

Visualising the *anni di piombo*: The representation of the Bologna massacre in *Romanzo criminale* (2005) and *Romanzo criminale - La serie* (2008-2010)

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ABSTRACT

Giancarlo De Cataldo's novel *Romanzo criminale* (2002) has been turned into a film, *Romanzo criminale* (directed by Michele Placido, 2005), and subsequently a TV series, *Romanzo criminale - La serie 1 e 2* (directed by Stefano Sollima, 2008-2010). Like the novel, the film and the TV series are inspired by the story of the *Banda della Magliana*, a criminal gang that terrorised Rome in the 1970s and 1980s, and frame the crime story in the political and social context of the time. This article concentrates on the representation of the 1980 terrorist attack known as *la strage di Bologna* that features in both. I argue that, following Placido's controversial graphic representation of the *strage* and its victims, Sollima consciously avoided creating the possibility for what Burgoyne calls a "prosthetic" experience (2009: 139) by which the audience might understand and remediate this traumatic event through the emotions of one character. The series (in which graphic violence is frequent and functional to the representation of the psyche of the criminal protagonists) avoids sensationalism and provides a representation of the *strage* in which historical documents are central. Given Sollima's response to critics' concerns regarding the film, and his avoidance of the manipulation of archival material, *Romanzo criminale - La serie* must be seen as the result of mediation among film producers, critics and scholars. It also illustrates the potential of the series format, compared with the feature-film format, in the representation of historical events on film.

The TV series *Romanzo criminale - La serie* (2008-2010, seasons 1 and 2), directed by Stefano Sollima, was produced after the controversial film entitled *Romanzo criminale* directed in 2005 by Michele Placido. Both are adaptations of Giancarlo De Cataldo's novel *Romanzo criminale* published in 2002. In this article, I argue that *Romanzo criminale - La serie* is particularly effective in re-interpreting the troubled period of Italy's history known as the *anni di piombo* (years of lead), 1969-1982.¹ In particular, I compare the treatment,

in the film and TV series, of the *strage di Bologna* – the terrorist bombing of Bologna railway station on 2 August 1980, which killed 85 people and wounded more than 200. By analysing the representation and interpretation of the deadliest terrorist attack ever to occur on Italian soil, I argue that *Romanzo criminale — La serie* illustrates the potential of the series format, compared with the feature-film format, in the representation of history on film, with the series format allowing for more analysis and depth.

The experience of terrorism and political violence during the *anni di piombo* has attracted the imagination of Italian film-makers to a significant degree. As Alan O’Leary argues, “Italian cinema has played a prominent role in articulating the ongoing impact of the *anni di piombo* and in defining the ways in which Italians remember and work through the events of the long 1970s” (2010: 244). Interestingly, O’Leary goes on to say “[f]or much of the 1970s it was not the culturally valued, politically committed or auteurist cinema that addressed the problem or phenomenon of terrorism but the genres of the cop film (the *poliziesco*) and the so-called Italian-style comedy (*commedia all’italiana*)” (245). Therefore, from the very start, popular culture, through crime fiction in particular, has been at the forefront in interpreting that period. Christian Uva highlights the propensity for Italian cinema in the first decade of this century to tackle the so-called *misteri d’Italia*, violent and traumatic events in which the Italian state is thought to have colluded in bringing about (2011: 8-9). This propensity can be explained by a new focus on terrorism in literature and films following the 9/11 attacks in the USA, in Italy and globally (Pezzotti 2016: 169).

Most of the Italian films set during the *anni di piombo* have been at the centre of heated debate. The reactions that some of these films have provoked among people affected by the violence have given rise to questions about the appropriateness of dealing with this topic.² Critics lament that, in spite of the directors’ intentions, these films inevitably glamorise controversial characters (Bonsaver 2006: 80), and often exhibit a contradictory structure when they confront and re-work a traumatic period of Italian history yet at the same time sell Italy as “an object of tourist desire” through the use of beautiful scenery and cultural landmarks (O’Leary 2010: 253).

Placido’s filmic version of De Cataldo’s novel, *Romanzo criminale* (2005), was the subject of such debate. The film was a commercial success in Italy and one of the biggest export successes of recent years.³ Like the novel, the film is based on the story of the real-life *Banda della Magliana* criminal gang and the drug-fuelled mayhem it wreaked in the 1970s and 1980s in Rome. As Mauro Resmini argues, Placido reworked the epic of the novel into individual tragedies by concentrating on the individual stories of the anti-heroes (2016: 252). While the novel is a powerfully executed noir and a drama chronicling one of the most tumultuous eras in Italy’s recent history, in which criminal organisations, elements of Italian secret services and terrorists often colluded, Placido put the theme of friendship among the protagonists at the centre of the narrative. In the film, the use of impressive wardrobe styling, scenes of extravagant lifestyle and attractive actors glamorised life in the underworld. According to Guido Bonsaver, “the American models for the film are Scorsese’s *Goodfellas*, and the camera work in De Palma’s *Scarface* and Tarantino’s *Reservoir Dogs*” as well as the Italian B-movie gangster films of the 1970s (2006: 80). As I have argued elsewhere (2016: 217), Placido’s film also evokes Sergio Leone’s *C’era una volta in America*. Similar to the latter, *Romanzo criminale* has a prologue in which the innocence of the young protagonists is brutally crushed by a murder and their subsequent arrest. The film is then divided into three parts, each taking the name of one of the main characters, and follows their personal lives and careers through the 1970s and 1980s. The reader of the novel does not necessarily sympathise with the flawed characters, whereas Placido’s choice to shape the film as a story of lost innocence creates,

to borrow the words of Murray Smith, “the optimal conditions for an intense, sympathetic engagement” (1994: 47) with the protagonists.

In the film, radios and TVs are often switched on and have the function of reminding the big-screen audience of the many tragic events that occurred during the *anni di piombo*, but the events of history remain mainly in the background, intersecting negligibly with the protagonists. There are two exceptions: the kidnapping of Christian Democratic Party president Aldo Moro by the major left-wing terrorist group, the Red Brigades, in 1978, and the *strage di Bologna*, carried out by a neo-fascist group.⁴ Several scholars have analysed the representation of Moro’s kidnapping in the film and the TV series, including Lombardi (2012), O’Rawe (2014), Resmini (2016), and Salerno (2016). This article concentrates on the less analysed episode of the *strage di Bologna*.

While in the novel there is no connection at all between the *strage di Bologna* and the activities of the *Banda della Magliana*, the film intertwines the gang’s history with the *strage* and puts it at the centre of the narrative. Placido shows a secret agent arranging for a particularly ruthless gang member, Nero (played by Riccardo Scamarcio), to execute the man sent to plant the bomb. The gang leader, Libano (Pierfrancesco Favino), is forced to help through blackmail, but feels uneasy about it. Another member, Freddo (Kim Rossi Stuart), disagrees entirely and goes to Bologna on the day of the attack. He is present when the bomb explodes at the railway station and in a controversial scene he wanders around the rubble in shock. By contrast, in De Cataldo’s novel, the protagonist of a similar scene is Inspector Scialoja, who reaches the site of the *strage* and joins the rescue operations, during which he is disturbed upon noticing the presence of secret service agents:

La presenza di uomini dei Servizi sul teatro della strage era più che giustificata. Indagano, è il loro mestiere. Eppure, lui sapeva chi erano quegli uomini. Sapeva chi proteggevano a Roma. Indagano per sapere o indagano per evitare che altri sappiano? Scialoja intuì collegamenti, strade maestre, deviazioni per viottoli oscuri e malsani. L’enormità dello scenario che gli si stava spalancando davanti agli occhi lo fece tremare (2002: 241).⁵

In this pivotal episode, Scialoja thus becomes aware of the “strategy of tension”, that is, the collusion between parts of the Italian state, neo-fascist terrorists and provocateurs in the 1970s (Ceci 2013; Ginsborg 1990). This is exemplified by the use of the word “*deviazioni*” (diversions), which recalls “*servizi deviati*”, a term commonly used in Italian to refer to covert activities of corrupt elements of the Italian intelligence service. The detective decides to leave his job in Emilia-Romagna and return to Rome in order to investigate. In other words, the trauma of the Bologna attack prompts Scialoja to reconsider his life and make it more meaningful (Colleoni 2010: 178-179). Conversely, in the film, archival video footage was carefully selected by the filmmakers for effect by juxtaposing images of wounded and dead bodies with images of Freddo wandering in the rubble (O’Leary 2013). Scialoja’s traumatic experience in the novel becomes, instead, a decisive moment in Freddo’s life: shocked by the vision of innocent lives destroyed in the terrorist attack, he decides to renounce his criminal life and leave Italy with his girl-friend Roberta.⁶

It may be argued that the use of digital technology to place Freddo at the Bologna railway station after the bombing is meant to elicit a mimetic response on the part of the viewer, enabling the audience “to inhabit, through identification with the main character, an actual historical scene” (Burgoyne 2009: 139). This could generate for the public what Burgoyne calls a “prosthetic memory” of the *strage di Bologna*. This appears to be Catherine O’Rawe’s view on this scene when she argues that “Placido deliberately inserts Freddo as a stand-in or proxy for Italians themselves”, so that “Freddo’s presence both

helps today's audience to understand the event [...] and remediates the event" (2014: 110-111). This is an interesting interpretation. However, the choice of an anti-hero as the character through which to remediate such a topical event may be problematic. According to O'Leary, the decision to show the explosion and its victims carries "the risk that the work of the terrorists is advertised and even, in a sense, celebrated" (2009: 50). It can also be argued that, by giving more emphasis to Freddo's consciousness, the director turns this pivotal moment in Italy's recent history into an opportunity to enhance Freddo's humanity in the film.

The subsequent TV series entitled *Romanzo criminale - La serie* has enjoyed critical and commercial success both in Italy and internationally. It was produced by Sky Cinema and broadcast on Sky in Italy between 2008 and 2010, and subsequently on Fox Crime, Sky One and Sky Arts with English subtitles. As Resmini argues, Sollima's series shares several fundamental traits with American series such as *Breaking Bad* or *True Detective*, for example, "the ambitious scope of the narrative; the attention to detail; the budget worthy of a feature film; the predilection for complex storytelling; the creative repurposing of genre conventions; the deployment of anti-heroes as protagonists" (2016: 254). Sollima directed every episode in the series, lending the final product a strong unity of form. Yet, as Marta Boni observes, each episode possesses its own internal semi-autonomy (2013: 97).

The series was broadcast three years after the film. This short time lapse is not surprising; as Christiana Gregoriou observes "[c]rime fiction is a genre that is particularly prone to migration as it continues to enjoy consistent popularity and attractiveness irrespective of time, place, as well as people" (2017: 3). Gregoriou uses the term "migration" for translations, adaptations and remakes of crime fiction and argues that these remediations are often "inventive and imaginative" (3). There is clearly a continuity between De Cataldo's novel, Placido's film and Sollima's TV series, given the involvement of De Cataldo as screenwriter for the film and the series, and Placido as artistic consultant for the series. However, the migration to TV format brought with it some significant changes. The series format allowed the creative team behind it to address some of the criticisms made of the film and to shift the balance between fiction and history. In this sense, the series seems to be – borrowing Marnie Hughes-Warrington's words – a "site of relation, agreement, and even contestation among film producers, critics and scholars, promoters and viewers" (2009: 6).

The author De Cataldo has been interviewed by Pierpaolo Antonello and Alan O'Leary (2009), so we know he was aware of the scholarly debate around the film *Romanzo criminale*, and in particular its glamorisation of the Roman underworld. After a *faux pas* by the advertising team for the series, namely the temporary erection of polystyrene statues of the gang members in Rome's EUR district as part of the promotion for the first season – a move highly criticised by the public – producers, promoters and actors were very vocal in pointing out that the TV series did not idealise the *Banda della Magliana*.⁷ As Sollima said in an interview: "To start with, they are absolutely not good criminals. They are stupid kids. This was the first big change from the movie" (quoted in Rees 2011: 10). Moreover, Vinicio Marchioni, who played Freddo in the series, stressed that the actors always had in mind the families of the gang's victims when they were playing their roles.⁸ As Boni argues, the fan base has also discussed and reworked the series in many forms in social media and transformed it "into a constantly growing environment, sparking debate about history and politics" (2015: 78).

The attempt to provide a grittier version of the story, less inviting of identification with the gang members, is apparent from the start of the series. More faithful to the novel, the series does not trace the founding of the gang all the way back to the protagonists'

childhood, as Placido had chosen to do. Rather, like the book, it starts when the protagonists are already adults and converge under the leadership of Libano (played by Francesco Montanari) with the aim of conquering the Roman underworld. Most of the action of Placido's film was moved to the city centre and to glamorous locales. In contrast, the TV series focuses on the desolate suburb of Magliana and its squalid streets, bars and public housing interiors. Unlike the actors in the film, the main actors in the series were previously unknown and their characters and interactions are not idealised. In Placido's film the brotherhood among the anti-hero protagonists is intact till the end. In the series, their role as underdogs in the Roman criminal world makes them likeable at the beginning; however, in later episodes, their violent lives and their personal choices progressively alienate them from their families and their increased wealth does not bring the desired integration into mainstream society. Resmini argues that their criminal careers are "linked to a failed relationship with a father figure and the paternal model of masculinity. The creation of the gang is the reaction to the missing father, replaced by brotherhood" (2016: 170). Unlike in the film, this brotherhood is increasingly questioned throughout the series, when each member of the gang starts to act for personal gain and schemes against the others. With an increased level of arbitrary violence perpetrated by the gang, the progression of the series brings a changing engagement from the audience. Sollima says: "At the beginning you feel you like them, you have a conflict with yourself, and by the end of the second series, you will hate everybody (but one)" (quoted in Rees 2011: 10). As Smith argues, the structure of sympathy is a plural phenomenon, as the viewer engages at different levels with the central characters in a film (1994: 48). In the film *Romanzo criminale* the exclusive alignment with the villains from the start may create the optimal conditions for a sympathetic engagement with them. By contrast, in the series, the viewer may initially identify with a character, but increasingly become emotionally alienated from him. Moreover, partly thanks to its length, the series manages to introduce moral complexity with respect to the protagonists and allows an identification shift across various characters over time, or, again in Smith's words, a "multiple identification" (37) with the protagonists, their nemesis Inspector Scialoja, and the gang's victims.

The span of the series over 22 episodes of 50 minutes each also allows greater scope for the criminal story to be set in the context of political and social issues of the time. The series moves away from the format of the gangster film and re-focuses attention on the historical setting. It gives space to several episodes of police brutality and clashes between right-wing and left-wing groups in the streets. The introduction of a new character, Scialoja's rebellious sister, allows an insight into the student movement of the late 1970s. In Episode 1, Scialoja (played by Marco Bocci) is looking for his sister and runs into a student protest brutally broken up by the police. A demonstrator is killed and Scialoja fears the victim may be his sister, but the dead girl turns out to be Giorgiana Masi, an activist who was in fact killed in Rome on 12 May 1977 during a demonstration.⁹ And in Episode 7, by showing the activities of a clandestine radio station, the TV series also portrays ambiguity and conflict within the movement, with some participants supporting violence for political ends. It provides a more rounded perspective on those times than the film and, in depicting historical events that many in the audience have not lived through, its tone is neither patronising nor sensational.

The *strage di Bologna* is at the centre of Episode 11, series 1. The episode starts in Rome with the camera following a petty criminal, Angioletto, nephew of Puma (a drug dealer affiliated with the gang), rushing towards a telephone booth. Angioletto makes a telephone call and from what he says the audience realises that he needs to repay a debt immediately. He agrees to meet someone in an alley ten minutes later. The next scene is set in Modena, where Inspector Scialoja and a colleague, Mancuso, are on their way to

interview a barber, who has been the victim of a robbery. The screen displays the time: 9.30 in the morning. Scialoja sees a driver parking in the street and recognises him as a member of the secret services responsible for his transfer (and demotion) from Rome headquarters to Modena police station. The camera returns to Angioletto, who is murdered in the alley by an unknown killer. The next sequence is set on a hill in the countryside with a city in the background. Nero, a neo-fascist affiliated with the gang (played by Emiliano Coltorti), meets a man and asks him: “*Il pacco?*” (What news of the package?). The answer is: “*A destinazione*” (It has arrived at its destination). Nero then directs the man into a field and kills him. While returning to his car, he hears an explosion; he turns back and sees a cloud of dust rising from the city in the background. It is only at this moment that writing appears on the screen: “*Bologna*” followed by “*2 Agosto 1980*”, the date of the Bologna massacre. The signature tune and images follow. The story resumes and the audience sees Scialoja interviewing the barber, while a radio programme is heard in the background. Scialoja stops talking to the barber and turns up the volume: the broadcaster is reporting the explosion at Bologna station, providing details gathered from Ansa, an Italian news agency. The audio commentary is followed by blurred and blue-shaded archival video footage. The images run in parallel with the commentary of a witness interviewed by the journalist Sergio Zavoli, one of the most respected media professionals in Italy. A few years later Zavoli was to present *La notte della Repubblica*, a programme broadcast by the Italian public TV RAI 2 between 1989 and 1990, which revisited some of the most tragic moments of recent Italian history, including the Bologna bombing.

Analysing the representation of Moro’s kidnapping and murder in *Romanzo criminale - La serie*, Giancarlo Lombardi notes that “neither the hostage nor the terrorists are ever shown” and the body of Moro exists in a kind of anti-space (2012: 182). In the Bologna case, bodies are shown – the video footage included shows the corpse of a woman and a wounded man taken away by the paramedics – but the images are mediated by commentaries that help the audience put things into context. More importantly, the audience only sees the explosion in the background, at a distance, the writers thus avoiding an “advertisement” for the terrorists’ action such as O’Leary lamented occurs in the film (2009: 50). Furthermore, no extra elements of fiction are inserted into the narrative: Scialoja does not join the rescue operations as in the novel and Freddo is not at the scene of the attack as depicted in the film. In the series, Scialoja, Mancuso and other colleagues at the Modena police station watch the events on television. They are transfixed by the images of the *strage*, just as the audience was mesmerised by the archival video footage a few moments earlier. The audience experiences a vicarious trauma through the exposure to that footage and re-lives it through the reactions of the policemen. From the police station the screen returns to the archival video footage. The witness tells the journalist that she has seen a beheaded corpse. The horror is mediated and not directly experienced by the viewers. Gill Plain observes that the corpses described in Agatha Christie’s post-war detective stories only present minimal marks of violence. Plain sees these “tidy” corpses as symbolic of the need for post-war British society to regain integrity after the destruction caused by the war (2001: 33-34). In a similar way, the techniques used to represent the violence of the *strage di Bologna* in the Italian TV series — and specifically the mediated representation of the victims’ bodies — can be interpreted as symbolic of the desire to position this event in a defined past. According to Langer “[t]rauma stops the chronological clock and fixes the moment permanently in memory and imagination, immune to the vicissitudes of time” (1991: 112). Framing the images of the *strage* in a precise historical context separated from the fictional plot and mediated through authoritative commentaries may be an important step towards the integration of the trauma into a coherent narrative of collective memory.

It is also important to note that, in the series, the *strage di Bologna* does not have the impact of making Freddo a likeable character. This becomes increasingly clear in the episode, when the gang comments on the *strage*:

[Freddo] *La storia della bomba è proprio 'na rogna! E ce scasserà i cojoni peggio de Moro!*

[Dandi] *Sempre a vede' 'a vita rosa, eh? Moro stave qua dietro, 'a bomba è scoppiata a 400 chilometri!*

[Freddo] *Sì, ma il botto s'è sentito fino a qua. E li scossoni so' appena accominciati.* (Episode 11, 7.50-8.30).¹⁰

In this sequence, the gang members are shown as having no emotional involvement with the Bologna tragedy. In particular, Freddo is only concerned with its economic consequences. In the film he is deeply troubled by it, whereas in the TV series he is in Rome and considers it simply a nuisance, just as the Moro affair was an obstruction to business. He does decide to change the course of his life, but only after the traumatic experience of Libano's senseless violence that follows in the same episode.

From this moment onwards, Scialoja's investigation into the Bologna attacks alternates with Libano's personal investigation into Angioletto's death and the disappearance of 200 grams of heroin belonging to the gang. Libano realises that some gang member may have been involved in the theft and in spite of the fact that this quantity is only a minimal part of the gang's business, he refuses to let it go. Scenes of torture and death follow. They reflect Libano's paranoia: the leader of the gang feels isolated and does not trust anyone, not even the original members, Freddo included.

Libano's violence in this episode can be seen as an example of Giroux's (1995) category of "symbolic violence", which — unlike "ritual violence" used for mere entertainment and spectacle — "serves to reference a broader logic and set of insights" and is not an end in itself (301-303).¹¹ In the episode Libano first captures and tortures Puma, whom he believes was involved in his nephew's activities. Subsequently, he attacks Fringuello, a man to whom Angioletto owed money, breaking his arm (minute 22). He finds out that one of his closest men, Scrocchia, is involved in the disappearance of the heroin, and goes to his house and puts a gun to his head. He returns to Puma and threatens to kill him (minute 29), before beating two other gang members accused of running a drug business on the side (minute 34). Finally, he meets the Bordini brothers who were responsible for Angioletto's murder. He first shoots them and then hits them with a bat. This episode ends with a close-up of Libano's bloodied face while he says: "*È finito il tempo del perdono ed è arrivato il tempo del giudizio*" (The time for forgiveness is over, the time has come for the last judgement). In an era when "[t]he culture of violence has become increasingly a source of pleasure" (Giroux 1995: 300), Libano's unrelenting violence has, instead, the important function of illustrating his psychosis. It becomes a way "to illuminate important messages about the basis of humanity and inhumanity" (301). Libano's uncontrolled and sadistic violence makes Freddo decide to leave the gang and start a new life with his girl-friend Roberta. Therefore, the representation of blood and violence in the series does not celebrate "the sensational and the gruesome" but can be seen as "symbolic", in Giroux's sense, as it probes "the complex contradictions that shape human agency, the limits of rationality, and the existential issues that tie us to other human beings and a broader social world" (303). The series does not confer on violence any aesthetic quality that would glorify the acts of violence themselves. On the contrary, Libano's violence is a metaphor for an uncontrolled and almost Verghian attachment to "*roba*" (stuff). Libano and the other gang members waste their money buying objects

typical of a consumeristic society in a vain attempt to be socially accepted. Far from employing violence for its own sake, the series, through its depiction of the gang's violent life, also criticises Italian society of the 1970s and 1980s as consumeristic and superficial.

Of the post-9/11 crime film output set during the *anni di piombo*, this TV series is arguably one of the most accomplished. If the film *Romanzo criminale* sometimes falls victim to the stereotypes of a gangster movie, glamorising the gang members and their lives, *Romanzo criminale - La serie* tells the story of the *Banda della Magliana* in the context of the 1970s and the *anni di piombo*. It shows the criminal underworld in all its squalor. Moreover, it delves into the student movement, police brutality, and the political violence of the right and the left. In the film, history is sacrificed in order to leave more room for the life stories of the protagonists. Conversely, the series manages to “map a totality” (Resmini 2016: 254) by representing “the intricate networks of powers and influences at work in Italy between the end of the Seventies and the Eighties” (256). History returns to the centre of the narrative, in a lucid and convincing re-interpretation of that troubled decade.

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¹ The term *anni di piombo*, or years of lead, is inspired by Margarethe von Trotta's film *Die bleierne zeit* (1981) which deals with 1970s terrorism in Germany. As O'Leary explains, in its Italian translation, with the allusion to bullets, the term is suggestive of left-wing violence alone and appears to exclude the bombings characteristic of right-wing terrorism of the time (2010: 244). However, since this is a label commonly applied to the 1970s in Italy, it is used in this article.

² The most notable example is Renato de Maria's *La prima linea* (2009, *The Front Line*), a biopic loosely based on the memoirs of the Prima Linea terrorist Sergio Segio. Critics criticised the film as a glamorisation of terrorism also through the use of Italian sex symbol Riccardo Scamarcio for the role of the protagonist. See Battista (2009) and Menarini (2009: 16).

³ The film *Romanzo criminale* came ninth in box office sales of Italian films in 2005, earning 4,822,864.22 euros. See <http://www.anica.it/rassegna/anicainforma.pdf>. [online, accessed 30 June 2017].

⁴ Members of the neo-fascist organisation *Nuclei armati rivoluzionari* (NAR) were convicted of carrying out the bombing, although they have always denied any involvement. However, it has never become clear whether these NAR members acted alone or which individuals and/or organisations ordered and directed the attack (Bolognesi 2016).

⁵ My translation: "The presence of men from the secret services at the scene of the massacre was more than justified. They were investigating, it was their job. Still, he knew who these men were. He knew who they protected in Rome. Were they investigating in order to find answers, or in order to prevent others from doing so? Scialoja intuited connections – main roads, and diversions via obscure and unhealthy lanes. The enormity of the scenario unfolding in front of him made him shiver".

⁶ This decision is symbolic of what happened in real life, as one member of the *Banda della Magliana*, Maurizio Abbatino, known as il Crispino, who inspired the character of Freddo, repented and turned state's evidence. His confession helped the police to dismantle the gang.

⁷ See "Roma, spuntano le statue della Banda della Magliana" <http://www.lastampa.it/2008/10/15/italia/cronache/roma-spuntano-le-statue-della-banda-della-magliana-1LIVrGDE2okBm4cEGXsZSO/pagina.html>. The statues were promptly removed after protests from the Roman suburb's residents.

⁸ See "Notte criminale. I protagonisti: Vinicio Marchioni (Freddo)", <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jaULnor1zP4>, published 2010. [accessed 12 September 2017]

⁹ As the perpetrators of the murder remained unknown, the student movement attributed responsibility for the crime to the police. See <http://www.rainews.it/dl/rainews/media/40-anni-fa-assassinio-di-Giorgiana-Masi-le-immagini-di-quel-12-maggio-9e0bcb71-f45b-4441-ac4c-07fd7104cbfb.html#foto-1>, published 12 May 2017. [online, accessed 12 September 2017].

¹⁰ My translation: [Freddo] “This business with the bomb is a hassle. It will be more of a pain in the arse than Moro’s kidnapping”.

[Dandi] “Always optimistic, eh? Moro was just around the corner, the explosion was 400 kilometres away!”

[Freddo] “Yes, but we heard the bang from here. And the jolts have only just started”.

¹¹ Giroux’s third type is hyper-real violence, which “appeals to primal emotions and has a generational quality that captures the bona fide violence that youth encounter in the streets and neighbourhoods of an increasingly racially divided America” (1995: 304).