

Document Citation

Title	Lo straniero
Author(s)	
Source	<i>Dino de Laurentiis Cinematografica</i>
Date	
Type	distributor materials
Language	French German English Spanish
Pagination	
No. of Pages	16
Subjects	
Film Subjects	Lo straniero (The stranger), Visconti, Luchino, 1967

The Stranger

DINO DE LAURENTIIS
FILM

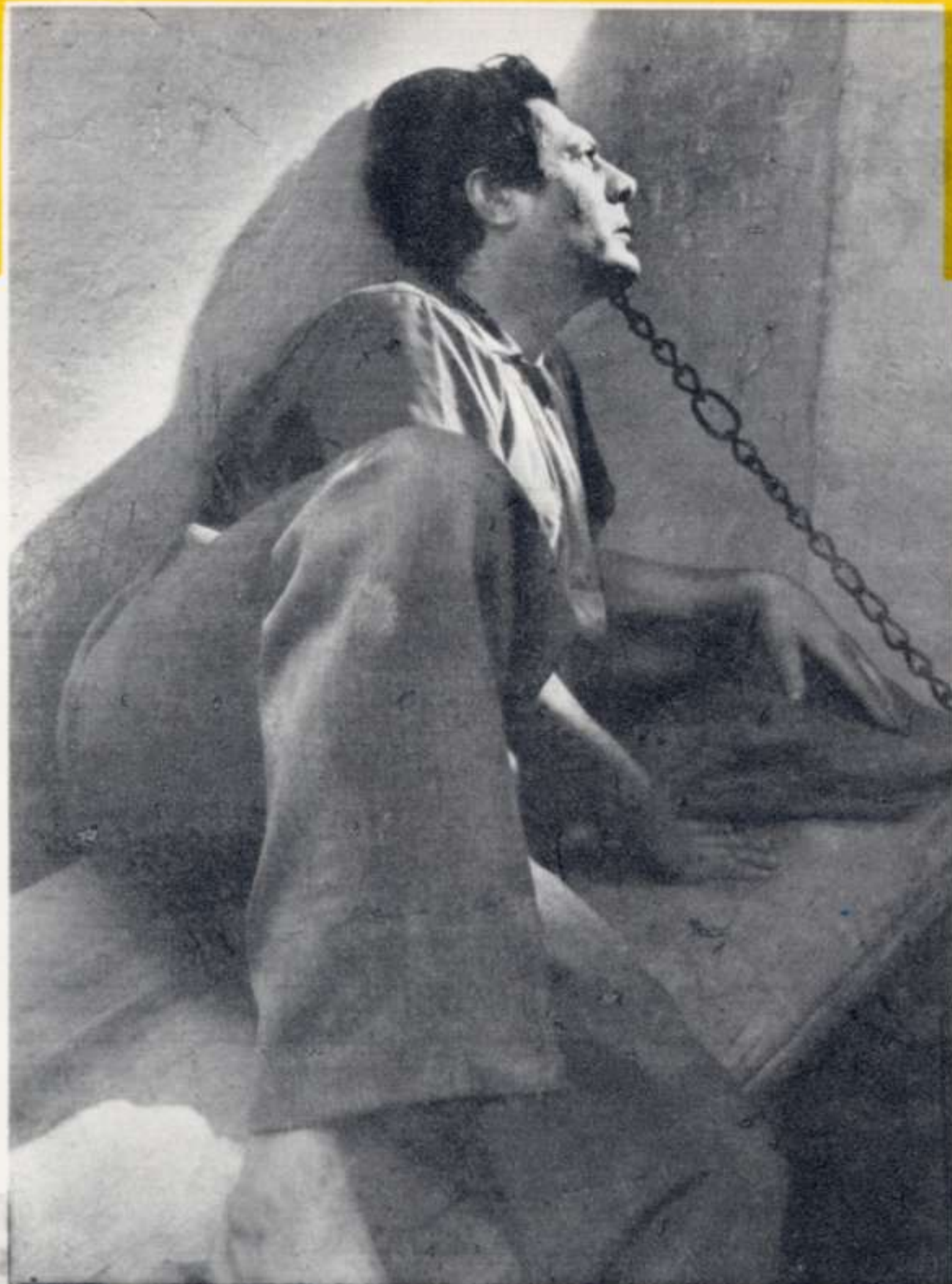
ANNO IX - N. 2

AGOSTO 1967

**LO
STRANIERO**

Esposito

LO STRANIERO



DINO DE LAURENTIIS presenta
MARCELLO MASTROIANNI

in

LO STRANIERO

dall'omonimo romanzo di ALBERT CAMUS

EDIZIONI GALLIMARD

ANNA KARINA

BERNARD BLIER

JACQUES HERLIN

GEORGE GERET

JEAN PIERRE ZOLA

e con

GEORGE WILSON

Regia di

LUCHINO VISCONTI



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con la MARIANNE PRODUCTIONS FILM S.A. di Parigi

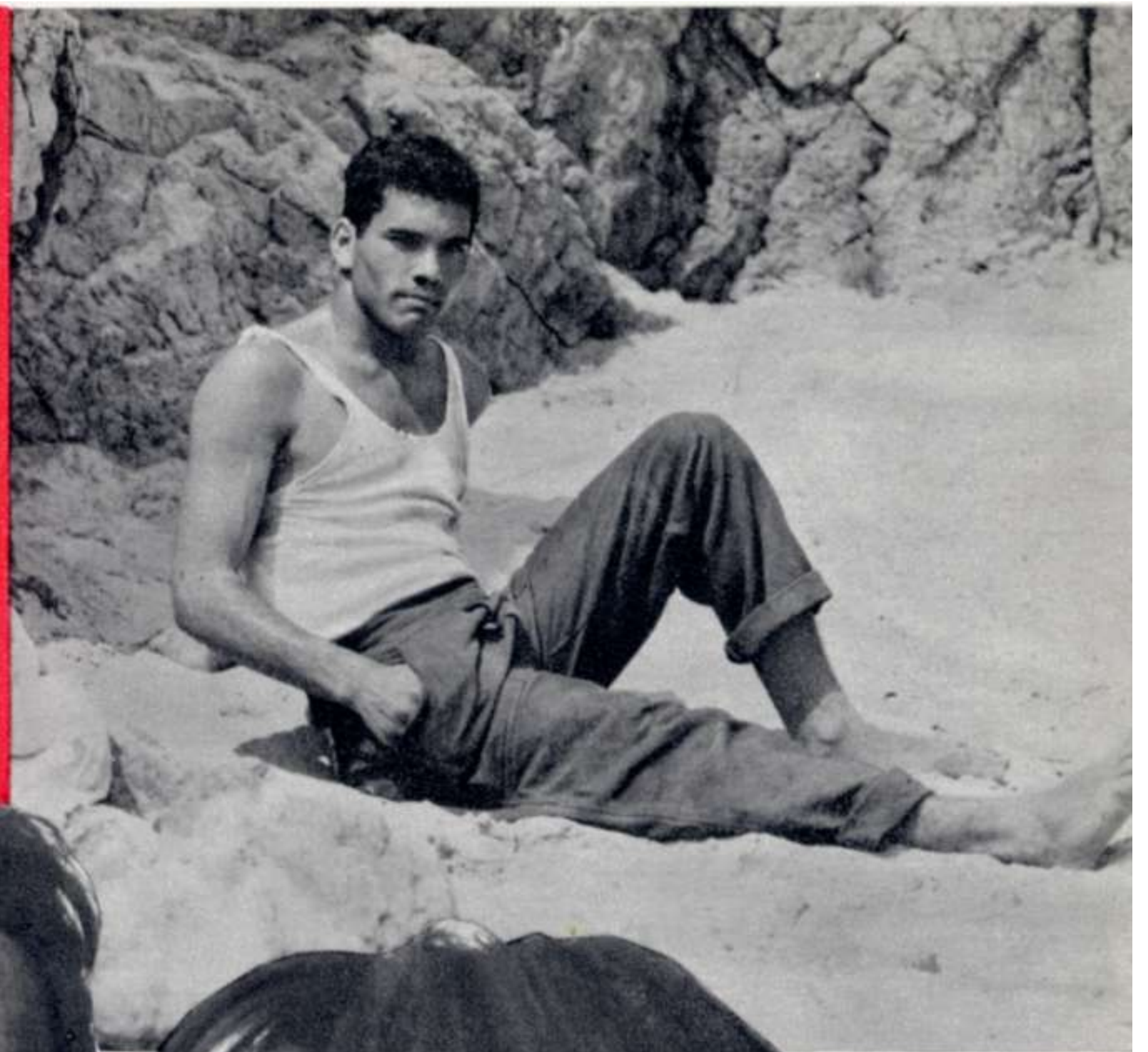
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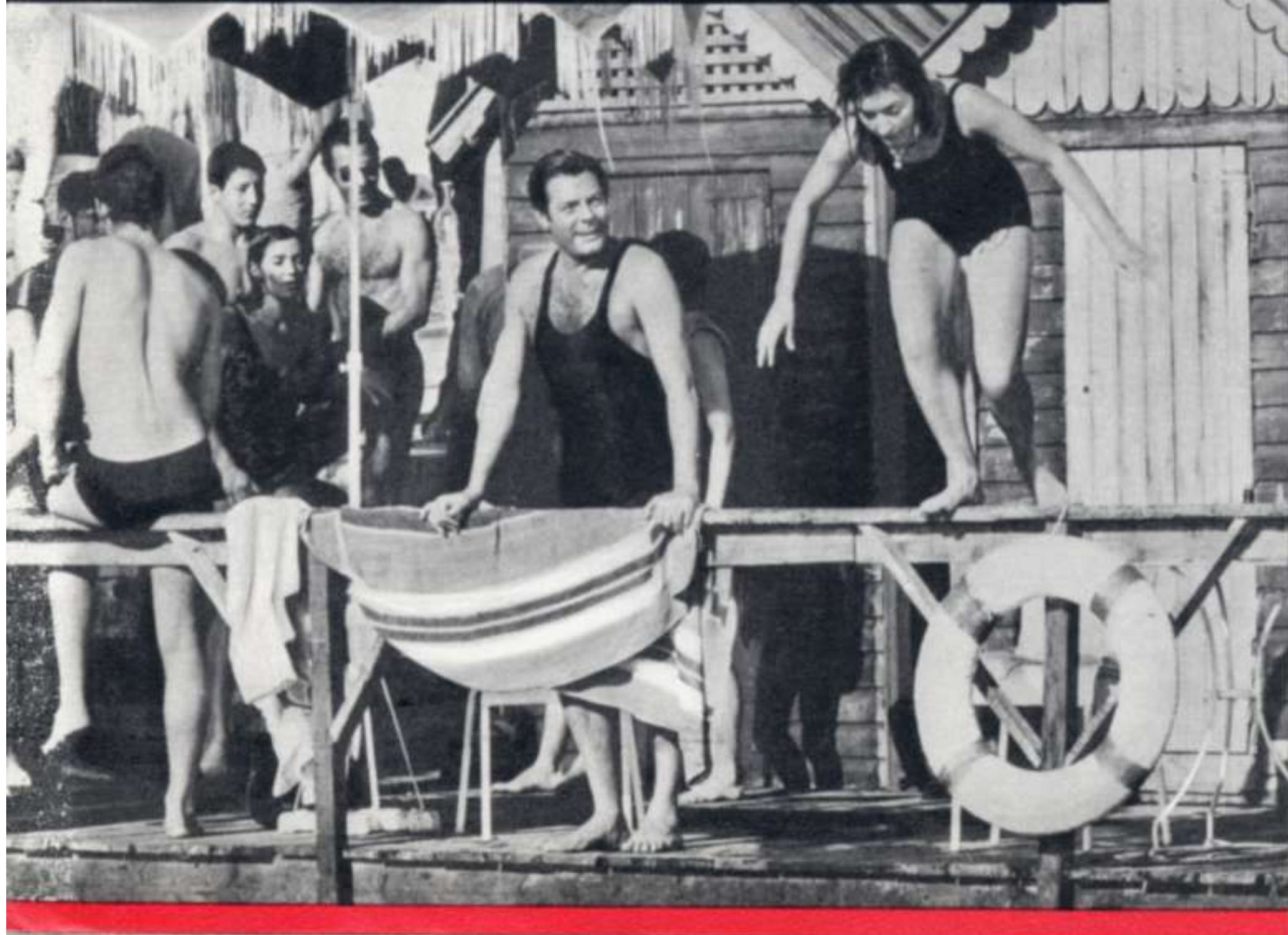
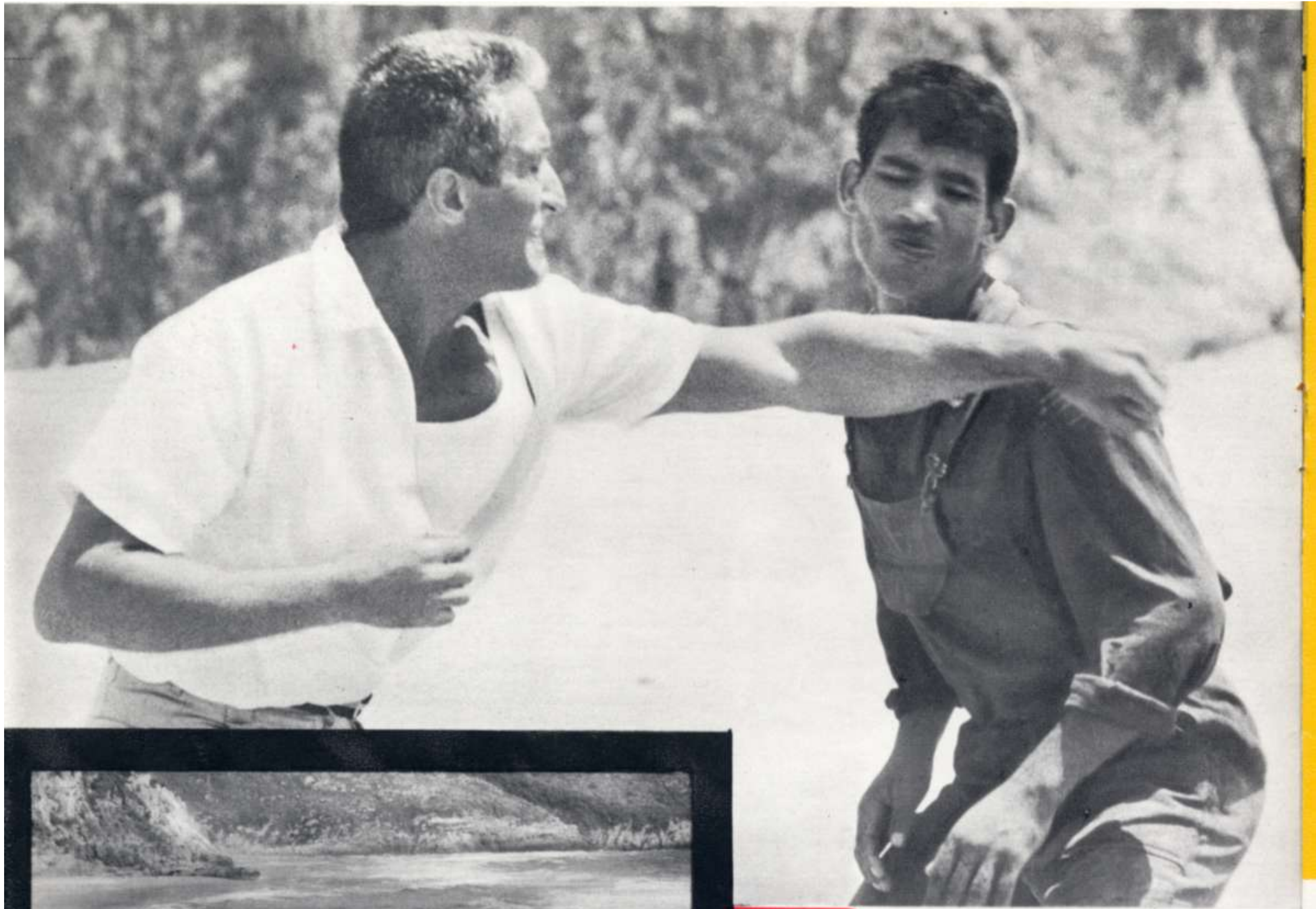
Produttore associato PIETRO NOTARIANNI

Il libro di ALBERT CAMUS « LO STRANIERO » è edito in Italia da Bompiani

Technicolor (R)

Distribuzione Euro International Films





LO STRANIERO

Tutti i films di Visconti, ad eccezione, forse, di « Bellissima », hanno una origine letteraria. Anche quando non sono direttamente trattati da un romanzo famoso (« Il Gattopardo », « Il postino suona sempre due volte »), o da una novella illustre (« Le notti bianche », « Senso »), dietro le sue opere, adombrato o palese, sta sempre un grande autore: Verga per « La terra trema », Dostoievsky e Thomas Mann per « Rocco e i suoi fratelli » e i greci classici per la Elettra-Sandra di « Vaghe stelle dell'Orsa ». Vicende e personaggi « rivisitati » che per Visconti rappresentano uno stimolo, la partenza per altre storie e creazioni e che, attraverso la sua mediazione assumono fisionomie e significati diversi, tipicamente « viscontei », facendo di lui, a sua volta, un autore.

Anche questa volta Visconti ha scelto per il suo film un romanzo: un lungo racconto, esemplare e perfetto, un caposcuola della letteratura francese degli ultimi trent'anni: « Lo Straniero » di Albert Camus. O forse sarebbe meglio dire che « Lo Straniero » ha scelto Visconti, tanta è l'insistenza con la quale questo progetto ricorre nei piani del regista fin dai primi tempi della sua attività cinematografica; un progetto sempre rimandato e sempre ripreso, come un'idea



fissa dalla quale Visconti non è mai riuscito a liberarsi. E a questo proposito è interessante ricordare che « Lo Straniero » è del 1942, lo stesso anno, cioè, di « Ossessione ». Un'altra opera famosa di Camus, uscita poco più tardi, sarebbe stata « L'uomo in rivolta »; quello che, appunto, era in quei giorni Visconti. In rivolta contro il conformismo, contro i farisei della cultura e della morale: quelli che, tra gli altri, sono i temi de « Lo Straniero ».

La vicenda è semplice o, almeno apparentemente, tale: Meursault (Marcello Mastroianni), un piccolo impiegato che vive e lavora ad Algeri, riceve l'annuncio della morte della madre avvenuta all'ospizio di Marengo un piccolo centro lontano dalla città una ottantina di chilometri. E' una notizia che non lo addolora particolar-





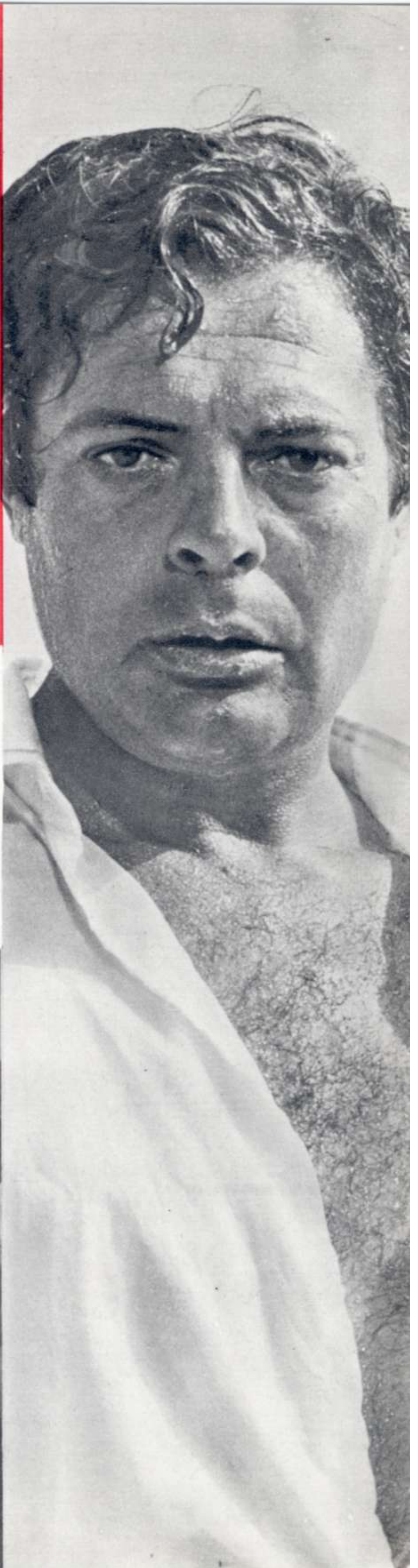
mente, dati i rapporti di reciproca indifferenza sopravvenuti con il passar degli anni.

All'ospizio il direttore (Jacques Herlin) è sfavorevolmente impressionato dalla mancanza di una scenata di disperazione che si aspettava da lui; e con il direttore tutte quelle persone che hanno occasione di conoscerlo per fargli le condoglianze. Meursault passa la notte a vegliare la bara, senza particolari pensieri, fumando e bevendo caffè che gli offre il custode, e leggermente a disagio di fronte ai vecchi compagni d'ospizio della madre che con lui hanno voluto assistere alla veglia funebre. Il mattino seguente uno sparuto corteo accompagna il carro mortuario, lucido e nero sotto il sole cocente, fino al cimitero. E Meursault, con un senso di dovere compiuto, ritorna ad Algeri.



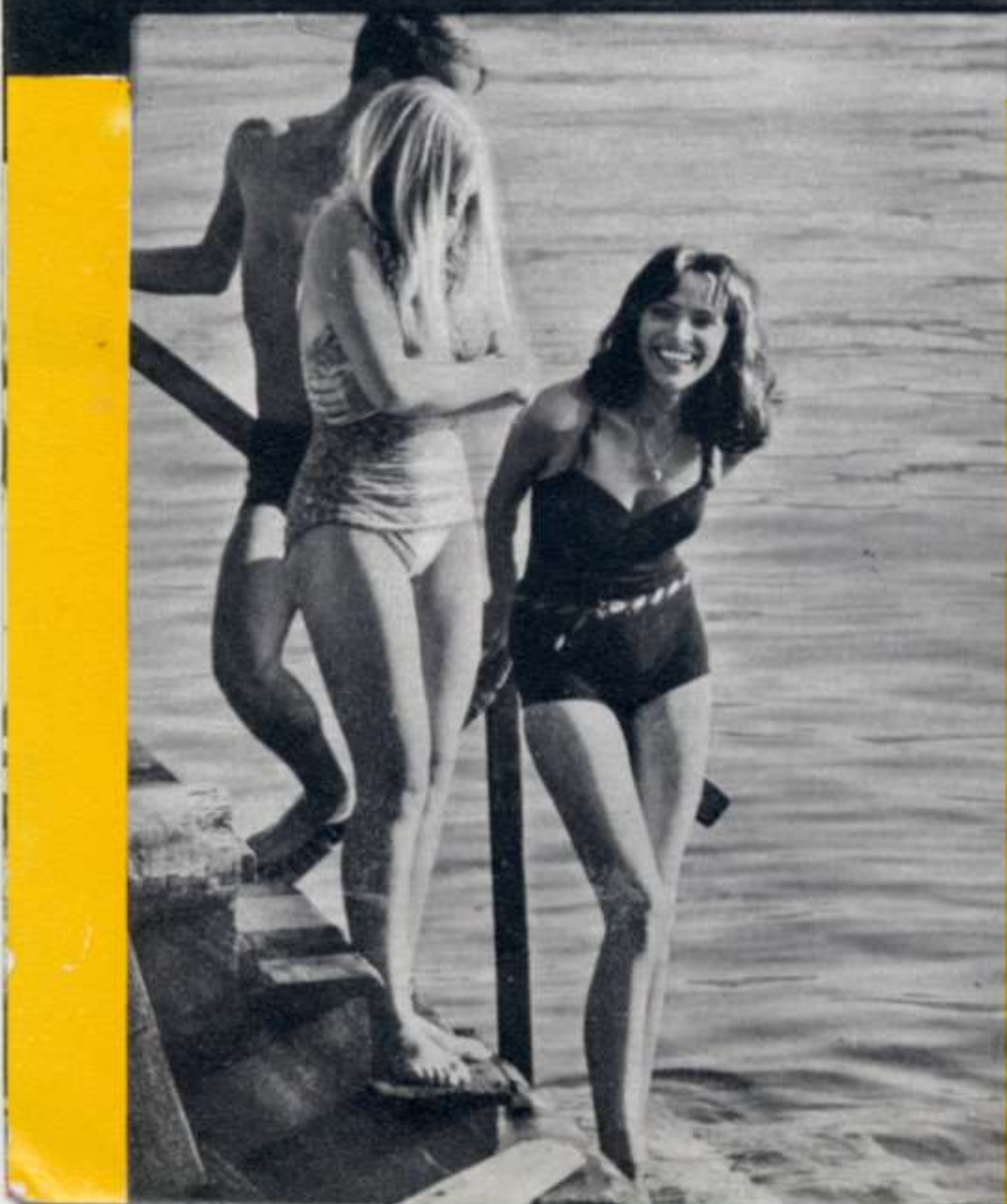


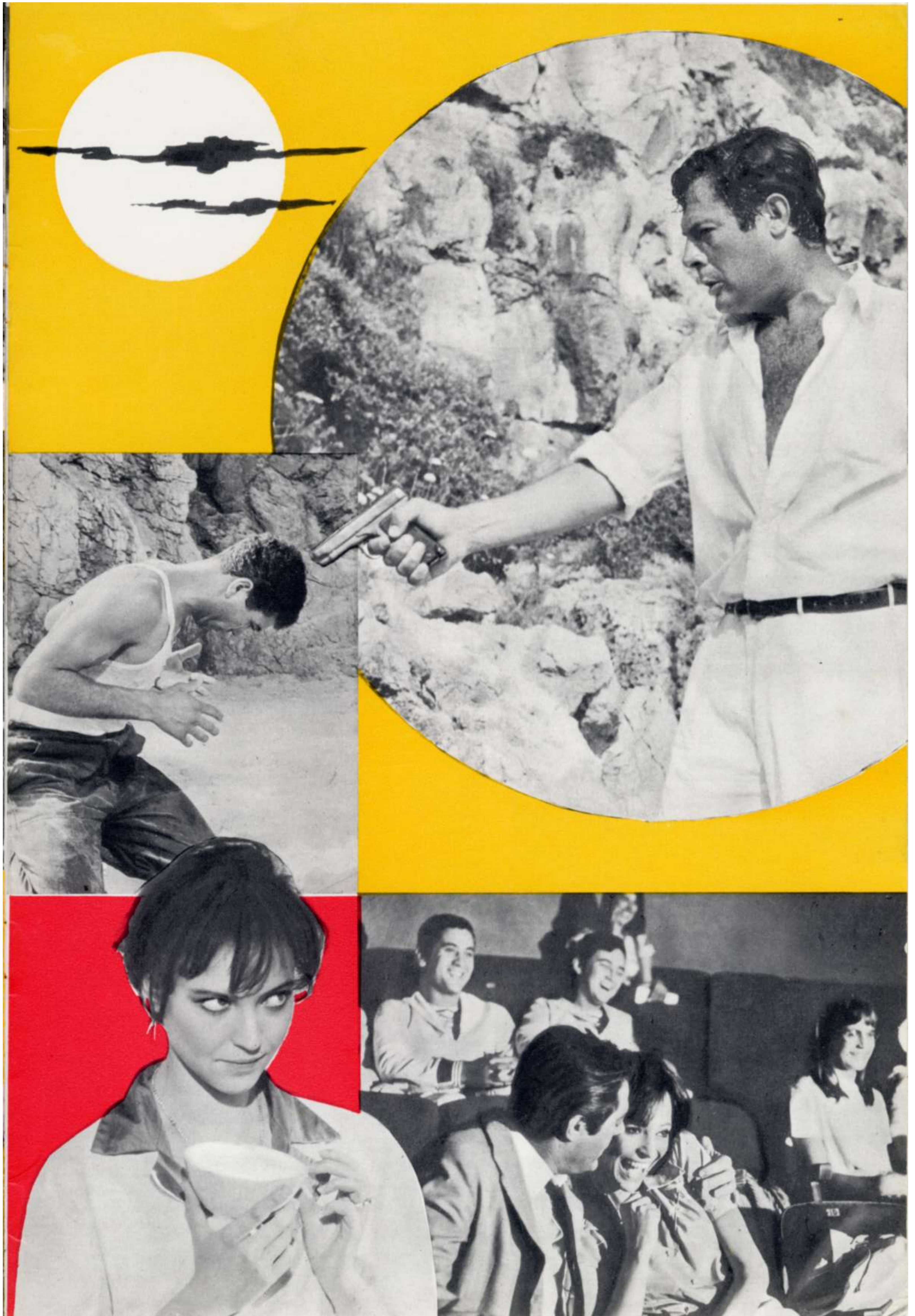
Il giorno dopo, sulla spiaggia, incontra una sua vecchia conoscenza Marie Cardona (Anna Karina), una dattilografa che in passato ha lavorato con lui; i due riallacciano la vecchia amicizia, trascorrono una giornata gradevole, vanno al cinema e finiscono per passare la notte insieme. Meursault riprende la vita di tutti i giorni: l'ufficio, il lavoro, i pasti nella solita trattoria. A variare la monotonia e l'abitudine della sua quotidiana esistenza, un giorno riceve una visita di un vicino di stanza, Raymond (Georges Geret), un nome del quale non si è mai particolarmente occupato e del quale l'unica cosa che sa è che probabilmente è mantenuto dalle donne. Il vicino gli racconta di aver litigato con la sua ragazza e tra grandi proteste di amicizia lo prega di aiutarlo a scriverle una lettera. Indifferente e disponibile come sempre Meursault accetta l'amicizia e scrive la lettera.





Nei giorni seguenti rivede Marie, ed è con una certa perplessità oltre che stupore, che da quella donna bella, giovane ed innamorata riceve la proposta di sposarla. Proposta che senza nessuna particolare presa di posizione, finisce per rifiutare. Come rifiuta l'offerta del suo direttore (Jean Pierre Zola) di trasferirsi a Parigi dove la sua carriera potrebbe avvantaggiarsi di molto. Tutta l'esistenza di Meursault, insomma, non è che sensazione elementare, bere, mangiare, fumare, far l'amore, senza conoscere la gioia, o il rimorso o l'amore. La sua coscienza si risveglierà soltanto di fronte alla tragedia. Una sera Meursault e Marie sentono delle grida disperate provenire dalla stanza di Raymond: è la ragazza della lettera, un'araba, che invoca aiuto e cerca scampo dall'uomo che la sta battendo a sangue. In-







terviene la polizia e la cosa è messa a tacere; ma da quel giorno Raymond non si sente tranquillo: un arabo (Cherital Saada), il fratello della ragazza, lo segue per la strada, in silenzio, da lontano, e gli appare davanti all'improvviso nei luoghi meno previsti. E così accade una certa domenica, quando Meursault, Marie e Raymond si recano a fare il bagno presso un amico che ha una capanna sul mare. Sotto il sole a picco, nel grande silenzio del primo pomeriggio, Meursault spara su quell'uomo che non ha mai visto prima, per delle cause che non lo riguardano in seguito ad una provocazione che forse non esiste nemmeno.

Quello che perde Meursault al processo non è tanto l'uccisione del giovane arabo quanto la sua « insensibilità ». I testimoni raccontano la sua indifferenza alla morte della madre, mettono in rilievo l'aver iniziato una relazione amorosa il giorno stesso dopo i funerali, lo accusano di avere come unico amico un magnaccia e di averlo aiutato a riprendere una ragazza che aveva cercato di ribellarsi a lui. Meursault non si cura di alterare i fatti, di assecondare i pregiudizi di chi lo sta giudicando. Ed è per tutto questo, essendo diverso, straniero, che sarà condannato a morte.





Alla luce di quella condanna improvvisamente vede l'assurdo di un mondo mortale dal quale ormai è escluso e non fa più parte. « La morte è l'unica realtà » aveva scritto Camus nel « Mito di Sisifo »; e la coscienza di Meursault si risveglia per rendersi conto di questa verità. Allo stesso tempo può giudicare la sua vita e giustificarla: « Era come se per tutta la vita avessi aspettato questo istante e questa piccola alba per essere giustificato ». Lo straniero capisce che non era colpevole di fronte ai giudici che l'hanno condannato a morte: « Niente, niente aveva importanza ed io sapevo bene il perché ».



MATERIALE PUBBLICITARIO



Bozzetto affisso a 4 fogli

Busta foto di 10 sogg. 50x70 in tricromia
 Affisso a 4 fogli fotolito
 Affisso a 2 fogli fotolito
 Locandina del 4 fogli fotolito
 24 fogli fotolito
 Flani - Brochures



Bozzetto affisso a 2 fogli

CAST ARTISTICO *16P #24586*

Personaggi	Interpreti
Meursault	MARCELLO MASTROIANNI
Marie Cardona	ANNA KARINA
Giudice Istruttore	GEORGE WILSON
Avvocato Difensore	BERNARD BLIER
Presidente Tribunale	PIERRE BERTIN
Direttore Ospizio	JACQUES HERLIN
Raymond	GEORGE GERET
Sacerdote	BRUNO CREMER
Pubblico Ministero	ALFRED ADAM
Signora Masson	ANGELA LUCE
Signor Masson	MIMMO PALMARA
Direttore Ufficio	JEAN PIERRE ZOLA
Un avvocato	VITTORIO DUSE
Emanuele	MARC LAURENT
Salamano	JOSEPH MARECHAL
Arabo	CHERITEL MOHAMED
Secondino	PAOLO HERZL
Regia LUCHINO VISCONTI	
TECHNICOLOR (R)	

CAST TECNICO

Regia	LUCHINO VISCONTI
Sceneggiatura	LUCHINO VISCONTI
Musiche dirette da	SUSO CECCHI D'AMICO
Organizzatore Generale	PIERO PICCIONI
Aiuti alla regia	BRUNO NICOLAI
Ispettore di produzione	ALFREDO DE LAURENTIIS
Direttore della fotografia	RINALDO RICCI
Architetto	ALBINO COCCO
Operatori alla macchina	CARLO BARTOLINI
Assistenti operatori	GIUSEPPE ROTUNNO
Aiuto architetto	MARIO GARBUGLIA
Vestiti e ambientazione	GIUSEPPE MACCARI
Aiuti costumista	MARIO CAPRIOTTI
Truccatore	GIUSEPPE DE BIASE
Aiuto truccatore	GINO CONVERSI
Montaggio	OTELLO SPILA
Assistente al montaggio	PIERO SERVO
Fonico presa diretta	FERDINANDO GIOVANNONI
Fonico mixage	PIERO TOSI
Abbigliamento e costumi di	CESARE ROVATTI
M. Mastroianni	GIULIANA SERANO C.S.C.
	GIUSEPPE BIANCHELLI
	MARIO BANCHELLI
	RUGGERO MASTROIANNI
	LEA MAZZOCCHI
	VITTORIO TRENTINO
	EMILIO ROSA
	PIATTELLI - Roma



DINO DE LAURENTIIS
FILM

Anno IX - N. 2
 Agosto 1967

Edito a cura dell'Ufficio Stampa Dino De Laurentiis Cinematografica S. p. A. - Roma, Via XXIV Maggio, 14 - Direttore Responsabile ARNALDO GIUSTI - Aut. Trib. di Roma n. 6789 del 16-3-1959. Stampato dalla Novograph - Roma - Si autorizza la riproduzione degli articoli in questo fascicolo, anche senza citare la fonte.

DER AUSLANDER (DER FREMDE)

Alle Filme Viscontis mit Ausnahme vielleicht von « Bellissima » (Die schoenste), sind literarischen Ursprungs. Wenn sie auch nicht direkt einem beruehmten Roman entnommen sind (« Il Gattopardo » = Der Leopard, « Il Postino suona sempre due volte » = Der Postbote klingelt immer zweimal) oder einer bekannten Novelle (« Le notti bianche » = Weisse naechte, « Senso » = Gefuehl), steht hinter seinen Werken, verborgen oder offenbar stets ein grosser Autor: Verga fuer « La terra trema » (Die erde bebt), Dostoiievsky un Thomas Mann fuer « Rocco e i suoi fratelli » (Rochus und seine brueder) und die klæssischen Griechen fuer Elektra-Sandra in « Vaghe stelle dell'Orsa » (Die sterne des grossen Baeren). Es sind Begebenheiten und Gestalten, die wieder « aufgesucht wurden », die fuer Visconti eine Anregung darstellen, den Ausgangspunkt fuer andere Geschichten und Schoepfungen, die durch seine Vermittlung andersartige, typisch « viscontische » Formen und Bedeutungen annehmen und aus ihm wiederum einen Autor machen.

Auch diesmal hat Visconti fuer seinen Roman gewaehlt: eine lange Erzaehlung, einzigartig und perfekt, ein Meisterwerk der franzoesischen Literatur der letzten dreissig Jahre: « Lo Straniero » (Der Auslaender) von Albert Camus. Oder es waere besser zu sagen, dass « Der Auslaender » Visconti gewaehlt hat, derart ist die Eindringlichkeit mit der dieses Projekt in den Plaenen des Regisseurs seit den ersten Anfaengen seiner Filmtaetigkeit immer wiederkehrt, ein stets aufgeschobenes und dann wieder aufgenommenes Projekt, wie eine fixe Idee, von der Visconti sich nie zu befreien vermochte. Und hierzu ist es interessant daran zu erinnern, dass « Der Auslaender » aus dem Jahre 1942 satmmt, aus demselben Jahre von « Ossessione » (Besessenheit). Ein anderes beruehmtes Werk Camus', das wenig spaeter erschien, sollte « L'uomo in rivolta » (Der revoltierende mensch) sein; wie eben Visconti in jenen Tagen war. Er revoltierte gegen den Konformismus, gegen die Pharisaeer der Kultur und der Sitten: diejenigen, die unter anderen, die Themen des « Auslaenders » bilden.

Das Begebnis ist einfach, oder wenigstens es scheint so: Meursault (Marcello Mastroianni), ein einfacher Angestellter der in Algier lebt und arbeitet, erhaelt die Nachricht vom Ableben seiner Mutter im Altersheim von Marengo, einem kleinen, etwa 80 Km von der Stadt entfernt liegenden Ort. Diese Nachricht ist fuer ihn nicht weiter schmerzlich, angesichts der gegenseitigen Gleichgueltigkeit, die im Verlaufe der Jahre eingetreten war.

Im Altersheim macht er auf den Direktor (Jacques Herlin) keinen besonders guten Eindruck, da letzterer von ihm ein verzweifertes Gebahren erwartete; und mit dem Direktor sind alle diejenigen derselben Meinung, die Gelegenheit haben, ihm ihr Beileid auszusprechen. Meursault wacht die ganze Nacht neben der Bahre ohne besondere Gedanken, wobei er raucht und den Kaffee trinkt, der ihm der Hausdiener reicht. Ihm ist nich wohl zumute gegenueber der alten Mitbewohner des Altersheimes, die es sich nicht nehmen liessen, der Totenwache beizuwohnen. Am folgenden Morgen begleitet ein kleiner Zug unter der prallenden Sonne den blanken, schwarzen Leichenwagen zum Friedhof. Dann kehrt Meursault mit sich selbst zufrieden, seine Pflicht getan zu haben, nach Algier zurueck.

Am naechsten Tage begegnet er auf dem Strande eine alte Bekanntschaft, Marie Cardona (Anna Karina), eine Stenotypistin die frueher mit ihm zusammen arbeitete; sie nehmen die alte Freundschaft wieder auf, verleben einen netten Tag zusammen, gehen Abends ins Kino und verleben auch die Nacht zusammen. Meursault nimmt sein alltaegliches Leben wieder auf: Buero, Dienst, die Mahlzeiten im kleinen Restaurant. Eines Tages besucht ihn sein Zimmernachbar Raymond (Georges Geret), um dessen Namen er sich nie gekuemmert hat und von dem er nur weiss, dass er vielleicht von Frauen unterhalten wird. Der Nachbar erzaehlt ihm, er haette mit seinem Maedchen gestritten, und indem er ihm seine Freundschaft beteuert bittet er ihn, ihm ein Brief schreiben zu helfen. Gleichgueltig und hilfsbereit wie immer, nimmt Meursault diese Freundschaft an und schreibt den Brief.

In den naechsten Tagen trifft er sich wieder mit Marie, und zu seinem Erstaunen und Verblueeffung macht ihm diese schoene, junge und verliebte Frau einen Heiratsantrag. Doch ohne einen besonderen Grund anzugeben, schlaegt er diesen Vorschlag ab. Ebenfalls schlaegt er ein Angebot seines Direktors (Jean Pierre Zola) einer Versetzung nach Paris ab, wo er seine Laufbahn guensitger gestalten koennte. Meursaults ganze Existenz ist ein ganz primitives Dasein: trinken, essen, rauchen, mit Frauen umgehen, ohne etwas von Freude, Gewissen oder Liebe zu wissen. Sein Gewissen erwacht nur angesichts der Tragoedie. Eines Abends hoeren Meursault und Marie verzweifelte Rufe aus Raymonds Zimmer kommen: es its das Arabermaedchen, an welches der Brief gerichtet war, das um Hilfe schreit und dem Manne zu entkommen versucht, der sie blutig schlaegt. Die Polizei greift ein und nichts wird darueber bekannt aber seit dem Tage fuehlt sich Raymond nicht mehr sicher: ein Araber (Cherital Saada), der Bruder des Maedchens, folgt ihm still und von weietm auf der Strasse, dann taucht er ploetzlich an den undenkbarsten Orten vor ihm auf. So geschieht es nun, als an einem Sonntag sich Meursault, Marie und Raymond zu einem Freund begeben, der am Meeresstrand ein Haeuschen besitzt, um zu baden: Unter der grellen Sonne in der grossen Stille des fruehen Nachmittags, schießt Meursault auf den Mann den er nie vordem gesehen hat, und zwar aus Ursachen die ihn nicht betreffen, infolge einer Provokation die vielleicht garnicht existiert.

Was Meursault beim Prozess ruiniert ist nicht die Toetung des jungen Arabers selbst, aber vielmehr seine « Gefuehllosigkeit ». Die Zeugen erzaehlen ueber seine Gleichgueltigkeit beim Tode seiner Mutter, sie heben hervor, dass er am Tage nach der Beerdigung ein Liebesverhaeltnis begann, sie werfen ihm vor, dass er als einzigen Freund einen Nichtstuer hat und dass er ihm geholfen hat, ein Maedchen wieder zu sich zu holen, das versucht hatte, sich gegen ihn aufzulehnen. Meursault kuemmert sich nicht darum, die Tatsachen anders darzustellen, die Vorurteile der Richter zu beseitigen. Und deswegen, weil er so anders und Auslaender ist, wird er zum Tode verurteilt.

Beim Lichte dieser Verurteilung sieht er ploetzlich die Absur ditaet einer sterblichen Welt, zu der er nun nicht mehr gehoert. « Der Tod ist die einzige Wirklichkeit » hatte Camus in « Die sage des Sisyphus » geschrieben; und Meursaults Gewissen erwacht um sich von dieser Wahrheit zu ueberzeugen. Gleichzeitig kann er ueber sein Leben urteilen und es rechtfertigen: « Eswar, als ob er das ganze Leben lang auf diesen Augenblick gewartet haette und auf diese Morgendaemmerung, um gerechtfertigt zu werden ». Der Auslaender versteht, dass er genueber der Richter die ihn zum Tode verurteilten nicht schuldig war: « Nichts, nichts hatte einige Bedeutung, und ich wusste sehr wohl warum ».

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MIT AUSNAHME ITALIENS**

THE STRANGER

All the films by Visconti, with the exception perhaps of « Bellissima », are literary in origin. Even when they are not directly drawn from a famous novel (« The Leopard », « The Postman always knocks twice »), or from a celebrated short story (« The White Nights », « Sense »), there is always a great writer, concealed or manifest, behind his works: Verga for « The Earthquake », Dostojevsky and Thomas Mann for « Rocco and his Brothers », and the Greek classics behind the Electro-Sandra of « Fair Stars in the Bear ». These events and characters have been « revisited » by Visconti and represent a stimulus for him, a departure for new stories and creations that, through his intervention, take on new features and meanings typical of Visconti, and in turn they make him a writer.

This time again, Visconti has chosen a novel for his film; a long, exemplary and perfect story, one of the masterpieces of the French school of the last thirty years: « The Stranger » by Albert Camus. It might perhaps be more appropriate to say that « The Stranger » has chosen Visconti, for this project recurs again in the plans of this director right from his beginnings as a maker of films, a project that was always postponed and always taken up again, like a fixed idea Visconti could never get out of his mind. It is interesting to recall in this connection that « The Stranger » dates from 1942, that it to say from the same years as « Obsession ».

Another work by Camus appeared shortly afterwards, « Man as a Rebel », and such a man was Visconti at that time. A rebel against conformity, against the pharisees of culture and of morality: and these, among other things, are the themes of the « The Stranger ».

The plot is simple, or at least it seems to be so: Meursault (Marcello Mastroianni), a modest clerk who lives and works at Algiers, learns that his mother has died at the old people's home of Marengo, a small centre about eighty kilometres from the city. He is not deeply moved by the news, as with the passing of the years the relationship between mother and son had become one of indifference.

At the home the director (Jacques Herlin) is pleasantly surprised at the absence of a scene of grief he had expected from him, and so are the other people who meet him and express their sympathy. Meursault keeps watch beside the coffin without thinking of anything in particular, smoking and drinking the coffee the warden offers him, somewhat embarrassed in front of his mother's old companions of the home who wanted to keep him company in his vigil. Next morning a sparse procession follows the funeral bier, black and shining under the scorching sun, down to the cemetery. And Meursault, with a feeling of duty accomplished, returns to Algiers.

The day after he meets an old acquaintance, Marie Cardona (Anna Karina) on the beach; she is a typist who worked with him in the past. The two take up an old friendship, spend a pleasant day together, go to the cinema and finally spend the night together. Meursault returns to the routine of his daily life: work in the office and the meals at the usual restaurant. As a change in the monotony and routine of his existence, one day a neighbour calls on him, Raymond (Georges Geret), a man he hardly ever thought about and about whom he only knows one thing, that he is probably kept by women. The neighbour tells him he has quarrelled with his girl, and professing great friendship for him, he asks him to write a letter for him. Indifferent and ready as always, Meursault accept the friendship and writes the letter.

During the following days, he meets Marie again, and he is bewildered, not to say amazed, that this young, beautiful girl in love proposes to marry him. In the end, without any particular reason, he rejects her proposal, and he likewise refuses the offer from his boss (Jean Pierre Zola) of a transfer to Paris, where he might considerably step up his career. In short, Meursault's whole existence consists of elementary sensations only: drinking, eating, smoking and making love, without knowing joy, remorse or love. His conscience will be awakened only if faced with tragedy. One night, Meursault and Marie hear desperate cries from Raymond's room: it is the girl to whom he wrote, an Arab, crying for help to get away from the man who is beating her cruelly. The police arrive and the thing is hushed up, but from that day Raymond does not feel safe, for an Arab (Cherital Saada), the girl's brother, follows him silently from a distance in the street, and often suddenly appears in front of him when he least expects it. The same thing happens one Sunday, when Meursault, Marie and Raymond go to a friend who has a cabin on the beach, to bathe. Under the scorching sun, in the deep silence of the early afternoon, Meursault shoots this man he has never seen before, for reasons that do not concern him, in consequence of a provocation that might not even exist.

What ruins Meursault at the trial is not so much the killing of the young Arab, as his « insensitivity ». The witnesses tell of his indifference at his mother's death, point out that he started a love affair on the very day of the funeral, accuse him of his sole friendship with a pimp, whom he helped to get back a girl that had tried to rebel against him. Meursault does not care to deny the facts or to comply with the prejudices of his judge. And it is for all this, for being different and a stranger, that he is sentenced to death.

In the light of that sentence, he suddenly is aware of the absurdity of a mortal world from which he is now excluded, to which he no longer belongs. « Death is the only reality » Camus had written in the « Myth of Sisyphus », and Meursault's conscience is awakened to perceive this reality. At the same time he can judge his life and justify it: « it was as if he had been waiting for this moment all his life, for that early dawn, in order to be justified ». The stranger understands that he was not guilty before the judges who condemned him to death: « nothing, nothing was important, and I knew well why ».

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EXCEPT ITALY**

L'ETRANGER

Tous les films de Visconti, exception faite — peut-être — pour *Bellissima*, ont une origine littéraire. Même lorsqu'ils ne sont pas directement extraits d'un roman fameux (*Il Gattopardo*, *il Postino* *suona sempre due volte*) ou d'une nouvelle illustre (*Le notti bianche*, *Senso*), derrière ses oeuvres, se trouve toujours, en pénombre ou notoirement, un grand auteur Verga pour *La terra trema*, Dostoïevsky et Thomas Mann pour *Rocco e i suoi fratelli*, et les classiques grecs pour *l'Electre-Sandra* de *Vaghe stelle dell'Orsa*. Trames et personnages « revisités », qui, pour Visconti, représentent un stimulant, la partance vers d'autres histoires et d'autres créations et qui, à travers sa médiation, assument des physionomies et des significations diverses, typiquement « viscontiennes », faisant de lui, à son tour, un auteur.

Cette fois encore, Visconti a choisi pour son film un roman; un long récit, exemplaire et parfait, un chef-d'oeuvre de la littérature française de ces dernières trente années: *l'Etranger* d'Albert Camus. Ou, peut-être, il serait mieux de dire que *l'Etranger* a choisi Visconti, tant est sensible l'insistance avec laquelle ce projet apparaît dans les plans du metteur en scène, dès les premiers temps de son activité cinématographique: un projet toujours remis à plus tard et toujours repris, à la manière d'une idée fixe dont Visconti n'est jamais parvenu à se libérer. A ce propos, il est intéressant de rappeler que *l'Etranger* est de 1942, autrement dit, la même année que *Ossessione*. Une autre oeuvre fameuse d'Albert Camus, sortie un peu plus tard, devait être *Le Révolté*, celui qu'était précisément Visconti en ces jours-là. L'homme révolté contre le conformisme, contre les Pharisien de la culture et de la morale: ceux qui sont, entre autre les thèmes de *l'Etranger*.

La trame est simple ou, pour le moins, semble-t-elle. Meursault (Marcello Mastroianni), un petit employé qui vit et travaille en Alger, apprend la mort de sa mère, survenue à l'hospice de Marengo, un modeste centre, situé à quatre-vingt kilomètres de la ville. Cette nouvelle ne lui procure pas une douleur particulière, en raison des rapports de réciproque indifférence, qui étaient venus à se créer avec les années...

A l'hospice, le directeur (Jacques Herlin) est défavorablement impressionné par le manque d'une scène de désespoir, à laquelle il s'attendait, et, avec le directeur, toutes les personnes qui ont ainsi l'occasion de connaître Meursault pour lui présenter leurs condoléances. Meursault passe toute la nuit à côté du cercueil de sa mère, sans pensées particulières, fumant les cigarettes et buvant le café que lui offre le gardien, et un peu mal à l'aise en face des vieux compagnons d'hospice de sa mère, qui, avec lui, ont voulu prendre part à la veillée funèbre. Le matin suivant, un pauvre cortège accompagne le corbillard, luisant et noir sous le soleil brûlant, jusqu'au cimetière. Et Meursault, avec le sens du devoir accompli, s'en retourne à Alger.

Le jour suivant, sur la plage, Meursault rencontre une ancienne connaissance, Marie Cardona (Anna Karina), une dactylographe qui a travaillé autrefois avec lui. Les deux renouent leur vieille amitié, passent ensemble une journée agréable, vont au cinéma et finissent par passer la nuit ensemble. Meursault reprend sa vie de tous les jours: le bureau, le travail, les repas dans le restaurant habituel.

Comme simple changement dans la monotonie et les habitudes de son existence quotidienne, Meursault, un beau jour, reçoit la visite d'un voisin de chambre, un certain Raymond (George Geret), un être dont il ne se serait jamais plus particulièrement occupé et dont l'unique chose qu'il sache de lui, est qu'il est probablement entretenu par les femmes. Le voici lui raconter qu'il s'est disputé avec son amie, et, après de grandes protestations d'amitié, le prie de l'aider à lui écrire une lettre. Indifférent et disponible comme toujours, Meursault accepte cette amitié et écrit la lettre.

Quelques jours après, il reçoit Marie, et ce n'est pas sans une certaine perplexité, mêlée de stupeur, qu'il reçoit de cette femme, belle, jeune et amoureuse, la proposition de l'épouser. Proposition que, sans aucune prise de position particulière, il finit par rejeter. Tout comme il refuse l'offre de son directeur (Jean-Pierre Zola) de se transférer à Paris, où sa carrière pourrait grandement s'améliorer. Toute l'existence de Meursault, en somme, n'est qu'une sensation élémentaire: boire, manger, fumer, faire l'amour sans connaître la joie, ou le remords, ou l'amour. Sa conscience ne se réveillera qu'en face de la tragédie. Un soir, Meursault et Marie entendent des cris désespérés, provenant de la chambre de Raymond: il s'agit de la fille de la lettre, une Arabe, qui crie au secours et cherche à fuir, parce que l'homme la roue de coups. La police intervient et l'affaire est passée sous silence. Mais, à dater de ce jour, Raymond ne se sent plus tranquille: un Arabe (Cherital Saada), le frère de la fille, le suit, de loin, pas à pas, dans les rues, ou surgit brusquement devant lui, dans les lieux les plus inattendus. Et c'est ainsi qu'il arrive encore, un certain dimanche, alors que Meursault, Marie et Raymond se rendent à la plage, près d'un ami qui possède une sorte de cabane au bord de la mer. Sous le soleil à pic, dans le grand silence des premières heures de l'après-midi, Meursault tire contre cet homme qu'il n'avait jamais vu auparavant, pour des causes qui ne le concernent pas, et à la suite d'une provocation qui, peut-être, n'existe même pas.

Ce qui perd Meursault lors du procès, n'est pas tellement le meurtre du jeune Arabe, que son « insensibilité ». Les témoins racontent son indifférence lors de la mort de sa mère, insistent sur le fait de sa relation amoureuse, au lendemain des funérailles, l'accusent d'avoir été comme unique ami un souteneur et de l'avoir aidé à reprendre une pauvre fille, qui avait tenté de se révolter contre lui. Meursault ne se soucie guère d'altérer les faits, de seconder les préjugés de ceux qui sont en train de le juger. Et c'est pour tous ces motifs qu'étant divers, étranger, il sera condamné à mort.

A la lumière de cette condamnation, il voit brusquement l'absurdité d'un monde mortel, dont il est désormais exclu et dont il ne fait plus partie. « La mort est l'unique réalité » avait écrit Albert Camus dans *Le mythe de Sisyphe*; et la conscience de Meursault se réveille pour se rendre compte de cette vérité. En même temps, il peut juger sa vie et la justifier. *l'Etranger* comprend qu'il n'était pas coupable en face de ces juges, qui l'ont condamné. « C'était comme si, pendant toute ma vie, j'avais attendu cet instant et cette petite aube. Rien, rien n'avait d'importance et moi, je savais bien pourquoi ».

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THE STRANGER

All the films by Visconti, with the exception perhaps of « Bellissima », are literary in origin. Even when they are not directly drawn from a famous novel (« The Leopard », « The Postman always knocks twice »), or from a celebrated short story (« The White Nights », « Sense »), there is always a great writer, concealed or manifest, behind his works: Verga for « The Earthquake », Dostojevsky and Thomas Mann for « Rocco and his Brothers », and the Greek classics behind the Electro-Sandra of « Fair Stars in the Bear ». These events and characters have been « revisited » by Visconti and represent a stimulus for him, a departure for new stories and creations that, through his intervention, take on new features and meanings typical of Visconti, and in turn they make him a writer.

This time again, Visconti has chosen a novel for his film; a long, exemplary and perfect story, one of the masterpieces of the French school of the last thirty years: « The Stranger » by Albert Camus. It might perhaps be more appropriate to say that « The Stranger » has chosen Visconti, for this project recurs again in the plans of this director right from his beginnings as a maker of films, a project that was always postponed and always taken up again, like a fixed idea Visconti could never get out of his mind. It is interesting to recall in this connection that « The Stranger » dates from 1942, that it to say from the same years as « Obsession ».

Another work by Camus appeared shortly afterwards, « Man as a Rebel », and such a man was Visconti at that time. A rebel against conformity, against the pharisees of culture and of morality: and these, among other things, are the themes of the « The Stranger ».

The plot is simple, or at least it seems to be so: Meursault (Marcello Mastroianni), a modest clerk who lives and works at Algiers, learns that his mother has died at the old people's home of Marengo, a small centre about eighty kilometres from the city. He is not deeply moved by the news, as with the passing of the years the relationship between mother and son had become one of indifference.

At the home the director (Jacques Herlin) is pleasantly surprised at the absence of a scene of grief he had expected from him, and so are the other people who meet him and express their sympathy. Meursault keeps watch beside the coffin without thinking of anything in particular, smoking and drinking the coffee the warden offers him, somewhat embarrassed in front of his mother's old companions of the home who wanted to keep him company in his vigil. Next morning a sparse procession follows the funeral bier, black and shining under the scorching sun, down to the cemetery. And Meursault, with a feeling of duty accomplished, returns to Algiers.

The day after he meets an old acquaintance, Marie Cardona (Anna Karina) on the beach; she is a typist who worked with him in the past. The two take up an old friendship, spend a pleasant day together, go to the cinema and finally spend the night together. Meursault returns to the routine of his daily life: work in the office and the meals at the usual restaurant. As a change in the monotony and routine of his existence, one day a neighbour calls on him, Raymond (Georges Geret), a man he hardly ever thought about and about whom he only knows one thing, that he is probably kept by women. The neighbour tells him he has quarrelled with his girl, and professing great friendship for him, he asks him to write a letter for him. Indifferent and ready as always, Meursault accept the friendship and writes the letter.

During the following days, he meets Marie again, and he is bewildered, not to say amazed, that this young, beautiful girl in love proposes to marry him. In the end, without any particular reason, he rejects her proposal, and he likewise refuses the offer from his boss (Jean Pierre Zola) of a transfer to Paris, where he might considerably step up his career. In short, Meursault's whole existence consists of elementary sensations only: drinking, eating, smoking and making love, without knowing joy, remorse or love. His conscience will be awakened only if faced with tragedy. One night, Meursault and Marie hear desperate cries from Raymond's room: it is the girl to whom he wrote, an Arab, crying for help to get away from the man who is beating her cruelly. The police arrive and the thing is hushed up, but from that day Raymond does not feel safe, for an Arab (Cherital Saada), the girl's brother, follows him silently from a distance in the street, and often suddenly appears in front of him when he least expects it. The same thing happens one Sunday, when Meursault, Marie and Raymond go to a friend who has a cabin on the beach, to bathe. Under the scorching sun, in the deep silence of the early afternoon, Meursault shoots this man he has never seen before, for reasons that do not concern him, in consequence of a provocation that might not even exist.

What ruins Meursault at the trial is not so much the killing of the young Arab, as his « insensitivity ». The witnesses tell of his indifference at his mothers death, point out that he started a love affair on the very day of the funeral, accuse him of his sole friendship with a pimp, whom he helped to get back a girl that had tried to rebel against him. Meursault does not care to deny the facts or to comply with the prejudices of his judge. And it is for all this, for being different and a stranger, that he is sentenced to death.

In the light of that sentence, he suddenly is aware of the absurdity of a mortal world from which he is now excluded, to which he no longer belongs. « Death is the only reality » Camus had written in the « Myth of Sisyphus », and Meursault's conscience is awakened to perceive this reality. At the same time he can judge his life and justify it: « it was as if he had been waiting for this moment all his life, for that early dawn, in order to be justified ». The stranger understands that he was not guilty before the judges who condemned him to death: « nothing, nothing was important, and I knew well why ».

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