, ed. A. Aurelitano and V. Re (Udine: Dip. Di Storia e tutela dei beni Culturali, Università degli Studi di Udine, 2006), 337–46.
57. For information on this, I am grateful to Silvia Magistrali, who is working on a Warwick PhD thesis on the relations between Italian magazine publishing and cinema in the postwar years.
58. R. Cremoncini, 'Foreword', in *Cinema Italia: Classic Film Posters*, ed. M. Bagshaw (London: Estorick Collection of Modern Italian Art, 2004), 3.
59. M. Bagshaw, 'Memories: The Italian Film Poster, 1914-1975', in *Cinema Italia*, ed. Bagshaw, 5.
60. 'Silvano Campeggi: artista del cinema', Exhibition, Salaborsa, Bologna, June–September 2019. See also the essays in Mucci, *Il cinema nei manifesti di Silvano Campeggi*.
61. M. Onorati, 'Importanza della pubblicità', *Cinespettacolo*, December 1949, 21. On the differences between Italian and American advertising cultures, see F. Fasce, 'Fare pubblicità: Italia e Stati Uniti a confronto', in *Pubblicità: la nascita della comunicazione moderna*, ed. D. Cimorelli (Milan: Silvana, 2017), 49–54.
62. Anonymous comment (possibly by Alessandro Ferrau) in *Cinespettacolo*, December 1949, 27.
63. Bifurcation of this type was a feature of American advertising too, as Schoonover shows. See *Brutal Vision*, 83.
64. De Grazia, *Irresistible Empire*, 298.
65. Eckert, 'The Carol Lombard', 36–7.
66. Bertellini, *The Divo and the Duce*, 2–3.
67. Boorstin, *The Image*.
68. On the wedding and contemporary press coverage, see S. Gundle, 'Memory and Identity: Popular Culture in Postwar Italy', in *Italy Since 1945*, ed. P. McCarthy (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 190–3.
69. See S. Gundle, *Between Hollywood and Moscow: The Italian Communists and the Challenge of Mass Culture, 1943-1991* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2000).
70. See S. Gundle, *Bellissima: Feminine Beauty and the Idea of Italy* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007), 131–41. The Catholic disapproval of beauty contests is also discussed in the same chapter of the book.
71. Ellwood, *The Shock of America*, 115.
72. See Gundle, *Fame amid the Ruins*, Chapter 3.
73. On the producer's attachment to the still-popular Nazzari, see T. Kezich and A. Levantesi, *Dino: De Laurentiis, La vita e i film* (Milan: Feltrinelli, 2001), 58–9.
74. On the rise of the postwar Italian star system and the role of production companies, see Gundle, *Fame amid the Ruins*, Chapters 2 and 3.
75. The two expressions in inverted commas are taken from De Grazia, *Irresistible Empire*, 298 and 312.
76. Bertellini, *The Divo and the Duce*, 88.
77. *Ibid.*, 134.

78. It would soon return, though investigations of the underbelly of cinema were few. A rare example is D. Biondi, *Sottobosco del cinema* (Bologna: Capitol, 1963). It is shown, strikingly, in the film *Io la conosco bene* (I Knew Her Well, Antonio Pietrangeli, 1965).
79. Anon., untitled, *Festival*, February 28, 1953.
80. O. Alessi, 'Il cinema propone e la moda dispone', *Festival*, February 28, 1953, 12–13.
81. *Ibid.* Rossi Drago, who took part in the final of the 1947 Miss Italia contest, was known for the intensity of her performances. Her character torments two brothers who fight for her favours in *Sensualità* (Enticement, Clemente Fracassi, 1952), which was one of the most daring Italian films of the period.
82. For an American view of the Italian star scene, see Anon., 'Hollywood on the Tiber', *Time*, 16 August 1954, 32–6.
83. See S. Gundle, 'Alida Valli in Hollywood: From Star of Fascist Cinema to "Selznick Siren"', *Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television* 32, no. 4 (2012): 559–87, 568–73.
84. *Ibid.*, 573–77.
85. See, for example, *La Settimana Incom* 00148, 18 aprile: *l'Italia alle urne*. www.patrimonio.archivioluca.com.
86. On Italian-style glamour, see S. Gundle, 'Hollywood Glamour and Mass Consumption in Postwar Italy', *Journal of Cold War Studies* 4, no. 3 (2002): 95–118; and R. Buckley, 'Glamour and the Italian Female Stars of the 1950s', *Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television* 28, no. 3 (2008): 267–89.
87. R. Buckley, 'Marriage, Motherhood and the Italian Film Stars of the 1950s', in *Women in Italy: 1945-1960*, ed. P. Morris (New York: Palgrave, 2006), 35–49.
88. On the case of Loren, see S. Gundle, 'Sophia Loren: Italian Icon,' *Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television* 15, no. 3 (1995): 367–85.
89. A. Ferrau, 'Il film italiani che sono andati bene anche nel mercato interno', *Cinespettacolo*, March 7–14, 1953, 6.
90. V. Calvino, 'Baci sulla carta', *Cinema*, August 10, 1955, 763.
91. *Ibid.*
92. The materials are conserved in Fondazione Cineteca di Bologna-Fondo Alessandro Blasetti (henceforth FCB-FAB), F. *Peccato che sia una canaglia*.
93. Mosconi, 'Segnali d'autore', 340–1.
94. *Giornale Paramount*, March 1, 1953, 1.
95. Ellwood, *The Shock of America*, 364–6.
96. D. W. Ellwood, *Rebuilding Europe: Western Europe, America and Postwar Reconstruction* (Longman: London, 1992), Chapter 5.
97. D. W. Ellwood, "'You Too Can Be Like Us". Selling the Marshall Plan', *History Today*, October 1998, <https://www.historytoday.com/archive/%E2%80%98you-too-can-be-us%E2%80%99-selling-marshall-plan>.
98. M. A. Doane, 'The Economy of Desire: The Commodity Form in/of the Cinema', *Quarterly Review of Film and Video* 11 (1989): 23–33, 27.
99. Eckert, 'The Carol Lombard'.
100. Newell, Salmon, and Chang, 'The Hidden History', 576.

101. See G. P. Brunetta, 'Mille e più di mille (Lire al mese)', in *Risate di regime*, ed. M. Argentieri (Venice: Marsilio, 1991); and Gundle, *Mussolini's Dream Factory*, 68–75.
102. D. Villani, *La pubblicità e i suoi segreti* (Milan: Editoriale Domus, 1946), 150.
103. *Ibid.*, 151. The great brand names that appear in a film, he explained, 'are usually there because they have been put there by a director rather than as a result of accords with manufacturers. A bottle of Martini has to appear on an elegant table rather than another make, a luxury auto must be an Isotta Fraschini, a Buick or a Chrysler'.
104. *Ibid.*
105. See B. Corsi, *Con qualche dollaro in meno. Storia economica del cinema italiano* (Rome: Editori Riuniti, 2001); and Forgacs and Gundle, *Mass Culture and Italian Society*, 132–3, 136–7.
106. Ellwood, *Rebuilding Europe*, 47–8.
107. See Scarpellini, *Material Nation*, 128–30.
108. Mussolini had posed for photographers on Moto Guzzi motorcycles, which were the recommended form of transport for local Fascist officials.
109. O. Calabrese, ed., *Il mito di Vespa* (Milano: Lupetti, 1996).
110. The director's papers confirm the roles of Cesare Zavattini, Suso Cecchi d'Amico and Ennio Flaiano in shaping and developing the script. Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, Margaret Herrick Library (Los Angeles) (henceforth AMPAS-MHL), William Wyler Papers (henceforth WW), F. 337: *Roman Holiday* script notes. Letter of Zavattini to Wyler, January 15, 1952. See also F. 347 *Roman Holiday* Paramount. Letter from Wyler to Don Hartman (Paramount), July 26, 1952 in which he asserts that Cecchi d'Amico and Flaiano did work 'of great value to the picture'.
111. V. Boni and S. Cordara, *Vespa: la storia di una leggenda dalle origini a oggi* (Milan: Edizioni White Star, 2019), 163.
112. AMPAS-MHL, WW, F. 340 *Roman Holiday* correspondence, Letter of Emanuele De Giudice to Piaggio Rome office, February 23, 1953. In another file, F. 342 *Roman Holiday* Henry Henigson, there is an internal memo from Henigson to Jack Gold dated August 19, 1952 which states that Wyler 'would like to have one of the Vespas which we are using for his personal purposes'.
113. AMPAS-MHL, WW, F. 340 *Roman Holiday* correspondence, Letter of Emanuele De Giudice to Piaggio Rome office, February 23, 1953.
114. Decades later, the Piaggio company, even claimed the credit for this, asserting in publicity material that 'the most successful Vespa campaign was determined by the perfect product placement in the fiction film *Roman Holiday*'. See www.ivespa.com/vespa-advertising.
115. L. Wertmüller, 'Ciak ... si Vespa!', in Calabrese, *Il mito di Vespa*, 155.
116. Gundle, 'Visions of prosperity', 160.
117. Wertmüller, 'Ciak ... si Vespa!', 155.
118. For a selection of the slides that were used in Sicily, see A. Buttitta, ed., *La pubblicità al cinema negli anni Cinquanta* (Palermo: Sellerio, 2008).
119. M. Quirico, 'Ma è una cosa seria', *Cinema*, June 16, 1956, 294–7.
120. P. L. Lanza, 'Il bucato degli angeli', *Cinema*, May 10, 1955, 349.

121. On the Urbani law of 2004, see Gundle, 'Tecniche e pratiche di pubblicità', 33–4.
122. Luigi Luraschi of Paramount Italy explained to Wyler the differences in the practices of the two countries. 'Ordinarily, were the picture being shot in the United States against a United States background', he asserted, 'we would, in line with company policy, ask that all advertising be removed and that no actual trade names be used. However, in this particular instance, since the products involved will be Italian products, and in order to enable the company to get as authentic a flavor of Rome as is possible, it is perfectly okay to photograph all Italian posters'. AMPAS-MHL, WW, F. 352 *Roman Holiday* production. Letter from Luraschi to Wyler, May 2, 1952.
123. Newell, Salmon, and Chang, 'The Hidden History', 577–8.
124. Vittorio Calvino noted in 1950 that cinema still seemed to ignore the existence of an Italian fashion sector, a problem that was no nearer resolution four years later. See V. Calvino, 'Chi vestirà le attrici?', *L'Eco del Cinema e dello spettacolo*, November 15, 1950, 15–16 and L. Littera, 'Moda e cinema: espressioni d'arte moderna', *Schermi illustrati*, May 1954, 10–11.
125. The very first issue of *Illustrato Fiat* had a back-cover picture feature inviting readers to identify the female stars photographed in the new Fiat 1100, 'Stelle al volante della nuova Fiat 1100. Le riconoscete?' *Illustrato Fiat*, December 1953, 12. On the launch of the Fiat 500 in 1957, film stars in Los Angeles were photographed inspecting the vehicle. See 'Splendori di stelle di "Hollywood" sulle vetture Fiat gunte a Los Angeles', *Illustrato Fiat*, June 1957, 20–1.
126. See, for example, 'Vetture Fiat in nuovi film', *Illustrato Fiat*, August-September 1963, 9.
127. Newell, Salmon, and Chang, 'The Hidden History', 576.
128. Evidence for this often has to be found in out of the way places. For example, in a biography of De Laurentiis, it is reported that, as early as 1938, the fledging producer offered Fiat free publicity in exchange for use of a vehicle in a film. See Kezich and Levantesi, *Dino*, 32–3. Many years later, he offered Blasetti an Alfa Romeo as a thankyou gift for shooting without credit some crowd scenes for a film by another director, namely *La grande guerra* (The Great War, Mario Monicelli, 1959), an offer that suggested he was in regular contact with manufacturers or suppliers. See FCB-FAB, CRS 17, fasc. 0486. Letter from De Laurentiis to Blasetti, August 21, 1959.
129. See P. Valentini, 'Il cinema e gli altri media', in *Storia del cinema italiano Vol VIII 1949-1953*, ed. L. De Giusti (Venice and Rome: Marsilio/Edizioni di Bianco & Nero, 2003), 103–15.
130. *Ibid.*, 113.
131. J. Allen, 'The Film Viewer as Consumer', *Quarterly Review of Film Studies* (Fall 1980), 481–98, 484.
132. Villani, *La pubblicità e i suoi segreti*, 150.
133. Testimony of Gianni Ducci to the author, July 20, 2017.
134. In America in the 1930s, for a brief period, Eckert observed, the 'fusion of products and performing stars' took the form of specific pairings, for example

- of Eddie Cantor and Texaco, and Bing Crosby and Kraft. Eckert, 'The Carol Lombard', 37.
135. Mario Medici reports example of two stars endorsing Durban's toothpaste in magazine advertisements in 1950. One of these was a star from the Fascist period, Maria Denis, while the other, Silvana Pampanini, was a star of popular rather than prestige cinema. See Medici, *La parola pubblicitaria: due secoli di storia fra slogan, ritmi e wellerisimi* (Venice: Marsilio, 1986), 146.
136. Even a film which adopted an overtly satirical attitude towards the world of advertising like *La cuccagna* (Abundance, Luciano Salce, 1962) was filled with billboards and advertising for real companies, on which the camera dwells.
137. See M. Landy, *Stardom Italian Style: Screen Performance and Personality in Italian Cinema* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2008), Chapter 5.
138. F. Cantore and A. Minuz, 'Il pubblico d'autore nell'Italia degli anni Sessanta: uno studio delle strategie di comunicazione della Cineriz', *Cinema e storia* (2018), 48–66, 54. For Veblen's theory, see *The Theory of the Leisure Class* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009; first published 1899).
139. L. Canales, *Imperial Gina* (Boston: Branden, 1990), 83, 149.
140. FCB, Archivio CristaldiFilm, Claudia Cardinale, Fasc.3 CC Studio 65/69 'Supercardinale'.
141. See S. Gundle, 'Fame, Fashion and Style: The Italian Star System', in *Italian Cultural Studies: An Introduction*, ed. D. Forgacs and R. Lumley (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), 309–26, especially 321–24. In the same period, some auteurs, including even Fellini and Antonioni, filmed high-profile advertising spots for television, although some prominent directors (including Fellini) also waged a campaign against the interruption of films on television with numerous advertisements, a practice that was introduced by the private broadcasters, including Silvio Berlusconi, who entered the market in the 1980s.
142. Nolan, *Transatlantic Century*, 154.
143. Arvidsson, *Marketing Modernity*, 13.

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