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A *Tempest* between Naples and Sardinia: Gianfranco Cabiddu's *La stoffa dei sogni*[*]

Martin Butler and Gigliola Sulis

(University of Leeds)

Modern discussion of Shakespeare on screen has turned increasingly to address questions of regionalism, particularly given the shift in the field towards films in languages other than English. Shakespearean film always involves transactions across borders – between cinema and theatre, visual and verbal, the historically distant and the innovatively modern – but the recent emergence of non-Anglophone film adaptations as a key area of study has problematized the geographical and national binaries that criticism once took unthinkingly for granted, by creating new linguistic and cultural mixtures (see Burnett 1-10; Huang). If at one time the flow of Shakespeare movie-making always seemed confidently one way, outwards from an English (or Anglo-American) centre towards an audience usually conceived of as marginal, the circulation of Shakespeare in today's diverse and fragmented global space has upset that centrality, problematizing his cultural authority and requiring him to be re-imagined in a correspondingly mobile and fluid way. In non-Anglophone films, Shakespeare is remade as both a global and local subject, hybridized and inflected according to the historical and regional imperatives of his host cultures. In these transnational encounters, Shakespeare's status as bearer of cultural capital is drawn into dialogue with specific local conditions, a process which often entails imaginative and disconcerting reinventions. In particular, moving the plays into new cultural spaces brings sharply into view issues of local identity and politics which cut across the usual appeals to Shakespeare's timelessness. The transnational Shakespeare movie is a vehicle for complex negotiations between the notionally hegemonic source text and the very different parameters of the culture into which it is absorbed.

Such considerations bear strongly onto Gianfranco Cabiddu's *La stoffa dei sogni* [*The Stuff of Dreams*, 2016], a freely adapted version or, more properly, spin-off of *The Tempest.*[1] This beautiful and compelling picture has been seen at several international festivals and earned in Italy a *Globo d'oro* for best film and a *David di Donatello* award for best adapted screenplay, but it has not yet had a full international release, nor has it received any English critical discussion. With its gorgeous cinematography, ingenious development of the story, and intensely characterful performances, it is a very appealing adaptation, and one objective of this essay is to explore its significance as a reading of *The Tempest*. More crucially, though, Cabiddu's bold telescoping of the play into the contours of modern Italian history, updating the story to the mid-twentieth century and relocating it to Sardinia,

his own place of birth and cultural reference point, makes *La stoffa dei sogni* a regionalist movie par excellence. Not only is Shakespeare's story transformed by its new Sardinian location, but Cabiddu creates a multi-levelled verbal texture for the screenplay by drawing on a dialect translation of the play done by the Neapolitan dramatist Eduardo De Filippo. Both of these are provocative choices, given the long fractious political and cultural history of the Mediterranean basin into which the play is interpellated. With its imagery alluding to Neapolitan traditions and inheritance on the one hand and to a recalcitrant Sardinian politics on the other, the film invokes a geography which is both dynamic and contested.

In her influential theorization of adaptation as "double vision" or "palimpsestuous intertexuality", Linda Hutcheon offers a model for reading a film of this kind (15, 21). *La stoffa dei sogni* is a palimpsestuous text, layered by multiple languages and sources, and requiring from viewers a critical alertness to its constant interplay between levels: its complex sediment of Italian, Neapolitan and Sardinian, and its lamination of Shakespeare with De Filippo, cinema and theatre. On the surface, *La stoffa* seems a classic "middlebrow" movie,[2] standing midway between art film and commercial picture. It is self-consciously literary in its concerns and showcases prestigious production values but without indulging in radical aesthetic gestures which might disturb the coherence of its characterization or story-telling. To that extent the film belongs to a tradition of Shakespeare film-making which aims at a wide general audience and is broadly respectful towards the texts which it adapts – unlike, say, another recent Italian adaptation, the Taviani brothers' *Cesare deve morire* [*Caesar Must Die*, 2012] which, in intense, quasi-documentary style, shows *Julius Caesar* being staged by prison inmates, and leaves viewers in no doubt about its aesthetic and political radicalism (see Calbi). Yet while eschewing such overt radicalism, *La stoffa* is deceptive, for its surface simplicity is haunted by multiple stories, and works by a principle of intertextual citation and superimposition. The film is rendered stereophonic by a Chinese box structure which creates a constant dialogue between Shakespeare's English text and Italian literary, theatrical, and cinematic influences, pluralizing the story into a network of teasing juxtapositions, allusions, and roles nested within roles. Indeed, the film is a challenging cultural hybrid which makes almost impossible demands of its non-Italophone viewers. Only spectators able to appreciate its intricate exploitation of Italian dialects as well as its mischievously playful handling of Shakespeare will fully grasp all its meanings.[3] Moreover, the Sardinian indigenization of *The Tempest* draws *La Stoffa* into the deeply-rooted politics of the Mediterranean basin, a move which re-energizes the postcolonial dimension of Shakespeare's play, bringing *The Tempest* to bear onto regional relationships that are historically vexatious and still disputed today.

Our essay sets out to expound both these literary and geo-historical networks and their implications. By contextualizing the film in relation to the complex array of sources and situations – Italian, Neapolitan, and Sardinian – which it places around *The Tempest*, we focus on the way that this 21st-century appropriation reconfigures the relationships of language and power in Shakespeare's original, reshaping its characters and outcomes to far-reaching effect. At the centre is a struggle for control, over the island and its residents (here drastically reconceived from those in the source-play, as inmates in an island prison) and over the psychological well-being of Prospero's family (a story complicated because, in Cabiddu's extension of the plot, we have more than one father-figure who potentially stands in for Prospero). At the same time the relocation of the story to a historically authentic setting in a carceral community, and the representation of Caliban as a linguistic and cultural Other who is regionally differentiated from the norms of the Italian mainland, intrudes into the film a consciousness of social and political separations which are fundamental both to the life of the individual and the state and cannot easily be ignored or transcended. This enables Cabiddu to develop from Shakespeare's play profound questions of personal liberty and political alterity which give *La stoffa dei sogni* its urgency and contemporaneity. The film's imaginative poles, we argue, turn on its symbolic opposition between the worlds of the prison and the theatre – one the site of confinement and loss, the other the fragile and contested space of creative emancipation.

The beauty of setting *The Tempest* in Sardinia, instead of taking the island in the usual way as a geographically unspecific no-place, is that it rather brilliantly indigenizes the play's geography, and saturates its existing Italian details with new and rich structural implications. Cabiddu's location is Asinara, a small, rocky, and almost uninhabited island lying off Sardinia's north-west tip. A mere twenty miles square, Asinara is today a protected nature reserve, but in the nineteenth century its remoteness led to its development as a prison camp. Subsequently it was used as a detention centre for prisoners from the Great War and the Ethiopian War, and it eventually became a maximum security jail. The prison closed in 1997, but the decaying buildings are still there. The *mise-en-scène* makes a powerful contrast between Asinara's natural beauty, its untouched beaches, maquis, and crystalline sea, and the crumbling prison structures where the action happens (see illustrations 1 and 2). This works both as a symbolic location and a convincingly authentic place, but is especially effective because it involves scarcely any manipulation of the play's geography. This island could plausibly feature as a stop on the sea route between Tunis and Naples – the twist being that in the film the equivalents of the Neapolitan royal family shipwrecked here are members of the *camorra*, the crime syndicate centred on Naples, and the figure corresponding to Prospero is the long-serving prison governor.

The set-up is as follows. At some time in the 1950s, four *camorristi* (Don Vincenzo, who controls the *famiglia* in Naples, his son Ferdinando, his nephew Saverio, and his henchman Andrea) are being transported to Asinara as prisoners, but when their boat is wrecked in a storm they seize a gun and escape; Ferdinando is separated from the others and cast up alone. On the same ferry there is also a group of travelling actors who are hitching a ride to the next island. These comprise the leader, Oreste Campese, his wife Maria, his daughter Anna, and Pasquale, who is stage manager and general factotum. On the island, the *camorristi* discover the actors and, to avoid being identified by the guards, force them to pretend they all belong to the same troupe. When they are discovered and taken to the governor, De Caro, he is understandably mistrustful. He suspects the escaped prisoners are hiding among the actors, so to flush them out he commands Campese to mount a production of *The Tempest* inside the prison, during which he expects the line between real and pretended actors will become clear. In this reworking of Shakespeare's plot, the dangers of the situation – the tensions between Prospero/De Caro and his antagonists, and between Alonso/Don Vincenzo and his henchmen – work because they feel grounded in convincing everyday realities. Meanwhile De Caro has a daughter, coincidentally called Miranda, who discovers Ferdinando on the beach while out bathing and falls in love with him (illustration 3). There is also a secondary narrative strand involving Caliban, whose filmic equivalent is a shepherd native to the island. We discuss him later in the essay.

Neapolitan palimpsest: Eduardo De Filippo's translation of *The Tempest*

Both the frame story and the Italian version of *The Tempest* as performed by Campese's family derive from the writings of the great Neapolitan dramatist Eduardo De Filippo, to whom the film is dedicated. Eduardo De Filippo (1900-1984) was one of the finest exponents of the tradition of Italian dialect theatre – a tradition that has Carlo Goldoni, Luigi Pirandello and Dario Fo amongst its exemplars. De Filippo's dramas, ranging from comic satire to social critique, are renowned for their realistic representation of Naples life and use of Neapolitan dialect. Best known internationally for plays such as *Saturday, Sunday, Monday* and *Filumena Marturano*,[4] De Filippo was the heir of a family of Neapolitan actors and comedians. His natural father was the actor and playwright Eduardo Scarpetta, and his brothers Titina and Peppino were also actors. The family tradition was continued by his son Luca, who in *La stoffa dei sogni* has a cameo as the ship's captain.

Gianfranco Cabiddu collaborated on Shakespeare with De Filippo near the end of the playwright's life. In the early 1980s, Cabiddu was working in the theatre studies department at La Sapienza University, Rome, when De Filippo received an honorary degree and was invited to give a series of lectures on dramaturgy. At the time Eduardo was engaged in translating *The Tempest* into Neapolitan, commissioned by the publisher Giulio Einaudi for the prestigious series *Scrittori tradotti*

da scrittori [*Writers translated by writers*]. De Filippo chose this play, he said, because of "the magic, the stage tricks, the supernatural creatures" and "the tolerance, the benevolence that pervade the whole story" (*La tempesta di William Shakespeare* 185-6).[5] Cabiddu's partner and future wife, Paola Quarenghi, then a junior researcher at La Sapienza and later an authority on De Filippo, worked closely with Eduardo on his lectures (De Filippo, *Lezioni*). Cabiddu acted as the sound engineer for an audio recording made of the translated play, with Eduardo performing all the male roles. Sadly De Filippo died before the translation was published, but the recording, although never released in its entirety, remains a lasting testament to his interpretation. The end of *La stoffa dei sogni* pays homage to this work, as the final images are accompanied by Eduardo's voice hoarsely singing the Neapolitan version of Caliban's song.[6]

De Filippo based his Neapolitan *Tempest* on a working translation into Italian made by his English-speaking wife, Isabella Quarantotti. He emulated Shakespeare's English by adding to the language a patina of poetic antiquity, not using contemporary spoken Neapolitan but going back to an archaic form inspired by the seventeenth-century literary tradition, and especially by fairy tales and the theatre genre of the *féerie* (fantasy play) which he had acted in as a youth (Quarenghi and Quarantotti De Filippo 60). De Filippo follows Shakespeare's text respectfully, but gives it a Neapolitan turn, in places paraphrasing the original and adding local colour. For example, before the shipwreck the sailors shout "Simmo Napulitane" [we are Neapolitans], and they pray to the *Madonna della Catena* [Lady of the Chain], venerated in an ancient church of this name in the fishing neighbourhood of Santa Lucia, made famous by an old Neapolitan song of this title. Although Cabiddu does not retain all these references in the film, he keeps the link by calling the ship Santa Lucia.

In *La stoffa dei sogni*, lines from *The Tempest* are spoken sometimes in Italian and sometimes in Neapolitan. The Italian translations alternate between a stilted early twentieth century text by Diego Angeli, made for the Italian version of Edmund Dulac's deluxe illustrated edition of *The Tempest*, which De Caro is seen reading in his study (*La tempesta* 1913), and a more modern edition by Agostino Lombardo, originally done for Giorgio Strehler's 1978 production at the Piccolo Teatro, Milan (*La tempesta* 1984). But the lines recited by actors in the later rehearsals and in the final performance come from De Filippo's translation. This Neapolitan text is presented as if it were created by Oreste Campese, after Don Vincenzo orders him to convert the classical Italian of the play into the language of everyday life, so that the *camorra* members can speak it more naturally. As Don Vincenzo points out, they act badly because the words are too literary and remote from their everyday speech. At first Campese resists, objecting that popular Neapolitan is unsuitable: "This is Shakespeare", he says, "not a Neapolitan melodrama". Yet he is forced to follow the will of Don Vincenzo, who, unawares, produces a declaration of faith in Shakespeare's greatness: "Campese, you can teach me. I can tell this

Shakespeare was an intelligent man and won't be offended if we change a few things". In the shooting script, this dialogue is more developed: "After all, Campese, this Shakespeare does not seem to be so haughty. It is clear that he really is an intelligent guy, and is not offended if one changes the outside of things a bit. He has substance ... and that remains".[7]

Cabiddu inserts other Neapolitan elements, which play with traditional images of the city and its people. Both actors and *camorra* members have the Neapolitan ability to improvise solutions in the face of difficulties, the actors being inventive, lively people, naturally gifted in singing and performing, and the *camorristi* being immersed in the internal power struggles of organised crime. A further anchor to popular filmic representations of Naples is the casting of Ciro Petrone and Francesco Di Leva as Saverio and Andrea. Both are familiar faces in Italy, having played gangsters in, respectively, the iconic film *Gomorra* (2008) and the TV series *Il clan dei camorristi* [*Camorra Connection*] (2013). As we shall see later, this mix of languages and cultures brings an urgent politics into the story.

In addition to De Filippo's translation of *The Tempest*, *La stoffa dei sogni* draws on another of his works, *L'arte della commedia* [*The Art of Comedy*] (1964), a play with a strong meta-theatrical element. In this drama, Oreste Campese is the *capocomico* (actor-manager) of a small touring company just arrived in a provincial town. The actors have lost everything in a fire, and Campese visits the local *prefetto* De Caro, asking him to attend their next performance, with the hope that this may persuade local people to come, and help the actors recover their losses. But De Caro refuses, denying that theatre has any value. However, in the second act he doubts his position when, in a Pirandellian twist, a series of petitioners visit his office, telling tragic stories and asking for help. Since De Caro is new to this post and does not know anyone in town, he is unsure whether the visitors are real inhabitants or actors sent by Campese to prove the impossibility of distinguishing life from art. The intrusion of seemingly defenceless actors into the world of government creates a chain reaction: the conventional separations between art and life erode and the politician's sense of normality collapses.

Cabiddu adapts this plot as the frame for his film, creating a playful game of intertextuality by shifting the distressed actors into the Sardinian island where they have been cast up. He borrows the names and personalities of the main characters: Campese, De Caro, and De Caro's secretary Franci, who becomes the prison governor's lieutenant. The tense relationship between the antagonists transmigrates directly from play to film. Campese, the poor but noble man of theatre struggling to make ends meet, is challenged to prove his worth by De Caro, who, though an amateur actor in his youth, has become an embittered man of order. Campese's thoughts on theatre, scattered through the film but concentrated in conversations with De Caro, come from Eduardo's play, and the inspired scene in which Campese walks through the prison yard counting the steps, planning where to put his improvised stage, is borrowed entirely from De Filippo. In both play and film the company loses

everything except for a trunk of costumes and props which, in the film, is a much-emphasized symbol of the world of theatre and its magic. There are also allusions to another play by De Filippo, the one-act comedy *Sik-Sik,l'artefice magico* [*Sik-Sik, The Magical Craftsman*] (1929), which supplies some of the comic mishaps on stage and Campese's hands-on approach to directing.

In *L'arte della commedia* Shakespeare's works are mentioned several times. In the prologue, Campese remembers playing "all Shakespeare, all Molière […] on few square metres of planks", and describes his preferences for Macbeth ["I play it with moustaches"] (1197). In the first act we discover his company is playing *Romeo and Juliet* and *Hamlet* – called "a funny, moving comedy" by the locals (1208) – though their repertoire does not impress De Caro, who dismisses it as "the same old thing" ["la solita zuppa"] (1210). *La stoffa dei sogni* keeps only the references to *Hamlet*, but expands them. When De Caro meets the actors, he quotes *Hamlet*, and relates its existential themes to the prison he controls and ultimately lives in: "I am very familiar with doubts, lies, and revenge". Presumably his ironic assumption that when Campese plays Hamlet he probably wears a blonde wig harks back to Laurence Olivier's film of the play (1948).

Campese's reflections in the comedy repeat what De Filippo himself said regarding Shakespeare's importance for his own artistry. In 1980, when receiving the honorary degree from La Sapienza, he defined theatre with a quotation from *The Tempest:* "that fragile and powerful spell, that harmony of spirit and matter, that substance which dreams are made of".[8] He discussed Shakespeare with his students at Rome, and worked with them on a sequel to *The Merchant of Venice* (see Luppi). His lectures convey a relationship with Shakespeare that was admiring but not subservient. "I read much when I was young and had good eyes," he declared, "and before any other author I chose obviously the top of the class, William Shakespeare".[9] Shakespeare is imagined by De Filippo as belonging to the "class" of thespians who, in all times and places, live theatre as a pragmatic everyday experience. Such artists write, perform, and act as company entrepreneurs, working as managers, arranging props and costumes, and repairing scenery if necessary. For them, theatre is both art and craft, something they train for their whole life, as De Filippo did and as is sometimes thematised in Shakespeare. Campese continues this tradition: he tells De Caro, "You know, governor, we grew up in the theatre, we're used to putting up with things and making do. We live for those two hours in the limelight, the enchantment. The applause and the stage are our reward". Shabbier than Shakespeare and De Filippo, he is still another "student" of the same class.

The frame-plot and the play-within-the-film

Cabiddu's plot boldly exploits this palimpsestuous dynamic between De Filippo and Shakespeare. With *The Tempest* nested inside a modern story, the performance and frame narrative constantly bear onto

one other. Each Shakespearean character has a twentieth-century equivalent, making insistent resonances between inner and outer plots. Thus there are two Mirandas, the Governor's disobedient daughter and the more tractable figure from the play-within-the-film. Since Miranda's role in the performance is allocated to Campese's wife, the Governor's anxiety about controlling his daughter is echoed by Campese's jealousy over Maria, who as a sexually desirable mature woman attracts unwanted attention from the younger *camorristi*. Ferdinando too exists as a part in the play and as Don Vincenzo's son of the same name, a relationship doubled when Don Vincenzo is cast as Alonso – so he has lost his son both in the play and in "real" life. Similarly, Saverio and Andrea duplicate their roles by conceiving the same plot to usurp their master outside the play that they perform within it.

Crucially there is Prospero, who is the parallel figure for De Caro but is echoed in Campese, whose family the company are and who acts Prospero in the play-within-the-film (see illustration 4). De Caro's status as Prospero in the frame plot is self-evident. He runs the prison, has his daughter Miranda and his lieutenant, Franci, who, as his version of Ariel, is impatient with service and desperate to leave it. Yet the inner play's identification of Campese with Prospero creates an oscillation with De Caro, setting the two at odds as contrasting authority figures, both in their different ways shipwrecked on the island. De Caro has all the power, but seems tired, disengaged and lonely. When in the storm Franci reports the radio is down and "we're cut off from everything", De Caro replies, "Franci, how long have you been here? […] You still believe there is an 'everything'?" He barely hides his sense of lost purpose, and takes out his alienation on his inferiors, whom he treats brusquely. Campese embodies a different version of power, apparently feebler but more empathetic and in touch with the secret magic of theatre. In Cabiddu's subversive story, the tyrannical Prospero – the island's official authority figure – is defeated by that gentler Prospero, the seemingly helpless actor.

In modern stage performance, the old view of Prospero as a benign patriarch has gradually given way to a more negative image of selfish tyrant (Lindley *passim*), and with its prison setting, *La stoffa dei sogni* lines up with the latter. De Caro is well-intentioned, an efficient administrator and an affectionate father, a well-read man who can converse impromptu about Shakespeare. But his power breeds resentment – Franci bridles under his harshness – and he ham-fistedly treats Miranda like a prisoner, locking her room when he hears the *camorristi* are on the loose. Miranda herself is eager to escape. We see her applying make-up with a magazine cover of Gina Lollobrigida propped next to the mirror, and, in a resonant moment, for her second secret visit to Ferdinando she puts on her mother's old shoes. This elegant footwear does not suit the sand, and on the beach she takes it off, but it signals her liminal state, poised between child and adult. Moreover, these shoes cue the film's sad back-story, De Caro's lost past. Unlike Prospero's wife, De Caro's wife is still alive, but she has abandoned him to make her own life elsewhere. Miranda poignantly tells Ferdinando of a letter she left behind, saying

"she loved me, but she missed so many things; I didn't complete her". De Caro has retreated to the island in response to rejection. He has not been usurped but is psychologically emasculated and exiled: the island is his prison, his efficiency as governor being poor compensation for his emotional wounds. Miranda, though, wants her own life, and to have more than the island offers. She wants, in fact, to fill her mother's shoes.

Cabiddu's cinematography puts De Caro in situations of power. He has his private study, like Prospero's cell, decked with books, globes and telescope, instruments signifying his technological superiority; he takes coffee outside under a canopy; he occupies high space on a terrace, overlooking the island. The terrace is the setting for his two structurally crucial interviews with Campese, in which he commands him to stage the play, then meets him again just before the end. His authority is seen in his commanding position. But Miranda undercuts this: by fraternizing with Ferdinando, she goes over to the enemy. Unlike Shakespeare's Miranda, whose love affair is accommodated by dynastic reconciliation, no bridges can be built with the Aloisi: as criminals, they remain unforgiven. Once Ferdinando is captured, he and Miranda plight their troth through a prison window, and in the last minutes they escape together on the ferry, stowing away inside the trunk of props that throughout the film symbolizes the strolling players' craft. In effect, Miranda rejects one father and joins herself to another, Campese's alternative, more humane Prospero.

At this point Cabiddu makes his one reference in the outer plot to Prospero's magic, for at their final interview on the terrace, Campese gives De Caro the wand he used in the play but hadn't got around to breaking. Realizing moments later that Ferdinando and Miranda have escaped, De Caro points the wand at the tiny ship disappearing into the distance. Storm clouds gather, and for a moment we expect another tempest, but De Caro changes his mind, breaks the wand, and lets the lovers go. In a neat jump-cut, the sound of the wand snapping coordinates with the lock opening on the trunk where the couple are hiding, so that De Caro's power – identified with Prospero through the wand – is supplanted by the actors' box of tricks. The film, then, precisely reverses Shakespeare's story. Miranda defeats her father, and Prospero is left behind in self-imposed exile. Not only does the film transpose Shakespeare's ending but it remotivates Prospero's renunciation of his magic. De Caro relinquishes power in response to Miranda's rebellion, his broken wand betokening a decisive family shift. In effect he decides that "the rarer action is / In virtue than in vengeance" (5.1.27-8)[10] – though the lines are not spoken and in the play it is his brother, rather than his daughter, with whom he reconciles. Unlike Prospero, though, the choice has been forced on him, for he gives in to the inevitable. But maybe it also suggests he has learned to let go and, for all his self-imposed solitude, has been moved by Campese's art.

Cabiddu, then, is exploring the therapeutic power of theatre, the idea that art "puts wings on one's heart and on one's reason" (as Campese tells De Caro). But his film remains hedged with scepticism about how far this can go. The theatre company – a cut-down version of what De Caro calls "guitti scavalcamontagne", strolling players led by an actor-manager – is not an impressive troupe. Four people with a trunk of props, their resources are limited, and what they do is padded out with unconvincing doubling, acting in silhouette, and voices projected from the wings. As a manager, Campese is often at his wit's end, though wisely pragmatic when he needs to be. Much is made of their traditional style. The performance is semi-improvised, they superstitiously distribute salt and red ribbons to ward off bad luck, and Campese accompanies the storm with a mandolin in popular Neapolitan manner. Nonetheless, theatre magic prevails and the performance is surprisingly affecting. We see Campese choosing the space for performance and the proscenium being erected (see illustration 5), but despite this primitive arrangement, they devise an effective storm, with a lantern projecting a ship onto the backcloth, waves created by waving cloths, and Ariel – performed by Campese's young daughter, Anna – calling up rain with a strange tubular instrument in which pebbles or shells fall through a pipe. All these striking details are palimpsestuous citations of famous productions of *The Tempest* by Peter Brook and Giorgio Strehler (see illustrations 6 and 7).[11] The pebble tube, or "rain-stick", was seen in Brook's 1990 Paris production, while the waving cloths and projection come from Strehler, who used a ship silhouette combined with movement and sound in the shattering opening scene of his famous Milan staging of 1978. For all that Campese runs a scratch company, he creates something of real constancy and power.

The magic of performance arises as the play starts to affect the characters in the "real" plot, for now their experiences entangle with Shakespeare's story. Both De Caro and Miranda watch the rehearsals and reflect on the characters, particularly the sequence in which Campese fussily tutors his daughter in how to act as Ariel, and then rehearses his first meeting with Ferdinand (played by Pasquale). The observers stand on the prison wall, their elevated position and the open sky marking them as temporarily detached from normality and musing on the play's meaning for themselves. For De Caro, watching Prospero interact with Ariel forces him to confront his roughness to his "Ariel", Franci. He explains the scene to Franci, inviting him to acknowledge the bond between them, but Franci is uncomprehending, the moment's intimacy is lost, and De Caro wearily commands him to start another search for the convicts. The failed contact with Franci only confirms De Caro's isolation and his distance from his dependants. Later, Franci will strategically outwit him, forcing a recommendation for transfer from the island by pointedly omitting from his official report of Ferdinando's arrest any mention that he was found secretly consorting with Miranda. This gives Franci leverage, since he is

protecting De Caro from censure over his daughter's behaviour. It reverses the trajectory of the Prospero/Ariel plot, by putting De Caro in Franci's debt.

As for Miranda, the scene she watches, with Prospero/Campese berating Ferdinand/Pasquale, mirrors her own situation, caught between father and lover, and it becomes a real struggle for control when Campese scolds Pasquale for forgetting to find him a magic wand, and Pasquale responds by telling him to get on with the rehearsal. Pasquale's words as Ferdinando resisting Prospero ("I won't stand this bullying") merge into his dislike of being pushed around by the director. This small theatrical revolt provokes a turn in Miranda's disobedience of her father, and she immediately runs down to the beach to tell Ferdinando that fate has brought them together. But above this encounter we hear Campese in voiceover, saying she is foolish to choose this man: "Miranda, you know nothing about life. You've seen this young man and you're convinced that out of all the men on this earth he's the only one for you. But who says so? How can you think he'll make you happy?" This is a continuation of the scene being rehearsed between Prospero, Miranda, and Ferdinand – it corresponds to *The Tempest*, 1.2. 478-82 – but at this moment no one in the outer plot knows she has met Ferdinando. The voice in her head is her own self-validating projection of the paternal point of view, as triggered by seeing Prospero's authority challenged in the rehearsal.

Don Vincenzo is the character most thoroughly changed by theatre. He identifies closely with his role as Alonso, seeing its parallels to his own situation, and he knows that if he is to escape he needs to be a convincing actor, so he is more committed than anyone else to the performance, and rises at night to practise his lines. He also disrupts the scene where Ariel prevents Sebastian and Antonio from killing the sleeping Alonso by calling out "Kill me", and pulling Saverio's dagger into his body so that blood pours out. For a moment it seems he really has been stabbed, then he revives and confesses it is just stage blood. Campese, he explains, had once said that in theatre a practical joke would bring good luck. Nonetheless, the incident disturbingly blurs the boundaries of fiction and life, and suggests more is going on in his mind than he publicly admits. His turning-point comes in a conversation with Campese in which he confesses that his son's loss has left him suicidal, and quotes lines from the play: "If I were king, there'd be no more poverty, and no more wealth; no more valets and servants; no contracts, no literature, no crops, no vineyards, and most of all no sovereign power ... No trading in metals, oil, wine, and wheat; no revenge, sweat and betrayals; no swords, rifles, pikes, and war machines. It would all be destroyed, banished from the earth. Only Mother Nature, by God's will, would be in charge". "Those aren't your character's lines", replies Campese. They are, of course, Gonzalo's disquisition on utopian rule, sentiments which, for Don Vincenzo, exemplify a change of heart, a loss of faith in himself and life in general. "It's the world upside down", he says, "that's why I like it", and he submits to Campese by giving him the gun. Don Vincenzo's migration to a different role

signals his transformation, theatre's power to act out traumas by proxy and make the fictional seem real. Later, the play's performance comes to a sudden halt when Don Vincenzo glimpses Ferdinando off-stage and cannot restrain his joy that he is alive, thereby exposing the truth about the *camorristi* to De Caro. Instead of the fictional family reunions we are expecting, the play is overtaken by Don Vincenzo's genuine cries of emotion at the recovery of his son. Even Shakespeare cannot survive this, and the performance is abandoned.

With many of its characters really or symbolically imprisoned, desperate to regain their freedom but conscious of the crimes which shape their lives, *The Tempest* is a play that readily lends itself to a penal setting. In recent years, there have been several influential carceral appropriations: notably Phyllida Lloyd's 2016 production for the Donmar Warehouse, London, set in a women's prison, with Harriet Walter playing Prospero as an inmate on a whole-life sentence, poignantly seen at the end of the performance still confined to her cell while the rest of the cast leave to start new lives; and Margaret Atwood's novel *Hag-seed* (2015), which retells the plot as a theatre-in-prison programme, whose director mounts the play to work through his resentments about the wrongs done to him by the equivalents of Alonso and Antonio. Atwood's novel alludes to the educational initiatives used in some modern penitentiaries – such as that depicted in the Taviani brothers' *Cesare deve morire* – which have inmates performing Shakespeare as a means of achieving rehabilitation, personal change, or just therapy. Notable examples include Jean Trounstine's work with Shakespeare in a Massachusetts women's prison, Curt Tofteland's "Shakespeare behind Bars" programme at the Luther Luckett Correctional Complex in Kentucky, and Laura Bates's work with prisoners in long-term solitary confinement in Indiana. At their best, such programmes aspire to give inmates – many deeply sunk into the penal system, often without possibility of release and effectively abandoned by society – some means of coping with a lost future or even of finding redemption. Of these enterprises, Tofteland's is the best known, and has been documented in an acclaimed film by Hank Rogerson (2005) which follows one such production. As it happens, the play in Rogerson's documentary, and which is staged to considerable redemptive effect, is *The Tempest*.[12]

La stoffa dei sogni adds to these carceral *Tempests*, though without optimism, poignantly contrasting the inmates' hopelessness with the play's yearning for liberty. The point is strongly made that everyone – not only the convicts but De Caro and the guards too – are trapped in the system. Watching rehearsals, De Caro is impressed by how Campese encourages his daughter to improvise in her role as Ariel, but reflects that really Ariel is defined by servitude – "Ariel only exists because of his obedience to Prospero", he says – and ultimately no one can escape subjection. As he tells Franci, "Man always builds himself a dependence around his longing for freedom". As for the guards, when they see Prospero threatening Ariel, they sarcastically note its relevance to them:

– What kind of a story is that?

– One with an asshole in command, and an even greater asshole obeying him.

– The same old story then.

This exchange Franci overhears and registers as revolution in the ranks, and an insult to himself in particular, as just one more asshole. The effect is slyly doubled near the end when we learn that Ferdinando's escape was contrived by Agostino, the old, trusted inmate who is De Caro's domestic servant. Seemingly a rehabilitated felon, Agostino acts as Gonzalo in the play, but he has already helped Miranda escape from her bedroom, giving her the hairpin to pick the lock. After the show he is substituted for Ferdinando in his cell, thus enabling him to escape. Even Agostino turns out only to be waiting for his own minor rebellion.

However, the film does not explore the plight of the long-term convicts in any detail, nor does it make a case for their redemption or for the *camorristi*. Don Vincenzo may fantasize about a world where authority is banished, but he remains in prison at the end, as do Andrea and Saverio. The only escapee is Ferdinando, who, as he tells Miranda, has been sentenced for criminal association, not for any violence he has committed personally. This gives him a second chance, but the film does not pretend that the future changes for any of the others, no matter what inner recognitions *The Tempest* stirs. There is no lasting solution to the problems of guilt and retribution which the film broaches, for the impulses towards redemption and recalcitrance remain painfully opposed. Miranda flees the island, but for the other prisoners, and even the guards, liberty remains tantalizingly out of reach. Theatre liberates its performers and spectators imaginatively, but for most the prison walls remain in place.

The Tempest **in "Postcolonial" Sardinia**

The film, then, offers a powerful revision of Shakespeare's play, reshaping its ending and alternately endorsing and qualifying its philosophical stance. However this question of liberty is political too, for it is bound up with and shaped by the vexed relationship between Sardinia and the Italian mainland. Cabiddu belongs to the tradition of Sardinian storytellers connected by their common "identitarian obsession" (Sulis). From as early as the matriarch Grazia Deledda (Nobel Prize for Literature in 1926), Sardinian writers have turned an ethnographic gaze on the island's traditions and customs, and brought to the forefront the Sardinian language by interspersing quotations in Sardinian within their Italian narratives. These characteristics are shared by the so-called new wave of Sardinian film-makers who have attracted acclaim since the 1990s.[13] The start of this phase is usually associated with Cabiddu's early film, *Il figlio di Bakunìn* [*Bakunìn's Son*] (1997), an adaptation of a 1991 novel by the Sardinian writer Sergio Atzeni, a friend from Cabiddu's youth and one of the founders of contemporary

Sardinian fiction, who depicts the island's ethnic identity as stratified, multiple, and postcolonial (see Wagner, *Sardinien*; Sulis). But Sardinia was already at the centre of Cabiddu's first feature, *Disamistade* (1988), which revolves around a family vendetta in a traditional village in the 1950s. This film has a strong anthropological grounding in the island's conservative social mores, and also has an aura of *Macbeth*, dealing with local feuds, a protagonist avenging his father's murder, and the ineluctability of fate (Giuseppe Verdi's 1847 operatic version of *Macbeth* is present in the film, heard on the radio).[14]

Considered from a Sardinian perspective, *La stoffa dei sogni* stands out for its openness to the national and international sources that cross-fertilise the story. An evolution from Cabiddu's previous films and documentaries, the story is not deeply rooted in the island's ethnography or recent history, since most characters are non-Sardinians who have come to Asinara for work, as inmates, or by chance. Instead, the island becomes a metaphorical microcosm of Italy's constitutive polycentrism, with the different accents of characters showing their variety of regional origins. De Caro, Miranda and Franci speak a neutral standard Italian, but the *camorra* criminals and the actors have accents from Naples or its hinterland, and Caliban's equivalent, the shepherd Antioco, speaks in Sardinian. Furthermore, the prison-island setting recalls the traditional image of Sardinia in the Italian national imaginary as remote and unwelcoming, almost an open-air prison. "Ti sbatto in Sardegna!" ["I'll throw you to Sardinia"] has, since the time of unification, been one of the most dreaded sentences uttered to civil servants or members of the armed forces, who were sent to the island as a form of punishment. The "prison-island" or "fortress-island" idea of Sardinia, resistant and refractory to what comes from the sea, is traditionally opposed to the "crossroad-island" view of Sicily, where different civilizations have sedimented over the centuries (see Febvre). In a manner similar to other contemporary novels and films, *La stoffa dei sogni* reinterprets Sardinia as both prison and crossroads, where locals and people from all over Italy interact, in a history of multifaceted and conflictual cohabitation.

As early as the nineteenth century, Cavour, the Piedmontese Prime Minister and architect of national unification, famously defined Sardinia as one of Italy's three "Irelands", presenting it as a paradigm of internal colonialism within the Italian state.[15] The island's individual identity was recognised in Republican times when, because of its unique history, traditions, language, and social customs, Sardinia became one of the five autonomous regions with a special statute. Recent scholars have used postcolonial theories to analyse Sardinian cultural and artistic production, by applying to the local context concepts such as "rhizome-identity" (i.e. a ramified root as opposed to identity derived from a unique root: see Deleuze-Guattari; Glissant), and identity as a process of relation between cultures, as in the mixed *creolité* proposed by Antillean writers Jean Bernabé, Patrick Chamoiseau, and Raphaël Confiant (*Éloge*). Furthermore, the presence of categories such as "subalternity" and "hegemony" in Italian critical discourse more generally pre-dates the import of

Anglophone cultural and postcolonial studies (for example in Hall; Spivak; Bhabha), thanks to the publication of Antonio Gramsci's *Prison Notebooks* in the aftermath of the Second World War, the text from which these concepts originate. This is particularly true of Sardinia, the island where the communist thinker and politician was born. In this respect, the film adds another chapter to the long list of artistic representations of the Italian "Southern question", interpreted in a Gramscian framework as an interaction between the central hegemonic power and the subaltern peripheries (Verdicchio; Ponzanesi-Polizzi). It also confirms the conceptualisation of the Mediterranean basin as a postcolonial network, a space of resistance to Western modernity from within, as theorised by Franco Cassano and Iain Chambers.

The only major Sardinian character in the film is the shepherd Antioco, who in this restaging of *The Tempest* figures Caliban as subaltern subject (see illustration 8). Antioco allows Cabiddu to develop a political perspective on Sardinian identity, by foregrounding the social and ideological appropriation of the indigenous inhabitant. As Bill Ashcroft puts it, in post-imperial writing in English Shakespeare's Caliban – the marginalised, subaltern indigene, or "anti-European 'natural man'" – has become "an evocative and controversial symbol of postcolonial exploitation and resistance" (17-18). Notably, the reciprocal accusations exchanged by Prospero, Miranda and Caliban, and Caliban's retorts to the master and his daughter, constitute a *topos* of postcolonial criticism, and have inspired countless modern "writings back", from Aimé Césaire onwards (Zabus). Antioco, evoking the national stereotype of Sardinia as home to shepherds and bandits, is another of these disruptive Calibans.

Antioco appears in a few but highly symbolic scenes, all but one in open and natural settings. In his first and last appearances, which frame the story, he is on a cliff over the sea, on the lookout for what lands on and leaves the island; the first appearance is preceded by shots of a goat, signalling that he reigns over the island's nature. He lives alone and has limited contact with other characters. The non-Sardinian prison guards question him in his sheepfold when searching for the fugitives and, in a scene that mimics common commercial interactions between Sardinian shepherds and non-local tourists, barter alcohol brought illegally out of the prison's pantry for the cheese that he produces. On another occasion, he meets Miranda on a country track, and picks up a scarf she has dropped, but she threatens to tell the guards he is following her. This brief encounter establishes his attraction to her, though without making him seem as predatory as some versions of Shakespeare's Caliban**.** When he finds two shipwrecked guards, Anselmo and Gaetano, he mistakes them for inmates on the run and helps them out of a naïve solidarity among the oppressed: "Those who run away to be free are my friends", he explains in his strict Sardinian. When they try to escape, though, he chains them up and hides them in an animal pen, using the same mix of violence and affection he reserves for his goats. At night, in a reversal of the Shakespearean scene in which Trinculo offers wine to Caliban, it is Antioco

who makes the guards-cum-prisoners eat and drink. He lays out plans for a future life together, including seizing Miranda and stealing wine from the prison.

As with the other characters, though, communication among the three is made difficult by the fact that, while Antioco understands Italian, he speaks only Sardinian. His interlocutors do not understand the local language, and so have no clue what he says. This linguistic imbalance reflects the island's bilingualism and the hegemonic role of Italian in the 1950s, the time in which the story is set, when much of the population spoke Sardinian, especially in rural areas.[16] Antioco speaks *Logudorese*, the north-central variety of local language, in the strict dialect spoken in Ovodda, a small village near Nuoro from which the actor Fiorenzo Mattu comes.[17] Incomprehensible to the non-Sardinian characters, Antioco's language is obscure for Italian viewers of the film and even for some speakers of other varieties of Sardinian, for example the southern *Campidanese*. The film's English subtitles highlight this lack of communication by leaving most of his lines untranslated and signalling at his first utterance that he speaks "incomprehensible Sardinian language". The viewers' disorientation is modelled by the two guards' exclamations of surprise: "What's he saying?", "Where are we?" The missing subtitles put foreign viewers in the same position as Italians and the film's other characters, for whom the mystery of Antioco's language signals his alterity from the prison-island's social structure.

This premise is necessary to understand the only scene in which Antioco leaves open natural locations to step uncertainly inside the prison, where, in a mix of Italian and Neapolitan, Campese's company is playing *The Tempest*'s second scene: Prospero asking Miranda to visit, in Eduardo's translation, "lo schiavo più schifoso e scostumato" [the most disgusting and uncouth slave], whom they need in spite of everything. The Sardinian prisoner who impersonates Caliban is wearing an animal skin but, struck with stage fright, is unable to speak. His words are uttered instead by the prompter Pasquale, who joins him onstage under the costume in a pantomime horse arrangement, so that Caliban now – in a witty visual echo of his first encounter in the play with Trinculo and Stephano – literally looks "as proper a man as ever went on four legs" (2.2.60-1): the phrase Stephano uses for him when Trinculo hides under Caliban's gabardine.[18] Antioco arrives while Pasquale is saying Caliban's lines. Fascinated by what he sees, he walks towards the stage, attracting the attention of guards and inmates, while his silhouette framed from behind obscures the onscreen stage, indicating his function as a lens through which to read the scene. Finally, he sits on the ground, next to De Caro. The effect is particularly complex, as there are now three Calibans in one filmic space: the unnamed prison inmate who acts the role, Pasquale who speaks his lines on stage, and Antioco, the outer plot Caliban, who watches from the audience.

Caliban the inmate now takes the stage, and Pasquale's voice continues his famous speech, stressing his precedence as the king of the island, and the fact that he is enslaved by Prospero's power. The camera alternates between the stage and shots of a progressively more interested Antioco and an uncomfortable De Caro, who fidgets on his seat. Shakespeare's lines resonate with these two as the off-stage Prospero and Caliban, the coloniser of the island and the indigenous inhabitant oppressed by De Caro's occupation. But then, as the on-stage Pasquale/Caliban accuses Campese/Prospero of usurpation and he replies calling him a liar, Caliban the inmate, suddenly recognising in the lines his own experience on the prison-island, pushes the prompter away and, for the only time, finds his voice. He points directly at De Caro and speaks while looking intensely at him. First he uses his own words – "I wasn't expecting you on this island" – then he adapts the play's script –"I was savage, but a savage king" – and finally fully appropriates Shakespeare: "The only thing that I have learnt is that I can curse you in the same language that you taught me". The play has made visible the unspoken truth of the island's domination, a domination that includes the two islanders, prisoner and shepherd, both Calibans subject to the power of the prison governor/island ruler. In a Shakespearean vein, the play-within-the-film reveals to the characters their real selves, either as subaltern subjects or as the representative of the hegemonic culture, leaving them shocked and disturbed.

More is to come. After the inmate/Caliban leaves the stage, Campese/Prospero says the line "The isle is full of noises", and the young Anna/Ariel makes an entrance imitating the sounds of birds and animals, helped by actors backstage. In fact, in Shakespeare's play Prospero's words really belong to Caliban and refer to the island's spirits (3.2.136), and when Antioco hears these animal sounds, he walks towards the stage, where he stands and whistles like a bird. Gradually the island birds respond, and actors and audience fall silent, listening to this strange communion. By being the only one who can speak the language of nature, Antioco proves he is the real king of the island. Moments later, the whole performance collapses when Don Vincenzo recognizes his son, and Antioco leaves the yard as silently as he has come.

Antioco returns at the end of the film, after Miranda and Ferdinando escape on the ferry with Campese, and we hear De Caro in voiceover abandoning his powers: "Our revels now are ended…". Before the camera pans to the final view from the ship, the shepherd is the last character we see, standing on a cliff looking out to sea, and the film closes with De Filippo's voice singing Caliban's song, a mix of visual and musical elements bridging the Neapolitan and Sardinian sides of the rewritten *Tempest*. These images remind us that, of all the characters, Antioco most belongs to the island: he was born there, was there before the others arrived, and remains when they leave. De Caro keeps his power over the inmates and shepherd, so their subaltern condition is not altered. But in the space of

his artistic creation, Cabiddu grants to the indigenous subaltern subject the poetic pre-eminence of the ending. Antioco does not speak, but we see the island through his gaze, and hear his rough, uncouth song. His point of view is the last to be asserted.

The stuff of dreams

It is not until the concluding moments that the film's title is explained. Before Caliban's song starts, we see Miranda on the ship, emerging from the trunk in which she and Ferdinando were smuggled aboard, and taking her place beside her substitute father, Campese, who watches the island recede. As the two sit silently together – and strikingly, Ferdinando stays hidden, so as not to disrupt this new father-daughter bond – we hear the final lines in voiceover from De Caro, Prospero's famous words to Ferdinand: "Our revels now are ended. These our actors … were all spirits and / Are melted into air, into thin air… We are such stuff / As dreams are made on, and our little life / Is rounded with a sleep" (4.1.148-58). As the two gaze on the waves, a reverse shot picks up the sea from Antioco's perspective, who looks back from the island, resting on his staff in a philosophical pose, before all the human figures are replaced by the boat's endless rocking and the empty distant shore (see illustration 9). The final image is, then, the sea as much as the land. Campese and Miranda move into a safe but temporary, uncertain space set apart from the dilemmas that come with being on the island.

It is a mysterious, complex ending, which pulls the viewer conflicting ways. The mood is melancholy, dominated by shots of the heaving water, detaching us from reality. Campese and Miranda are in transit, voyagers whose ultimate destination is unknown. Unlike Prospero's return to Milan in Shakespeare's play, we have no idea what their future holds, whether Miranda can indeed make a life with Ferdinando. There is no "brave new world" (5.1.186) coming into view, and certainly not for the characters left behind. Campese's expression is unreadable: he glances benevolently at Miranda, but stays silent and sphinx-like. The melancholy is intensified by a yearning cello theme and by the voiceover, in which the words "We are such stuff / As dreams are made on, and our little life / Is rounded with a sleep" accompany shots with the sea completely filling the screen. Moreover, to the quotation from the play, De Caro adds the final words "sonno eterno" [eternal sleep], a repetition which pushes the thought towards the prospect of inevitable metaphysical extinction.

Yet against this discomforting melancholy is the hint of underlying magic: that Ferdinando waits inside the actors' trunk, the box from which tricks have come; that the ship bears the name Santa Lucia, making her the same vessel sunk in the opening storm and which really should be just a wreck; and there is a brief glimpse of the ship's captain, who, as the credits arrive, turns and smiles at the viewer – the man who was shot by the *camorristi* and last seen as a corpse lying on the shore. Perhaps, then, the whole film has been a dream, and the dreamer Miranda, first seen sleeping in her

bedroom in the storm, and again several times thereafter. Perhaps it has all been Miranda's vision of the passage into adulthood: her rejection of her father, her voyaging into an unknown future with a lover and surrogate parent, and her mature acceptance of the pains of growing up and the inevitability of death. Or maybe Antioco is really the dreamer, the man who has also been seen sleeping, lying in the open air, looking at the stars and murmuring to himself how beautiful they are. Perhaps the ending is his dream of a liberty that might be possible were the island left to him; or perhaps his gaze seaward registers his enduring but frustrated attraction to Miranda, who now leaves the island without him. Or perhaps it is all a dream of the filmmaker, Cabiddu, the hidden sorcerer conjuring his story out of Shakespeare and De Filippo, and whose gaze is the film's ultimate reality.

These final images sum up the film's palimpsestuous intertextuality, its rich polysemic complexity in which *The Tempest* is dismembered and reassembled, refracted in a play of mirrors, and interpolated with figures from different cultures and artistic traditions, crafty manipulations through which the filmmaker makes one of theatre's best-known classics an interpretative grid articulating the conflicts of his world. With its twinned characters who seem to be living two lives, as protagonists of the film and figures from the play staged within it; with its richly sedimented modern and ancient languages; with its double vision, enfolding Shakespeare and closely observed regional cultures; with its situations of alienation and estrangement, entrapment and freedom, personal and political – it is both a dream of the individual fractured and restored, and a meditation on what constitutes the Shakespearean in the Mediterranean space of modern Italy and contemporary Europe. And in a remarkable demonstration of the story's polysemy and capacity for endless extension, in 2019 Cabiddu's screenplay was itself re-adapted for the theatre by Sandro Baldacci as *L'isola dei sogni* [The Island of Dreams], and taken back into the prison world with a staging by the Compagnia Scatenati, a company composed of convicts at the Marassi gaol in Genoa (see Benelli). Bringing together four outside professionals as the Campese troupe with incarcerated actors playing all the other roles, *L'isola dei sogni* responds to the film's preoccupation with liberty by reframing it as if from within the experience of the prisoners themselves.

Above all, the film weaves together a narrative speaking in multiple ways to different audiences, who will decode its network of allusions according to their knowledge of local, regional and international contexts, or the competing realms of literature, theatre and cinema. Viewers who approach it as a literary adaptation have their pleasure enhanced by Cabiddu's subtle games with his sources. They will recognize its "micro-quotations" – such as the tortoise that is briefly spotted, probably in reference to Prospero calling Caliban a "tortoise" (1.2.316); or the passing allusion to *A Midsummer Night's Dream* when Pasquale, like Bottom, offers to act all the spare roles in the play; or the final prompt towards the film's Italian theatrical origins in the fleeting appearance of Luca De

Filippo as the resurrected Captain and Eduardo's voice singing Caliban's song. Cinema-goers will catch details such as the modelling of the old, trusted inmate Agostino on Dustin Hoffman in the modern carceral classic *Papillon* (1973), or Ferdinand's resemblance to the late Massimo Troisi, much-loved Neapolitan star *of Il Postino* (1994). These viewers will follow whatever thread is meaningful for them. But for viewers to whom such citations mean nothing, the film still has a rich mythic texture which speaks to elemental human situations – as in the way that Miranda's discovery of Ferdinando on the beach seems to track back to the archetypal depiction of two strangers falling in love, Nausicaa and Ulysses in the *Odyssey*, self and other, the local woman and the castaway. All viewers will catch how the prison setting brings out the play's profound sense of loss and helplessness, the powerlessness and subjection which is experienced by all its characters. At the same time, they may hear how it also speaks of resistance to oppression, of family, love, the struggle for power and forgiveness, and most of all the saving power of the imagination, of theatre as the place where we recognise our real selves and find reality magically reinvented.

CAPTIONS FOR ILLUSTRATIONS

1. The island's natural landscape. © Gianfranco Cabbidu.
2. The prison on the island. © Gianfranco Cabbidu.
3. Miranda (Alba Gaia Bellugi) discovers Ferdinand (Maziar Ferruzi). © Gianfranco Cabbidu.
4. Campese (Sergio Rubini) and De Caro (Ennio Fantastichini). © Gianfranco Cabbidu.
5. The theatre in the prison. © Gianfranco Cabbidu.
6. The storm scene in performance. © Gianfranco Cabbidu.
7. The ship in Giorgio Strehler's 1978 production. © Luigi Ciminaghi/Piccolo Teatro di Milano.
8. Fiorenzo Mattu as Caliban. © Gianfranco Cabbidu.
9. Final shots: Caliban gazes out to sea. © Gianfranco Cabbidu.

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* This article is the joint work of the authors, who are equally responsible for its structure and content. However, Sulis oversaw the sections on the Neapolitan palimpsest and "postcolonial" Sardinia, and Butler those on the frame-plot and "the stuff of dreams". The authors are grateful to Gianfranco Cabiddu for discussing the film with them during a seminar held at the University of Leeds on 8th November 2017, and for sharing the screenplay and the images accompanying this essay. They are also grateful to the postgraduate researchers in English and Italian, in particular Alessio Mattana and Rachel Johnson, for the engaging debate which developed on that occasion and inspired this article.

[1] *La stoffa dei sogni* [*The Stuff of Dreams*] (2016), dir.: Gianfranco Cabiddu, original script: Gianfranco Cabiddu, screenplay and script: Gianfranco Cabiddu, Ugo Chiti, Salvatore De Mola.

[2] For this term, see Cagle and Napper.

[3] In this essay, our quotations from the film in English are generally based on the existing subtitles, but have been checked against the Italian film and screenplay, and corrected where necessary. English translations of other Italian texts are our own.

[4] Several of these had notable TV or cinema adaptations: for TV, *Natale in casa Cupiello*, dir. Eduardo De Filippo (RAI 1962; 1977), and for cinema *Napoli milionaria!* [*Side-Street Story*], dir. Eduardo De Filippo (1950), and *Matrimonio all'italiana* [*Marriage Italian Style*], dir. Vittorio De Sica (1964) with Sofia Loren and Marcello Mastroianni. In Britain, Zeffirelli directed London productions of *Saturday, Sunday, Monday* (Old Vic, 1973) and *Filumena* (Lyric Theatre, 1978); *Filumena* was revived by Peter Hall in 1998 with Judi Dench in the title role. In Italian, the main point of reference on Eduardo is the three volumes of his *Teatro* edited by Nicola De Blasi and Paola Quarenghi (2000-2007), including historical and linguistic introductions, chronology and critical apparatus. The bibliography in English on the rich Italian literary production in languages other than Italian (e.g. dialects and minority languages) is limited. On Neapolitan theatre and Eduardo, see Marrone and, as a testimony, De Filippo, "Intimacy".

[5] "[L]a magia, i trucchi di scena, le creature soprannaturali che popolano questa commedia", "la tolleranza, la benevolenza che pervade tutta la storia". On the translation, see Lombardo, *Eduardo e Shakespeare*; Leonardi; Sapienza (also for an updated bibliography); and Segnini. Cabiddu attended Agostino Lombardo's classes on *The Tempest* at La Sapienza, and his interpretation of Shakespeare is influenced both by his teaching and by the academic work produced at the same university (see e.g., on filmic adaptations of Shakespeare, Imperiali, and Quarenghi).

[6] Memories of this experience are in Cabiddu, and Quarenghi and Marotti. Part of the recording was presented during Eduardo's university lectures, and later used for a puppet show.

[7] "E poi Campese, questo Shakespeare non mi sembra uno tanto spocchioso. Questo si capisce che è una persona intelligente veramente, non si offende se uno gli cambia un poco il guscio delle cose. Questo ha la sostanza… e quella rimane!"

[8] "[Q]uell'incanto fragile e potente, quell'armonia dello spirito con la materia, quella sostanza di cui sono fatti i sogni": De Filippo, "Ringraziamento", 19.
[9] "Ho letto molto da giovane, quando avevo gli occhi buoni, e prima di ogni altro autore scelsi naturalmente il primo della classe, Guglielmo Shakespeare": De Filippo, *Lezioni*, 81.
[10] All references are to Shakespeare, *Complete Works*.
[11] These allusions were discussed by Cabiddu in the seminar at the University of Leeds. For these productions, see Horowitz. For the rain-stick, see Horowitz 155, and Brook 133-34. Strehler's production can be viewed at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aVN94wgXRd4.
[12] The film can be streamed from https://www.shakespearebehindbars.org/documentary/. See also Trounstine, Scott-Douglass, Shailor, Wray, Bates, Lehmann, and Calbi.
[13] On cinema in Sardinia, see Urban.
[14] A noteworthy theatre play based on a translation of Shakespeare's *Macbeth* in archaic Sardinian has recently won critical acclaim: *Macbettu*, dir. Alessandro Serra, winner of the Ubu Prize 2017.
[15] On the "semi-colonial" condition of the island, see Wagner, "La questione".
[16] On the Sardinian language, see Tufi; Lai. In 1999, Italian law n.482 included Sardinian among the historical linguistic minorities to be protected. It is included in the UNESCO's *Atlas of Languages in Danger*.
[17] Fiorenzo Mattu is the Sardinian-speaking protagonist of previous films such as *Arcipelaghi* [*Archipelaghis*] (2001) and *Su Re* [*The King*] (2012, both dir. Giovanni Columbu), and is therefore an iconic, recognisable figure and voice on screen, at least for Sardinian viewers. As already mentioned in relation to the actors playing the young *camorristi*, Cabiddu's choice of actors aims at the interaction of different audience levels: local (with Mattu, Jacopo Cullin as Franci and Gianpaolo Loddo as Agostino) and national (with Sergio Rubini as Campese, Ennio Fantastichini as De Caro, and Renato Carpentieri as Don Vincenzo, together with Luca De Filippo as the ship's captain: all very well-known figures in the Italian theatre and cinema scene).
[18] In discussion at Leeds, Cabiddu emphasized this playful citation of the Trinculo/Caliban episode was a deliberately intended allusion.