

論文の英文要旨

論文題目

Pavese tra letteratura e cinema:
nuove prospettive sul mito americano

Pavese, Literature, and Cinema:
New Perspectives on the American Myth

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This dissertation explores the relationship between Pavese and American culture, giving particular attention to the role in it of cinema. In Italy of the 1930s, American culture was of serious interest to a number of left-wing intellectuals, and some of them, including Pavese, engaged themselves in the translation and criticism of American literature. The purpose of my dissertation is to suggest new perspectives on this fascination with United States, generally referred to as "the American myth," by exploring it from a point of view different from those adopted in previous studies on the topic. The dissertation is structured into three chapters, each of which explores the relationship between Pavese and American culture on a distinct level: the first is concerned with biography and bibliography, the second with the relevant historical-cultural context, and the third with Pavese's poetry.

1. Pavese and American culture: biographic verifications and trends in criticism

This first chapter examines biographical elements and the history of criticism regarding Pavese in order to provide fundamental reference points on the subject and to show the validity and necessity of the analytical perspectives adopted in my research.

The first sub-chapter traces Pavese's life, focusing on his relationship with American culture, especially that with American cinema. From a young age, Pavese showed a strong interest in American culture, and he dedicated himself to the introduction of American literature in 1930's Italy. His interests were not limited to literature alone; they covered such other fields as society, music, and, in particular, cinema. It can be said that his first encounter with American culture took place at the cinema, since he was already an ardent moviegoer in the 1920s, before he became interested in American literature. This sub-chapter attempts to demonstrate, on the basis of Pavese's personal notes, letters, essays, and diaries, that cinema played an important role in the formation of his own American myth.

The second sub-chapter examines the history of criticism and studies regarding Pavese, particularly on the issue of his Americanism, in order to outline relevant trends, developments, and focal points in relation to the respective historical background of each different period being considered. The relationship between Pavese and American culture has been the subject of much scholarly attention, from the 1940s to the present day. A study produced by Dominique Fernandez and published in 1969 has had a particularly strong influence on the critical response to Pavese's American myth. In the 1970s and 1980s, a number of important studies were published which developed Fernandez's original analysis in different directions. Although, by the 1990s, studies on Pavese's Americanism seemed nearly exhausted in Italy, since 2000 there have been published a number of stimulating new studies which shed fresh light on the subject, questioning established theories. In the conclusion to this sub-chapter, I delineate the objective and the approach of this dissertation, each of which has been determined on the basis of an analysis of Pavese-related criticism.

2. Cultural background: American culture as seen in Italy of the 1920s and 1930s

This second chapter investigates the reception of American culture in Italy of the 1920s and 1930s. The first sub-chapter shows how American popular culture spread in Italy after the First World War, particularly with respect to three fields: music, cinema, and literature. Although the relationship between the fascist regime and American culture tends to be conceived as antagonistic, censorship in the area of foreign cultural activities was not strict, at least not until the first half of the 1930s, and many Italians,

regardless of their political positions, were fascinated by American popular culture. Taking this particular aspect into consideration, this sub-chapter also discusses both the differences and the affinities between the American myth as held by the masses and that as held by intellectuals like Pavese.

Three subsequent sub-chapters explore the characteristics of Pavese's American myth through a comparative analysis of his reflections and those of other Italian writers on the United States with regard to three respective areas: society, literature, and cinema. The second sub-chapter examines opinions of Italian intellectuals on American society, revealing ambiguity and heterogeneity in their attitudes that make the issue not simply reducible to an opposition between the "anti-Americanism of the fascist regime" and the "Americanism of left-wing intellectuals." The political relationship between Italy and the United States was not exclusively antagonistic throughout the fascist period, and the attitudes of Italian intellectuals toward the United States varied even within the same ideological groups.

The third sub-chapter analyzes the opinions of various critics on American literature, applying theories proposed in recent studies regarding the concepts of "world literature" and "American modernism." Unlike intellectuals of previous generations, Pavese and Vittorini evaluated American literature highly, thinking of it as "world literature" and trying to learn from it in order to reinvigorate Italian literature. While most studies on Pavese interpret his interest in American literature in terms of realism, this dissertation interprets it in relation to "American modernism," which was characterized by a strong presence of regional and popular elements.

The fourth and last sub-chapter examines the opinions of Italian writers on cinema, paying particular attention to Pavese's recently published essays on the subject. These essays reveal not only his film preferences but also his aesthetic reflections on cinema as a new form of art. He criticized Italian films, preferring German and American films, and he was particularly fond of the comedies of Chaplin and Keaton. Although he was critical of Hollywood commercialism, he highly appreciated the freshness and the power of the popular and experimental language found in American films.

3. *Lavorare stanca*: the influence of American literature and cinema

The third chapter analyzes the influence of American literature and film on the poems

collected in *Lavorare stanca (Hard Labor)*, taking into consideration the mutual influences between cinema and literature in the two countries

The first sub-chapter examines the strong presence of the “common people” and of the quotidian themes that appear in Pavese’s poems, identifying some affinities with American works, particularly with the poems of Whitman and the films of Chaplin. In *Lavorare stanca*, there are many poor, marginalized characters (farmers, factory workers, prostitutes, vagabonds, thieves, etc.), together with many objects related to everyday life, in contrast to content that might be expected to be found in the conventional poetic tradition. With a predominance of quotidian themes and lower-class characters, Pavese’s poetry resembles that of Whitman, although between the two poets there are significant differences: while Whitman praised the vitality of laborers and celebrated individual freedom, Pavese described, rather, exhaustion from labor, as well as the loneliness and alienation of individuals. While exhibiting the same preference as Whitman had previously shown for everyday themes and ordinary people, Pavese focused more on the dark side of modernized society, as had the writers whose works came to be classified as “American modernism,” notably those of Dos Passos, Steinbeck, Cain, and Faulkner.

In the representations of common people in Pavese’s poems, it is also possible to find some affinities with American films of the 1920s and 1930s. Focusing on affinities with certain Chaplin’s films, this sub-chapter examines representations of tramps and factory workers in *Lavorare stanca*.

The second sub-chapter explores the affinities of Pavese’s poetry with American film and literature, focusing on recurrent expressions related to vision and on the concept of “image” in his poems. In *Lavorare stanca*, Pavese gives a central role to the gazes and gestures of protagonists, as well as to variations in light and shadow. Many of his poems evoke a series of fragmentary images captured from different angles and points of view. Furthermore, the connections with cinema can be found also in Pavese’s essay on his own poetics, *Il mestiere di poeta*, included in *Lavorare stanca*. In this essay, Pavese defines his concept of “image” in his own poems as a “fantastic relationship” between characters and objects. Analyzing Pavese’s poems together with his essays on poetics and on cinema, this section discusses the affinities between his concept of “image” and film montage. Taking into consideration these aspects, it also

examines the influence of American literature on Pavese's poems in relation to the use of "image," suggesting the possibility that Pavese was inspired by the "cinematographic" aspects of American literature.