

# SPUNTI E RICERCHE

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## *Il Gattopardo: Sicily, Italy and the Supranational Cultural Imaginary*



*Edited by  
Gregoria Manzin  
Mark Nicholls  
Annamaria Pagliaro*

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*Il Gattopardo:  
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## Spunti e Ricerche vol. 34

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### Abstracts 4

### Articles

|  |   |     |
|--|---|-----|
| Gregoria Manzin<br>Mark Nicholls<br>Annamaria Pagliaro | A complex game of liberation and domination:<br><i>Il Gattopardo</i> , Sicilian oblivion, and<br>Simonetta Agnello Hornby   | 8   |
| Caroline A. Ellsmore                                   | The Leopard, the Bear and the Album-leaf:<br>Giuseppe Verdi's <i>Waltz in F Major</i> in <i>Il Gattopardo</i>   | 22  |
| Giacomo Girardi  | The Anti- <i>Gattopardo</i> : Lionardo Vigo's <i>Protostasi sicula</i> .<br>Archaeology, History and Politics   | 38  |
| Miriam La Rosa   | Sicily and the Game of Hospitality: How Contemporary<br>Art Can Break the Marriage that <i>Il Gattopardo</i> Made   | 52  |
| Giulia Lombardi  | The Post-Unitarian "Uomo Nuovo":<br>On the Ironic Treatment of History in<br>Federico De Roberto's <i>I Viceré</i> and<br>Giuseppe Tomasi di Lampedusa's <i>Il Gattopardo</i> | 69  |
| Mark Nicholls  | The Flower of San Remo. <i>Il Gattopardo</i> on Location  | 90  |
| Karin Schulz   | Spatial Visions in <i>Il Gattopardo</i> . Literary Representations<br>of (De)Construction of Emotional State  | 107 |
| Brian Zuccala  | The Marquis vs. the Many.<br>Verso una rilettura 'Wolochiana' di 'Spazi-'—<br>e 'Sistemi-personaggio' nella Sicilia capuaniana  | 118 |

### Reviews

|               |  |     |
|---------------|--|-----|
| Dino Bressan  | Bertone, Manuela e Barbara Meazzi, cur. <i>Curiosa di<br/>mestiere. Saggi su Dacia Maraini</i> . Pisa, Edizioni ETS, 2017.   | 144 |
| Mirna Cicioni | Barbara Pezzotti, <i>Investigating Italy's Past through<br/>Historical Crime Fiction, Films, and TV Series. Murder in<br/>the Age of Chaos</i> , New York, Palgrave Macmillan, 2016. | 147 |

## Abstracts

### **Gregoria Manzin, Mark Nicholls, Annamaria Pagliaro, “A complex game of liberation and domination: *Il Gattopardo*, Sicilian oblivion, and Simonetta Agnello Hornby.”**

This article stands as a preamble to the collection of essays contained in the present issue of *Spunti e Ricerche*. The 60th anniversary of the publication of *Il Gattopardo* (1958) offered the occasion to call on scholars for a discussion on Sicily as a *locus* to explore trans-historical issues of political and social cohesion. The novel and Visconti’s film were not the sole focus of the resulting 2018 symposium; they were equally deployed as an opening into a broader discourse on Sicilian matters. This contribution examines Simonetta Agnello Hornby’s novel *La Mennulara*, in its three versions: the original debut novel (2002), the expanded edition (2019), and the graphic novel created by Massimo Fenati (2008). It serves to highlight how the narrative work of Agnello Hornby, as a contemporary Sicilian writer, exemplifies the intertextuality and importance of place of the Sicilian literary discourse: her continuation and rupture with the celebrated Sicilian historical novel speaks for a culture of resilience and resistance; a place where the tension between domination and liberation never fade from view.

### **Caroline Ellsmore, “The Leopard, the Bear and the Album-leaf: Giuseppe Verdi’s *Waltz in F Major* in *Il Gattopardo*.”**

Giuseppe Verdi, and Giuseppe Tomasi di Lampedusa’s great-grandfather, Giulio Fabrizio, Prince of Lampedusa, (memorialized as ‘Don Fabrizio, Prince of Salina’, with his ‘Leopard’ family crest) were connected as contemporaries during the Italian *Risorgimento* and Unification. They were also connected by allusions to Verdi’s *La traviata*, in Lampedusa’s novel. Giuseppe Verdi, like the composer Nino Rota, not born to great wealth, spent his life as a dedicated artist. While also known for his generosity, he lacked social grace and was nick-named “The Bear of Busseto”. Rota’s art and the aristocratic Luchino Visconti’s direction, in their re-creation of the era, brought back to life a long-lost album-leaf, Verdi’s *Waltz in F Major*. Verdi and ‘Don Fabrizio’, both autocrats temperamentally bemused by their times, were separated by the ineffable artistry of Verdi’s music. This artistry was exemplified in that one mysteriously resurrected sheet of paper, containing triple rhythms so reminiscent of the music in *La traviata*. The film, *Il Gattopardo*, drew Verdi from his camouflaging terrain while also revealing Visconti’s affectionate nostalgia for the beauties of a lost world. It ultimately brought together artists and aristocrats, revolutionaries and

reactionaries through the dance's musical evocation of a doomed campaign to salvage the old by subverting the new.

**Giacomo Girardi, "The anti-*Gattopardo*: Lionardo Vigo's *Protostasi sicula*. Archaeology, History and Politics."**

This article aims to introduce the figure of the Sicilian erudite, writer and politician Lionardo Vigo (1799–1879) with a specific focus on his book *Protostasi sicula o genesi della civiltà*. The volume could be seen as the cultural and literary manifesto of a large group of men, so widespread in Sicily, who fought against the Italian unification under the aegis of the House of Savoy. It is a militant text, inserted into the political climate of the time and supported the concrete need of the island to self-govern or at least to obtain a particular administrative consideration in the new State's construction. The article argues that there is a huge difference between Vigo and the Prince of Salina: Salina had the acumen to understand that his own survival, together with that of his entire class, was linked to a compromise with the new political order, an aspect that Vigo, a real *anti-gattopardo*, firm on his position, failed to grasp.

**Miriam La Rosa, "Sicily and the Game of Hospitality: how contemporary art can break the marriage that *Il Gattopardo* made."**

Sixty years after the publication of the novel *Il Gattopardo* (1958, *The Leopard* 1960), by Giuseppe Tomasi di Lampedusa, this article is a pretext to engage in a reflection on contemporary Sicily that combines the author's personal and professional experience of the island with historical considerations. The reader should be warned that the rhythm and tone of writing reflect this mingling of subjective and objective concerns. The core points raised in the article revolve around the notion of hospitality as understood in philosophy and history, including references to the manifestation of the rules of hospitality in the specific context of Sicily, and in the structure and politics of its contemporary art field. In this attempt to discuss the present without discarding the looking glass of the past, the socio-political message behind *Il Gattopardo* plays an important role. With the intention to overcome the often-pessimistic approach adopted in the discourse around Sicily and Sicilian-ness, the article advocates for a re-evaluation of the understanding of artistic development in this contested corner of the Italian south. Turning tables and, with them, dated depictions, the proposed image of Sicily is no longer that of a sleeping beauty, but of an alert and resilient actor.

**Giulia Lombardi, "The Post-Unitarian 'Uomo Nuovo': On the Ironic Treatment of History in Federico De Roberto's *I Viceré* and Giuseppe Tomasi di Lampedusa's *Il Gattopardo*."**

The immediate, controversial and continuous success of Giuseppe Tomasi di Lampedusa's *Il Gattopardo* (1958) brings to the reader's attention another novel, which was published about half a century before: Federico De Roberto's *I Viceré* (1894). Both novels present

## Abstracts

explicit analogies, but they also show some differences, which are worth investigating. One of those is the narrative strategy used to convey the common theme of both novels, which is the political change taking place in Sicily at the time of Risorgimento. The article's emphasis is on how the image of the so-called 'uomo nuovo' (a social phenomenon emerging in the new Italian State, on the cusp between an authoritarian monarchy and a liberal state) is observed with irony by both narrators. The narrative perspective in *I Viceré* emphasizes primarily on the general historical, social, moral and anthropological premises that will lead to the fall of a political system and the rise of a new one. In the case of *Il Gattopardo*, the narrative perspective observes the progress of the political change and its magnitude. The article argues that the irony of the narrating instances on the precise historical moment of Risorgimento should not be read as mere "anti-historical", but as revealing instead a direct confrontation with history.

### **Mark Nicholls, "The Flower of San Remo. *Il Gattopardo* on Location."**

Considering the production of *Il Gattopardo* in Sicily, and some pre-production business, this article seeks to account for the substance of this particular encounter and to expand our understanding of the issues that are raised when a visiting, foreign film company comes to town and endeavours to tell a story which purports to be about local histories and cultures. These issues are explored by way of a creative practice analysis which stands as a useful method in understanding the somewhat neglected and frequently mythologised pursuit of social history within the creative arts. The article focuses on the most detailed and comprehensive accounts of the production provided in the work of Tommaso Cima (1963), Alberto Anile and M. Gabriella Giannice (2013) and in the documentary film *A Dying Breed: The Making of The Leopard*, produced as part of the Criterion Collection DVD release of 2004. From these accounts and the primary evidence that they provide, it offers an overview of the production of the film in Sicily and assesses the extent to which it engaged with local places and people. In doing so, it reflects on what this encounter tells us about how significant Sicily itself was to *Il Gattopardo*. The article offers an analysis of these events and encounters and considers what the standard business of location filming, such as location scouting, negotiating with individuals and institutions, building and renovation works, on-set improvisation and adaptation to local conditions and cultures, tells us about this production's commitment to Sicily.

### **Karin Schulz, "Spatial Visions in *Il Gattopardo*. Literary Representations of (De)Construction of Emotional State."**

In *Il Gattopardo* views of the Sicilian landscape and natural spaces are recurrent moments of Don Fabrizio's self-reflection, mapping his own ideas and moods while facing backgrounds of unavoidable social transformation. Natural and spatial persistence contrast experiences of irreversible changes and therefore constitute a stable and timeless projection space for emotions. While spatial based reflections facilitate a deconstructive

process of inner hidden emotions, they also build a literary figure and representation mode of the complex and self-conflicting personality of Don Fabrizio. The article focusses on the literary representation of space in *Il Gattopardo*—its constructive and deconstructive modes—to reflect the protagonist’s emotional identity in light of contemporary social revolution. It outlines traditional literary romantic aesthetics of melancholic nature and space and their modern turn of individual self-perception and mental strength in order to reconsider the cultural challenge of modern social alienation.

**Brian Zuccala, “The Marquis vs. the Many. Verso una rilettura ‘Wolochiana’ di ‘Spazi’ e ‘Sistemi-personaggio’ nella Sicilia capuaniana.”**

Partendo dalla distinzione proposta da Kindt tra teoria narratologica ‘pura’ e un più applicato “narratologically informed criticism” (39), questo saggio si occupa innanzitutto del secondo. È un esercizio di critica capuanista, volto—sulla scia della recente ‘riscoperta’ di Capuana (non solo ma anche) nell’Anglosfera—ad arricchirne il profilo intellettuale di ulteriori sfumature ideologico-letterarie, attraverso la rilettura e rivalutazione di alcune fra le sofisticate strategie narrative messe in atto nella sua produzione. Sul piano più teorico-metodologico, il contributo intende rappresentare il primo passo di un mio progetto complessivo volto ad ‘importare’, ad uso dell’italianistica la cornice metodologica elaborata in ambito anglista da Alex Woloch in *The One vs. the Many* (2003), per esaminare su basi “socionarrative” la tensione tra protagonismo e minorità, all’interno della prosa realista ottocentesca. Il saggio si struttura in due parti. Nella prima si introduce la cornice metodologica in questione, motivando le ragioni e le consonanze per le quali tale cornice appare particolarmente atta ad essere utilizzata su testi della tradizione letteraria italiana, e in particolare quella verista ottocentesca, nello specifico capuaniana. Nella seconda si mostra come tale cornice possa produrre risultati esegetici interessanti sul *case study* de *Il marchese di Roccaverdina* (1901), risultati che mostrano come le dinamiche socioeconomiche e formali esibite dal testo—da qualcuno considerate di matrice postcoloniale (Re; Basile; Bouchard; Virga)—siano efficacemente analizzate attraverso le categorie wolochiane di ‘spazio-personaggio’ e ‘sistema personaggi’.