A Conversation with Nino Baragli

(This interview was conducted a few years ago by Stefano Masi and was published in the book ‘Nel Buio Della Moviola’. It is printed here with his kind permission and that of Gabriele Lucci, to whom I am most grateful. The translation is by Emiliano Battista.)

At the time of this interview Nino Baragli was the President of the Italian Association of Film Editors (AMC). He has, in the course of his career, cut thousands of miles of films: he is one of the undisputed old masters of this craft. His contribution to Pasolini’s filmography was enormous: Accattone, Mamma Roma, Uccellacci e uccellini/Hawks and Sparrows, Il Vangelo Secondo Matteo/The Gospel According to Saint Matthew, Teorema/Theorem, Porcile/Pigsty, Medea, Decameron, I racconti di Canterbury/The Canterbury Tales, Il Fiore delle Mille e una Notte/The Arabian Nights, Salo’ or the 120 days of Sodom.

He had recently worked for Sergio Leone on Once upon a time in America: a truly monumental task with more than six months of work in the cutting room. For Leone he has also edited Il buon, il brutto ed il cattivo/The Good the Bad and the Ugly, Once upon a time in the West and many other films. He had worked for a host of other directors from Mauro Bolognini to Bernardo Bertolucci. More than 200 films cut in thirty-five years.

Baragli is a man with a big deep voice, he couldn’t be from anywhere else than Rome. He wears a shirt open at the neck and sports a thick golden necklace. His skin is dark: he looks tanned. But how is it possible for an editor, always stuck in a cutting room, to get a suntan?
I meet him at the CDS Studio on a hot mid-May afternoon. Roberto Perpignani was there with me. His support has been crucial in my investigation about editors in Italian film history. I am slightly late and I find them in the middle of a discussion with another editor, Raimondo Crociani. The three of them are all governors of the AMC. They are talking about producers and how editors are paid. It is rather an interesting issue as there are two different positions within the Association. Young editors like Cruciani insist that the Association should fix what is the minimum fee editors can claim for a film. On the other side Baragli argues that this wouldn’t really solve anything as producers always find a way to avoid regulations and do things in their way. But young editors with little contractual power feel that they are not being protected when facing producers and they are forced to accept very low fees.

**Stefano Masi:** Mr Baragli, I would like you to help me solve a little mystery about the origins of this craft. An old Italian DOP, Otello Martelli, told me that in his early days the camera operator and the editor would sometimes be the same person. Does that make sense to you?

**Nino Baragli:** It does actually sound a bit strange. But it is not impossible.
SM: Let’s put it like this: on the one side you had the intellectual. He would have the idea, write the script and direct the movie. On the other side you had the technician who would be in charge of photography and editing. So that the technician, editor and camera operator, was the manual worker, the one who would physically handle the film.

NB: Now that I think about it, it is not so strange after all. My uncle Eraldo worked for a while as a camera assistant before turning to editing. I don’t really know why and how he went into editing . . .

SM: Your uncle Eraldo, Eraldo da Roma, is the greatest Italian editor of all times . . .

NB: His real name was Eraldo Judiconi. He started in the 1930s. I remember that when he was working on Addio Kira and Noi Vivi I was already there, as close as possible to his moviola, to see how the film is spliced together and how the image moves . . .

SM: Why did he decide to be called Eraldo da Roma?

NB: He used to be a tenor and Eraldo da Roma was his stage name as a singer. He was really great. He used to perform a lot, mainly operas. I remember him in La Tosca. I still have a picture of Eraldo playing as Cavaradossi. But his real surname was Judiconi: he was my mother’s brother.

SM: So he moved into cinema and he kept his stage name. Why did he stop singing?

NB: He never had the big break in that world. Once he had an audition at the Teatro dell’Opera. Rita Gigli, the daughter of the great Beniamino Gigli, heard him singing and thought that he was her father. Eraldo had a great voice, but it was really difficult to make it as one of the top singers. That’s why he decided to quit and started working as a camera assistant.

SM: And what about you, did you start working as your uncle’s assistant?

NB: No. I actually started in cinematography, even if just for a short while. So what you were saying at the beginning about the connections between editor and cinematographer is probably right. I started in the camera department myself.

SM: When, and how?

NB: In 1944 my sister moved up north to join her husband Carlo Bellero. He was the camera operator in films like Alfa Tau and La Nave Bianca. During the times of the Salo’ Republic they were still in the north, in Venice. I hadn’t seen my sister for a
long while and decided to join her in Venice. It was a rather adventurous journey . . . .

SM: And what about your uncle Eraldo? Had he moved to Venice as well to join the Salo’ film industry?

NB: No. He stayed in Rome. The production company Scalera had resettled in Venice. They were trying to complete a new film directed by De Robertis. It was called *Marinai senza stelle*.

SM: How old were you at that time?

NB: No more than sixteen or seventeen years old.

SM: And what was a seventeen years old kid doing on the stage of Scalera-film in Venice?

NB: I was the apprentice with my sister’s husband. He was the camera operator. I started as his assistant and camera loader. Arriflexes weren’t too difficult to load. Then, since De Robertis would cut his own films, I joined in to help out in the cutting room as well.

SM: So De Robertis was a director without an editor but with an assistant editor?

NB: I have to say that in the 1940s there was still not a great awareness of how crucial the editor’s role is. Then we had some great editors, like Serandrei and Eraldo, who showed how important this profession is.

SM: Straight after the war the editor’s role was really obscure.

NB: Sure, the layman wouldn’t know anything about the existence of editors and editing. But people in the industry knew how important editors were. De Sica knew my uncle was an extraordinary man. And Visconti knew he owed a lot to Serandrei, that his editor had really given him a lot.

SM: Do you know if De Robertis would always cut his films on his own?

NB: I don’t really know. But from what I saw he would do everything by himself. He would sit at the moviola and do the whole thing: he would cut and splice just like an editor. He had a girl assisting him. I can remember that cutting room being a real mess: they didn’t use rubber numbers, they could never find trims and so on . . .

SM: After that film you went back to Rome and started working with your uncle. Is that right?

NB: Yes. He was cutting a film called *Eugenia Grandet*, directed by Mario Soldati. I only did a couple of films with uncle Eraldo. And I wasn’t even his main assistant, I was the second assistant. Then after that I started to cut myself.
SM: On which of the films edited by Eraldo did you work?

NB: The first was *Eugenia Grandet*. Then there was something called *Premio di Roma*: a very strange experience. It was one of the first times the Americans came to work in Italy. The whole thing was a joke: these people claimed to have great actors, they were pretending to be really big names, but none of it was true. They had this Montgomery guy, but he wasn’t the famous one. These kind of things would happen at the end of the war . . . .

SM: So we are talking about the period between 1946 and 1948.

NB: That’s right. And straight after that I cut the first film that was just ‘mine’. It was in 1950. It was an American production and the whole crew spoke only English. I couldn’t understand a single word. The film was called *Dark Road* and the producer was Mike Frankovic. We would all call him ‘Big Cigar’ because of this long thing constantly hanging from his mouth. A couple of years later he became the President of Columbia Productions. *Dark Road* was also Tonino Delli Colli’s debut as a DOP.

SM: How would an editor get to cut his first film feature in the late 1940s?

NB: As far as I can tell things haven’t changed at all. You had schools before and they are still here. Take the Centro Sperimentale di Cinematografia for instance: it is still working. And just like today you would have nepotism which you see everywhere in the industry: I have a friend, you have a friend, he has a nephew . . .

Nepotism is part of our cinema as much as it is part of the rest of our culture. I don’t think anything has changed. From the way I see things, Film Schools don’t really produce editors. I guess there is something wrong in the way things are structured. For instance I have two nephews who work as assistant editors. Roberto Perpignani has a daughter who does the same. Montanari got his son into the industry. You see, that is how it works.

SM: And you are saying that forty years ago it was exactly the same?

NB: Maybe things are just a bit different. Forty years ago there was a rather small number of editors around. They formed a closed circle probably even more than now. Sometimes it was very difficult to make it even if you had somebody in your family who was an editor.

I remember that when I started my uncle Eraldo told Camillo Mastrocinque not to hire me as an editor. Eraldo was
Mastrocinque’s editor and instead of supporting me, he told him I was still too young and inexperienced and that he would have to cut the new film as well. It was a very tight ‘clan’ you see . . .

**SM:** Why do you think that is?

**NB:** Take Eraldo and Serandrei. I remember that, if they met in Cinecittà, they would avoid eye contact and literally look away. They never said hi to each other. Things are very different now and there is a strong bond between all of the editors in the Association. Those who accuse us of not allowing enough space for newcomers are very much mistaken. They should rather realize that it was much tougher for us who made our debut thirty or forty years ago.

**SM:** How many of you came from the Centro Sperimentale di Cinematografia?

**NB:** As far as I know nobody did, and it is still the same today.

**SM:** Silvano Agosti is the only exception then?

**NB:** Well, he studied editing but now he is a director . . .

**SM:** So why do you think there is such a bad connection between School and Industry?

**NB:** Schools are a good thing but they have their limits. Learning how to cut a film is not the same as learning that 2 plus 2 equals 4. Sometimes, in film editing, 2 plus 2 equals 3. Do you know what I mean? It has to do with your ability to be inventive. Being able to cut a film . . . it is something you either have or not. There are certain things that cannot be taught at school.

**SM:** Yes but don’t forget that you need the right chances and connections if you want to make it. Otherwise you can’t be as talented as you want . . .

**NB:** As Eduardo De Filippo said ‘exams never end’. It is like that whenever you work with a director you are being examined by him. Same thing with the producers . . . so all the time we constantly are trying to pass exam.

**SM:** Would you say that about a low-budget film?

**NB:** As far as I am concerned, there is no difference between one film and the other. There is no such a thing as class A-movies and B-movies. They all matter in the same way. Think of the director of a low-budget film: that little film is nonetheless going to be his ‘Ben Hur’.

**SM:** Do you still work with young and first-time directors?

**NB:** Of course I do. A couple of days ago I met Cinzia Torrini about a project she has that I might cut for her. Actors like
Robert Duvall and John Savage are expected to be on board. She wrote the script and asked me to have a look at it. So we sat together and started revising it. I had never done it before. This is her second film. It has been a wonderful experience. I didn’t ask for money, I didn’t want anything. She said: ‘Let’s wait and put everything on the final bill!’

SM: Is it normal for an editor to start collaborating with the director at the script stage?

NB: It almost never happens. But it would actually be a very good thing to do. Editing means reinterpreting the script after it has been filtered by the director. Sometimes you really do change the film in the editing. See that film on the shelf: L’Attenzione by Giovanni Soldati. Well . . . you should read the original script and then look at the film. Things have changed so much.

SM: To have the editor cooperating on the script is actually a sort of Utopia, in strong contrast with the attitude most directors have. Perpignani told me that Orson Welles used to tell him: ‘You are not supposed to think!’

NB: It is true that at the moment there are very few directors who are up for a real and full collaboration.

SM: Looking at the editor’s work, what are the main differences between contemporary cinema and yesterday’s cinema?

NB: From what I can see, one of the main differences is in the amount of footage that is shot for a single film. Forty years ago, editors would not sit at the moviola struggling with the incredible amount of footage we are faced with nowadays. For Leone’s Once Upon a time in America I had something like three hundred kilometres* of film from which to chose. Forty years ago, you would never have more than ten kilometres of film in the cutting room.

SM: You can’t really make a comparison with Once upon a time in America . . .

NB: It is true that Leone’s is a rather special case . . . but even for other films you are always have around 70,000 metres of film. You should also bear in mind that in the past things were normally shot more in continuity. People tended to do a certain amount of editing work at the shooting stage, editing ‘in camera’. Take Germi, for instance, he would always know beforehand where he was going to cut. Now they have second and third cameras . . . what a waste of film stock.

*A 100-minute film is approximately three kilometres in length.
SM: Can you think of any directors who is not following this new trend?

NB: Recently I had a chance to look at the rushes of Ferreri’s new film. He doesn’t shoot that much. He still makes cinema the way people used to many years ago.

SM: Let’s go back to 1950, the year of your debut as a feature editor. If I were to walk into a cutting room from 1950 would I see anything different compared with the cutting rooms you work in today? Different kind of tools maybe?

NB: No doubt about that!

SM: Can you describe me these different tools?

NB: As far as I can remember at the time moviolas were built on a wooden base and we only had four plates. No hand controls, we would use pedals to run the film backwards and forwards. Right pedal to go forwards, left backwards. And you had to lift your feet from both pedals to ‘brake’ and stop the film.

SM: And did you have the Catozzo splicer (Tape joiner)?

NB: No, and that was the real problem! In the 1950s you really had to be good to make a cut. Now it is much easier: you can actually see the joins and you can try things over and over; if it isn’t working you can actually try and add two more frames. Nothing terrible is going to happen. There is no way you could have worked like this in the olden days. With the cement splicer you would lose a frame for each joint.

SM: Did that imply a different way of working?

NB: Before making a cut you would examine the frame very carefully with a magnifying lens.

SM: Did your uncle Eraldo have one?

NB: Oh yes, he had a magnifying lens in a golden frame, he got it as a present from Vittorio De Sica, or maybe it was from Rossellini. I can’t remember now. Anyway, I inherited from him when he died. With this lens Eraldo would carefully analyze the movement in the frame, check the position of the head or the arm of the character. He also used a lamp, he would look, check, make his marks. Then he would go back, look at the frame again and change the marks. So you can see that it really took a long time to make a single cut.

SM: Did you also work like this in your early days?

NB: Not really . . . honestly I wasn’t really worried about making mistakes because I would use a little bit of black spacing on every cut. But then of course you had a black flash on each joint of the film.
SM: What was the black spacing for?
NB: To fill the gaps created when you had to remove little slices of the frame in order to make the joint.
SM: I can imagine it must have been quite a lengthy procedure.
NB: It would take ages.
SM: Practically, who was in charge of doctoring the film like this? Was that the assistant’s job?
NB: No. Editors would do that by themselves. The assistant was in charge of the sound tracks. And that was a very delicate task, since at the time we would cut what used to be called ‘the standard’ (master). The sound was already printed next to the picture but with a 19-frame offset. So you had to cut in a very particular way.
SM: It must have been like cutting a positive married print!
NB: More or less. This is how we did it: we had to cut the picture first and then pulled the handles of each shot for the dialogue to be dubbed. We basically had to cut the film twice: it was an endless process. And I’ll tell you something more: straight after the war the dub was done on a half-band optical negative (and I am almost sure that FONO-ROMA kept working this way till very recently). It is actually 35mm stock cut in half, they would use both sides in order to save money. Once I had to sync up a film with the negative of the sound track.
SM: What does that actually mean?
NB: Well, say that you break the film as you are working on it, then you have to call the actor and have him rerecord his lines from scratch.
SM: So was the syncing up part of the editor’s duties?
NB: At the time there was a lot of sync sound. You would have departments in charge of this, but sometimes the assistants would do the syncing up for the editors. Editors would never do it themselves. I did it sometimes as an extra job when I was working as an assistant, just to earn a little bit more money. I did syncing up for Cinquini when he was cutting //diavolo bianco//.
SM: So you were working as an assistant and doing night shifts syncing up?
NB: Exactly. After a day of work in the cutting room I would sit at another machine and do syncing up till midnight. You do these kind of things only if there is a great passion!
SM: So you didn’t have much time left for other things or other people?
NB: You have to love this job to the point that you become completely obsessed by it. I don’t trust those people who go around bragging about being able to cut a film in ten days. Let’s say: it might even be possible . . . but then you have to spend another ten days watching it over and over because there is always something that is not quite working. I don’t like rushing things. You have to be committed to what you do.

SM: And do you believe in this regardless of what the shooting ratio is?

NB: It doesn’t really matter that much, you know. Sometimes, when people are trying to convince me that they are talking about a rather easy project, they will say: ‘He’s the kind of director who doesn’t shoot that much!’ But not having a lot of rushes doesn’t necessarily simplify the editing. When there is a lot of material it might take a lot to find the right stuff, but at least I know I’ll find it eventually. When the shooting ratio is really low, you might not have what you need at all.

SM: Could you talk about a project you worked on which you think is particularly interesting from an editing point of view?

NB: I think *Accattone* did something to slightly change the way we approach editing, the system behind it. The film was initially produced by Federiz (Fellini and Rizzoli). Pasolini went out shooting for two weeks. Then Catozzo, the editor, told the producers that, from his point of view, it was impossible to put together the things Pasolini was shooting! The production came to a halt. Everybody who has been involved with Pasolini knows very well how emotional and passionate he could be. He felt shattered at the time (He seriously wanted to kill himself after *Mamma Roma*, because he didn’t like the film.) Then a new producer, Alfredo Bini, stepped in and we went through the rushes together.

SM: And what did you think of Pasolini’s rushes?

NB: I was shocked! Pasolini would film a man running out of frame, then all of a sudden you would find him standing perfectly still. We, the editors, were used to people leaving and entering frame, while Pasolini would film a shot in Frascati (Suburb of Rome) and the reverse angle in Venice. But I manage to understand exactly what he wanted. Pasolini was a silent type and it was very difficult to understand his way of working.

SM: His background was mainly in literature. Maybe he didn’t have a good relationship with technology.

NB: I would always ask him the same question: What is the point of this sequence?’ Since you wouldn’t understand anything
by the way his scripts were written. His scripts were rather short but with a lot of things in them. I would ask him: ‘What are you trying to say?’ At that point he would take his glasses off, put them on his lap and then start to explain.

SM: But how would he explain himself: on the intention, the narrative content or the metaphorical one?

NB: He would explain a sequence as if it he was talking about a book. Even shooting for him was like writing a book. He didn’t have any kind of fixed rules: he always had to be interpreted.

SM: And how did your colleagues react to such an unconventional way of editing?

NB: Serandrei came to congratulate me after he watched Accattone. He told: ‘What I just saw was something truly wonderful!’

SM: When you were younger, did you ever work in the sound department?

NB: Yes I did because getting into editing was really difficult and so all the youngsters would work doing syncing up and mainly wait for the right chance to come up.

SM: Why was it so difficult to get into the big time?

NB: Since there were a few big names in the industry that were doing all the available films preventing anybody else from working on anything serious. They would cut four or five film at the same time. Serandrei was even able to work on eight projects at the same time: he was the number one at Titanus.

SM: How could they possibly cut four, five or even eight films at the same time?

NB: They did manage. I have done it myself. In the golden days I would really cut four films at the same time.

SM: But how could you work in four different cutting rooms, dealing with four different directors?

NB: Obviously it wasn’t easy! I remember that once I was working on four different films, all of them in the studios of the old Istituto Luce.

One morning I got there and I saw all four directors, Montaldo, Vancini, Caprioli and Gregoretti standing in the courtyard, all four waiting for me. As soon as I spotted them I just said ‘I am going to the bar!’. And so I ran away. Then I rang each one of them to arrange different appointments.

SM: But don’t you think there is something wrong in working on four films at the same time?

NB: I try not to overlap projects. I try at least. But editors have many clients and we have to make them all happy. At times I
have to say no to somebody. I remember that Scola wanted me to cut *Riusciranno i nostri eroi*. I was approached by the producer first and then Scola himself rang me at home. I wasn’t in so he spoke with my wife: ‘Tell Nino I’ll be delighted to work with him. I am about to go away to shoot now. I’ll let him know something later on’. At the same time Pasolini was about to start *Porcile* (*Pigsty*) which was not a big production but struck me as being quite an important film. So I had to make a choice. And I went for *Porcile*. Of course, I never worked with Scola again after that! You see, that is why sometimes we are forced to say yes.

SM: So you spend most of your time in the cutting room?
NB: Do you know how I cut Bolognini’s *La notte brava*? He’d been working with Cinquini up to that point. That was my first film with him. We were running out of money during the editing. So I spent four days and four nights working without a break on a version of the film to be shown to people who were interested in investing in it. I had a little nap on a couch from time to time. I barely washed my face and never left the cutting room for those four days.

SM: When things are so difficult what can an editor rely on?
NB: Your instinct mainly. Some editors have it, others don’t. Instinct tells you what to take out of the film and what to put in. You can spend your entire life on a sequence that maybe is never going to work. Other times you immediately know what you have to do.

SM: But what about working on more projects at the same time. How can your instinct keep shifting between different narrative situations? How can you cut a war drama in the morning and a romantic comedy in the afternoon?

NB: You have to think you have different airtight rooms in your head, you know what I mean? Think of a submarine ready to go on a mission. If you don’t make sure all the rooms are airtight it is going to sink. The brain works in just the same way. In one place you have one film, in a different place you store another one. At any point you can lock one room and go into another one.

SM: Has it happened to you to try and find a shot that actually belonged to a different film? Don’t you ever get confused?
NB: That would be a sign that I am losing the plot.
SM: So you really need an extraordinary memory for this job!
NB: What really matters is that you have to respect your film and your craft. If you get into a film there is no way you are going
to be confused. It can only happen if you are not focused on what you are doing.

**SM:** Editors have their own professional association. What are its aims?

**NB:** I would like to stress the importance of promoting a new image of who the editor is. We created the Associations of Italian Editors because we want people to know and understand who editors are and what they do. Sometimes even in the industry people don’t know that much about editing. My uncle Eraldo, the great Serandrei and all the other wonderful editors have passed away before somebody realized the importance of collecting and treasuring their experiences. When people talk about editing they never go beyond Eisenstein and Griffith.

**SM:** Have you already achieved something with the Association?

**NB:** Yes. We managed to finally have awards for editors, so now there is a Donatello (Italian equivalent of the Oscar) for the best film editor of the year. And we are hoping to have more awards next year.

**SM:** How did the producers react to your Association?

**NB:** Some of them might believe that we are joining forces against producers. But they are wrong. We only work towards the best for the film.

**SM:** Do you ever as an editor have to negotiate between director and producer?

**NB:** Sometimes you are caught between two fires: the director wants something and the producer wants the opposite of it. But you have to understand the producer’s reasons and point of view. Sometimes the producer comes and says: ‘We are going to be in trouble with the board of censorship unless we cut that scene out!’

**SM:** And what if the director really wants the scene in?

**NB:** I have to find a way to make them both happy, mainly for the film’s sake. Things like this happens all the times. I remember cutting Comencini’s Tutti a casa produced by Dino De Laurentis. De Laurentis almost convinced Comencini to cut out a very beautiful scene which was not in the script and had been invented during the shoot. I was the only one that still wanted that scene in. We had a test screening in Florence and I persuaded the producer to leave the scene in at least for that occasion. The audience’s reaction was very strong, there was loud applause and so that the scene never went out again.

**SM:** Ruggero Mastroianni told me about a very curious technique used by Serandrei before the tape joiner was introduced and
editors were still using cement splicers. He would make a cut but then, instead of scratching the film and joining it with cement, he would spit on it and overlap the two frames on each side of the cut. The saliva would hold for a while and then his assistant would do the proper joint later. Do you know of anybody else who used to work like this?

**NB:** I would never spit on the film because that is where what I eat comes from . . . I’ve never seen anybody doing it. I can say for sure that my uncle Eraldo didn’t do it.

**SM:** Serandrei was the top editor in Italian pre war cinema. Still his colleagues didn’t know anything about his way of working. I assume there is not a real flow of information amongst you editors!

**NB:** Every editor has a different way of working. I work a lot at the editing machine. Some editors only mark the film at the machine. Then the assistant makes the cuts and they check the final result in the projection room. My approach is different. I sit at the machine till the whole sequence has gone from the left to the right plate and I can say that I am satisfied with the result. On top of that, I start from the assumption that cinema was originally silent so everything should make sense even without sound and dialogue.

**SM:** Are you saying that you edit without sound?

**NB:** No. I cut picture and sound at the same time. But when I finish cutting a sequence I rewind the film and check it without sound: it has to work even silent. Otherwise it means that it isn’t perfect.

**SM:** Do you ever cut without sound?

**NB:** Only in special circumstances. You can’t really do it all the time: if you don’t really master the language, for instance, you have to cut the sound. The first film I ever cut, *Dark Road*, was in English. In cases like this you have to cut the sound by yourself.

**SM:** Was it difficult to cut *Dark Road*?

**NB:** Very complicated. Everything was done in the American way: the director would shoot and then leave. The producer had the last word on the final cut. I didn’t even know it at that time.

**SM:** Are you saying that the director was not in the cutting room?

**NB:** Never! That is a typical American thing. They have three different stages in the editing. The editor does the first cut. The second is the result of the discussion between editor and director. But they don’t work together in the cutting room: they watch it in a theatre, taking notes and using a projector that can play the film
backwards as well. Then for the final cut, it is the producer’s call. He can always impose his will. Of course things are different if the director is called Coppola or Scorsese or Spielberg.

SM: In Italy we don’t really have this idea of the Final Cut, do we?
NB: No: it is an American thing. I’ve met many American editors, like Peter Zinner who cut The Godfather. They have a completely different system. Sometimes they even have a little editing machine on the stage. For Lady Hawk, for instance, I’ve seen that they had a Moviola in Cinecitta’ Studio 5, where they were shooting. They would use it to check some effects and camera angles.

SM: In America the editor’s work is much more respected.
NB: In the American film culture the editor is a central figure: he is the most important man. He starts working on the film when the shooting begins. He is alone in the cutting room and he is completely autonomous. The Americans know well how the film comes to life in the dark of the cutting room.

[RC: Baragli’s description of the autonomy of the American editor speaks more to his own dream than any reality though it is undeniable that European editors have traditionally had less status]