of the double, of the musical mask where one might find a little march or a few languid notes of the violin, a joyous merrily-go-round or else, as in Il Bidone, for example, an anguish-fear in black and white.

Il Bidone is an Italian story and the Italian is always accommodating, insincere and likeable, a polite swindler, often constrained by necessity. The war had favored the development of every kind of activity to make ends meet and the movies had multiplied those little edifying but justified aspects of an art of getting by that was typically Italian. The bicycle thieves had become a part of this history on a level with the multitudes of small-time crooks and swindlers that had crowded the Italian comedy of the Fifties and Sixties when they had adjusted themselves to the economic boom. Fellini's "bidonisti" (swindlers) present themselves as a connecting link between the illegality caused by sheer misery and the kind connected to the reconstruction from the rubble (physical and moral) of the war.

The most fearful of the bidonisti is Carfo, called Picasso. With his angel face he can con anyone, perhaps because he has about him the aura of the Fool. He can be dressed as a priest, the secretary of Monsignor Augusto, or as a simple layman pretending to allocate government housing. After the episode of the cigarette case and the scene made by Iris, this painter who has "lent himself" to the illicit because he is "a family to support" does not hesitate to return to the trade with the overcoat trick, his last excursion into crime that ends with the wild drinking in that confronts him with a simple truth: that life of subterfuge is not for him and his real fear is less of the police than of being discovered by his wife. And then, he does not want to end up like Augusto. Picasso is a loser whose money is concerned. "You don't even know how to say a million.," Augusto reproves him, "and do you know why? Because you can't even imagine billions." Perceiving this, if only in a confused way, he decides to go back to his old love of art and nature to which the others are completely indifferent.

On the contrary, Roberto, who repeats the character of Fausto in Vita Nuova, is a city fish with ambitions to swim in the great sea of the Roman underworld. Unlike the time-wasters of the provincial Romagna town who are together assiduously, he only meets with his accomplices on business and to work out the little preliminary maneuvers. He is more evolved than Fausto because less ingenious. Both these shabby personages, like the master of ceremonies in Ginger and Fred, are beautifully interpreted by Franco Fabrizi, an actor who in real life was quite the opposite of the immoral, cowardly and ambitious types he played in the movies. Roberto is the vitellone who is studying to be a con man, a simple pawn and an aspiring singer ("I have already bought all Johnny Ray's records - all of them. That's just my style."). He aims to get set in the world of easy money even if he needs to let women keep him. Like Picasso, he does not want to end up like Augusto and in his way aspire to an artistic career (in music) by cultivating false illusions.

In Fellini's perspective Il Bidone represents a passing moment of an Italy undergoing change and the script allows the two youths, just because they are young, to be the first to understand that there was change in the air. And if Picasso decides to go back to painting, Roberto, without family responsibilities and although remaining in the trade, will go to Milan where, at the precise time that Augusto is in prison, will set himself up in a big way, just like Rinaldo: "Boy, he really has it made. I saw him with an Aurelio Sport... Yes, Yes, an Aurelio Sport" Riccardo, another con man, will say.

But before setting himself up well, he will go quickly through all the phases of an initiation into crime: from a chauffeur to a hole digger in the "Monsignor Bidone" gambit. He will be the one to slit through the crowds of slum dwellers and end up as a petty thief in Rinaldo's house. During that New Year's Eve party he will finally learn his lesson and when he is found out he will submit with a smile to the man of the house's comment: "You have a long row to hoe before coming to feel around in here. Thus Roberto begins hoisting his row by keeping the too-ordinary Picasso at a distance as well as Augusto who is too out of date. At best he might serve to help him link up with his real self. Augusto, instead, keeps on living up to his identity as a white convertible, wife and children in Switzerland, a lover and apartment in Paroli, the rich man's quarter. At his parties figure the representatives of the false dolce vita of Roberto, that Fellini will soon be telling us about.

Augusto is as much at home in a nightclub at dawn as Zampanò is in a tavern. He is a vagabond gypsy, a lone wolf who has "always screwed everyone because the world is full of dupes", and because he wants to get out of that microcosm of two-bit crooks who want to prove to themselves how smart they are by pawning off old overcoats as new ones. The money is never enough for them because they spend it all trying to fill the vacuum of boredom that occurs after every job. This is why Augusto wants to exchange his liberty for a quieter job as manager of the Texas Club, a night spot he knows well because it is here - another prototype of the onrushing dolce vita - that he spends his nights when he has the cash. But Rinaldo does not accept his offer, because he now moves in higher, inaccessible spheres.
encounter with his daughter arouses feelings within him – a luxury that a real swindler cannot afford. In fact, with the peasants and the hut dwellers, his criminal technique is undeniable; his placid, bound-dog face conveys confidence, security and honesty. He easily extends the credulity of others because – unlike Piscopo – he believes in his work of instilling in his feeble-minded victims a sense of security and decency that make them trust his appearance as a “big, elegant Bishop” – to use Passolzi’s description of Fellini – and hand over the savings of a lifetime. The meeting with Patrizia, after years of silence, puts a crimp in his armor and, at the movie theater, a very Fellini-like narrative location, the director adds an artistic touch to his movie.

Augusto’s parabola begins a downward turn as soon as the first decoys begin to come apart. Sitting beside his daughter, he feels like a true father for the first time (“If you want to continue your studies... I will take care of the security money. Two or three hundred thousand is nothing to me. I can get it whenever I like”), while the usher has mistaken them for an engaged couple. And it is right there at the movie theater that a former victim recognizes him and sends him to prison. But not before he has put on his rough-guy face again to ward off his daughter. The disguise for swindling the father of the paralyzed young girl will be the final pretext for the big one, the swindle courageously carried out alone, to the detriment of his greedy accomplice. Being predators of the same ilk, they will destroy him.

The scene in the movie theater could appear to be a cynical choice on the director’s part if we were not dealing here with the question of the contradictions of falsity, and if, therefore, it were not necessary to balance the premise with a more realistic anti-moralistic denigration. The effect has to be a strong one, particularly in the two interacting moments that explicitly refer to the cinema itself: the music of the comic strip bunch in The White Sheik brings to mind the set at Ostia and, immediately afterwards, the father’s arrest in the presence of his daughter recalls the end of Bicycle Thief. And so, in place of the appearance, there comes the clash with reality, a mixture of impulses so as to create a current – Fellini’s wind – which will impossibly lead the false monsignor to the encounter with a quasi-daughter, the sunny Susanna who is compelled to drag herself around on crutches.

Overcome by that encounter, and by the fact that he has just swindled the amount of money Patrizia needs, Augusto comforts the nurse girl and decides to carry out the final swindle of his life. He does a pretty convincing acting job until his accomplice finds the money in his shoe. If he had used that money for the nightclub, he would most certainly have maintained his position in that unscrupulous world, but the anomalous act of the rogue that he basically is puts Augusto in a weak position, and exposes him to the vengeance of those who, like himself, know only the law of money.

His death, in the self-punishment that he has procured for himself, is casual, like that of the Fool in the clash with Zamparone. Augusto will fall and break his back in a way that prevents him from saving himself. He dies alone and in terror, with the false ring of the false monsignor still on his finger.
The Prostitute, the Innocent, the City and Love

The Nights of Cabiria • La Dolce Vita • The Temptations of Doctor Antonio

Sometimes they seem like coincidences, and yet the seeds contained in the early work reveal themselves as a mine to be exploited in the future. This is the case with The White Sheik which, as with many first works of great authors, contains much, if not all, of the Fellini poetry. These seeds bore fruit in the early Fellini movies, and constituted the human in which the mature ones grew. One need only remember Via Veneto and, in particular, the heroine of The Nights of Cabiria (1957), the definitive proof of the human and clownish qualities of Giulietta Masina who was already cherished in the public’s memory with her interpretation of Gelsomina. Cabiria, however, is something more.

The kind, demoralized prostitute, cheerful consoler to the despairing Ivan, finds a place in one of the most typical milieu of Fellini’s film world: a baroque, nocturnal Rome, a fountain in a deserted piazza, lights that pick out the shapes of the sleeping buildings, the narrow alleys paved with cobblestones which seem to give off an expressionistic gleam. A quiet and rather magical atmosphere with an airy kind of enchantment, the ideal setting for a non-threatening appointment. Two women suddenly appear in this bewitching stage set, “one as wide as the façade of the church in the little piazza, the other very petite, wearing rubber boots, a chicken-feather bolero jacket, an umbrella which she brandishes like a sword, wide-eyed with the perpetual and joyous wonder of a nocturnal sprite. As I was shooting this scene, I gave a name to this character who, in the script, had none: Cabiria.”

Because of “that outburst by the bridegroom, her tears, her despair, noted and expressed in the miming of extreme astonishment, innocent grins, unhinged emotions, Cabiria’s silent grimmaces of solidarity or mockery acquired such a pathetic and comical cadence and dilation, that I began to think that a little personage was born that night who might have the same strength and arouse the same empathy and feelings as Gelsomina in La Strada. In fact, Cabiria began to keep me company, and I thought of her often. To keep her quiet I promised her a movie all of her own.”

In this way, Fellini lives and converses with his little characters who have been only just barely sketched out, and are already in search of a definitive identity, using the same words as he used in his pre-cinema works. For example, Il Mio Amico Pasqualino (My Friend Pasqualino), a likable little man who talks with the furniture, with invented characters and names, and who, in the seventh chapter (The sun sets and our little vagabond begins to get some strange ideas which force us to give this chapter a rather vague title: “7:30 p.m.; Pasqualino At Times”) even pays a visit to the prostitute Carmen, one who has “a sweet expression on her face” and may already be a foreshadowing of Cabiria. This name entered the history of Italian cinema as the title of the second national “epic”, filmed by Giovanni Pastrone in 1914, with its suggestions of ancient Roman grandeur filtered through an improvised and minimal inventiveness.

While walking with Giorgio along the banks of the Tiber on the outskirts of Rome (the precise spot being near Acilia), the eccentric Cabiria, a street walker, is robbed of her purse, pushed into the water, and almost drowned. She is saved by a group of people, and comforted by her best friend and ‘colleague’, Wanda. She blocks out the memory of her lover/protection, and goes back to the profession as a ‘freelancer’, amidst heated discussions, derision and quarrelling. After a fierce quarrel with an older colleague, Cabiria tells Marisa to take her to Via Veneto, where the high class prostitutes work, in order to give Marisa’s new car a run.

There, in front of a nightclub, she witnesses a quarrel between the famous actor, Alberto Lazzari, and his elegant girlfriend, Jessy. Out of spite, and because he does not want to be alone, Lazzari invites Cabiria into his car, takes her first to the Picidolly, and then to his beautiful villa where, for the first time in her life, the girl experiences the pleasures of a rich life, amid impressive staircases, mirrors, huge rooms and ‘white telephones’, all of which increase her admiration for the screen idol. The arrival of the jealous Jessy interrupts the enjoyment. Lazzari makes her hide quickly in a bathroom, and only lets her out at dawn, with a substantial amount of money for her trouble. Returning to her usual milieu, Cabiria recounts each little detail of her fabulous adventure.

One night, a religious procession passes by, heading for the Madonna del Divino Amore sanctuary. This arouses the faith and curiosity of the street walkers and their pimps, including Antletes’s lame
The two of them see each other regularly. Oscar tells her about many things, brings her presents, asks for nothing in exchange. When Cabiria realizes how futile the relationship is, however, pleasant, and decides to break it off, Oscar asks her to marry him. She happily sells her little shack and draws her savings out of the bank in order to begin a normal life.

After having lunch near Lake Albano, the couple go for a walk in the woods in order to admire the view from up high. Oscar, nervous and uneasy, manages to lead his fiancée to the edge of the cliff. Here, Cabiria finally realizes what is actually happening: the man robs her and leaves her lying, devastated, on the ground.

Later that night, leaving the woods, Cabiria reaches the road and encounters a group of young people singing and playing. As she walks among them, her sad expression changes into a smile.

In this play of coincidences, two of the less important, but critically revealing, details contained within this story, which had problems with the censor because of the subject matter, are a piece of clothing and a gesture in a frame towards the end of the movie. The item of clothing, the famous "chicken-feather boiato jacket", which Giulietta Masina had already worn in The White Sheik, together with the pathetic socks, becomes the uniform, the identifying marks of Cabiria's downslide, common character, just as the rope and striped shirt denoted the misery of Gelsomina's unbalanced existence. But Cabiria tries to evolve, pursues liberation from a reality in which exterior events play a determining role, in order to leave that world of the humiliated and the offended.

The context of the first insult to her person, decisively Pasolini in kind, reveals itself as a determining factor right from the first images of the sunny shingled shore of the River Tiber at Acilia, a spontaneous amalgamation between Ostra and an unreachable Rome beyond the line of the high-rise buildings on the outskirts of town. Pasolini, whom the director called "most likable with that dustyuros's face of his, a prostitute face, the face of a bum weight boxer from the slums" – plays an important part in the movie as a linguistic expert for the expressions in Roman dialect, and for his knowledge of characters from the proletarian masses, of whom he wrote in Ragazzi di Fito. Fellini and Pasolini go for long car journeys together, looking for locations, images and visions, which, due to the sponge effect (characteristic of his creativity), will end up recurring in subsequent works. "I went around with him visiting various parts of town immersed in a disgusting silence and with evocative names like medieval China, Infernetto, Tiburtino III, and Cassaletti Spirit. He guided me like Vergili and Carcan combined, both of whom he resembled, but he was also like a sheriff, a modest sheriff who went around keeping a check on familiar places. As well as locations, the two of them were really on the look

Among the ancient ruins, Cabiria floats the symbols of her profession: a striped jersey and chicken feather boiato jacket. With no-one to gather her, she abandons her colleague's small car, a real working class status symbol of that time.

uncle, who wants to be cured. Wanda and Cabiria join the group, and the latter, greatly moved, implores the Virgin Mary to help her change her life. Like the lame man, her request is not answered and, during a picnic on the grass, she drinks and picks arguments because she is unwilling to resign herself to her circumstances. A group of orphaned children pass by and the moment is passed off as a very human story.

A few evenings later, Cabiria goes to the popular movie theater where, prior to the screening of the movie Processo di Cima, there is a variety show starring a diabolical magician. Sightig the pray, the latter calls Cabiria onto the stage, and hypnotizes her, involving her in a romantic encounter with Oscar, an invisible prince charming, to the jeers of the audience.

At the end of the show, she is still feeling a little woozy, and an accountant, Oscar D'Onofrio, who is gentle, polite and persuasive, insists on making a date with her because he has been struck by the coincidence of the names and the girl's sweet nature.
The two of them see each other regularly. Oscar tells her about many things, brings her presents, asks for nothing in exchange. When Cabiria realizes how futile the relationship is, however pleasant, and decides to break it off. Oscar asks her to marry him. She happily tells her little shack and draws her savings out of the bank in order to begin a normal life.

After leaving lunch near Lake Albano, the couple go for a walk in the woods in order to admire the view from up high. Oscar, nervous and uneasy, manages to lead her from the edge of the cliff. Here, Cabiria finally realizes what is actually happening: the man rats her and leaves her lying, devastated, on the ground.

Later that night, leaving the woods, Cabiria reaches the road and encounters a group of young people singing and playing. As she walks among them, her sad expression changes into a smile.

In this play of coincidences, two of the least important, but critically revealing, details contained within this story, which had problems with the censors because of the subject matter, are a piece of clothing and a gesture in a frame towards the end of the movie. The item of clothing, the famous "chicken-feather bolero jacket", which Giulietto Masina had already worn in The White Sheik, together with the pathetic socks, becomes the uniform, the identifying mark of Cabiria's clownish, common character, just as the cape and striped shirt denoted the misery of Melosimo's vagabond existence. But Cabiria tries to evolve, pursuing liberation from reality in which exterior events play a determining role, in order to leave that world of the humiliated and the offended.

The context of the first insult to her person, decisively Pasolini in kind, reveals itself as a determining factor right from the first images of the sunny shingled shore of the River Tiber at Ascoli, a curious agglomeration of Ostia and an unreachable Rome beyond the line of the high-rise buildings on the outskirts of town. Pasolini, whom the director called "most likable with that dusty mason's face of his, a proletarian face, the face of a boxman weight boxer from the slums" - plays an important part in the movie as a linguistic expert for the expressions in Roman dialect, and for his knowledge of characters from the proletarian masses, of whom he wrote in Ragazzi di Vita. Fellini and Pasolini go for long car journeys together, looking for locations, images and visions, which, due to the sponge effect (characteristic of his creativity), will end up recurring in subsequent works: "I went around with him visiting various parts of town immersed in a disquieting silence and with evocative names like medieval Chino, Infnettolo, Tiburtino III, and Cassuti Spiriti. He guided me like Vergil and Choron combined, both of whom he resembled; but he was also like a sheriff, a modest sheriff who went around keeping a check on familiar places." As well as locations, the two of them were really on the look out - possibly just a pretext - for an old whore, the 'Bomba Atomica', whom Fellini had seen during his early years in Rome. When leaving the offices of the daily Messaggero at one in the morning on one occasion, walking towards Piazza Barberini, he saw her, a "kind of dirigible dressed all in white coming down the street - not on either sidewalk, but down the very middle of the street." An incredible vision that "gave rise to the various Sunshine in my movies."

There is unquestionably a great physical chasm between Cabiria and the 'Bomba'. But it is all put to good use in the continuous internal working out and the prodigious capacity for recollection which, with no explicit motivations, utilizes memories at certain moments in incongruous contexts, as part of his accumulation of stylistic/inventive elements. Every fragment, quotation, remark, creates connections, links, recollections and ignites suggestions for present and future narrative passages.

The contradictions in the human affairs of Cabiria are many. Particularly in the representation of non-returned feelings in a dehumanized reality, for which Fellini is careful not to hazard sociological justifications which would be entirely unsuitable to his narrator's sensitivity, which is why he ends up showing - inventing - the dual soul, good and bad, of that reality.

An example of this is Cabiria's monologue when she is feeling disconcerted by the theft and humiliation that Giorgio inflicted on her. She anticipates the sense of the movie, talking to herself, giving in to feelings and the enormous need for sincere affection: "But why? Why did he need to do it? I would have given him everything, I would... Everything he asked of me. So why did he have to do it?"

These are the very same words she might have used of Oscar at the end of the movie, if it were not for the fact that the men she encounters in this circular story must first be individually portrayed in their negativity, which results in revealing the feminine positiveness of Cabiria, Gelosimo, and thus Giulietta herself.

Giorgio, "this dirty Velliere," who has to return to "selling balloons at San Pietro", is first portrayed in the figure of Amiero, Mariva's protector and nephew of the lame man (played by Mario Passante, one of Fellini's regulars, here playing the part of a cocaine pusher), a linking figure with the Divino Amore sanctuary episode, which they all experience with equal stuper, except for the brief parenthesis of religious excitement, decidedly unsuitable for bringing change to a parasitical existence.

Lazzari, played by Amedeo Nazzari in the self-ironical role of a movie idol, makes professional use of Cabiria at the most convenient time to resolve the problem at the nightclub, and for relieving boredom before his girlfriend, Jessie, arrives. In the morning, after keeping her locked up all night, he pays Cabiria off, who is almost ashamed of taking the money: she does not feel she has earned it and, anyway, just leaving in that house with that man would be sufficient compensation. Creeping quietly past, she looks at the half-covered body of the sleeping Jessie, perhaps imagining herself in her place. This is a conclusion which would have satisfied Anna Magnani, for whom the scene had been conceived, but which is most moving and human in Giulietta Masina's interpretation.

Quietly leaving the villa, and adjusting her pathetic white socks, Cabiria might ideally have run into the bag man, a character who was cut in the final version of the movie. In this regard, Fellini recalls that there was very active censorship during this time and, fearing it, "following the advice of an intelligent and perhaps somewhat liberal Jesuit friend, Father Arpa, I went to see a famous cardinal in Genoa who was considered papal material and, perhaps for that reason, very powerful, in order to ask him to view the movie. [...] The movie was saved, but with one strange condition:
the cutting of the scene with the beggar man [...] part philanthropist and a bit of a magician, who, after having a vision, dedicated himself to a particular mission: he went to the shanty towns of town, finding the disinherited and distributing food and clothing, which he carried around in a bag, to them all. In the scene that was cut, Cibria met him on Via Appia Antica, and went with him to the ghostly grotto of the 'Bolcho Atombio'. There followed several little stories about that world of the dispossessed. "It was a moving sequence that I was forced to cut. Evidently, those in certain Catholic circles find it disturbing that the movie should pay homage to that entirely answoman philanthropist enfranchised by ecclesiastical mediation.

Another significant male character, prior to the appearance of the con man Oscar, is the illusionist, played by Aldo Silvani, who had already appeared in a vaguely similar role the director of the Cervia Circus in La Strada. Magician and hypnotist, he calls Cibria to the stage and makes her exhibit that ingenuouness which will later make himself to the coarse mass of people making up the zoo-like audience, as well as the hurried interruptions after the show by the borman and the bus conductor.

And finally there is Oscar, with a sharp nose for the fragility and feelings hidden beneath the chicken-feather bolero jacket, and under the apparent self-assurance that allowed Cibria to hold her own against the catscalls of the audience. The revolution towards street life - similar to Marcella's disgust in La Dolce Vita - a feeling taken for granted, allows Fellini to avoid the danger of easy sentimentalism and, worse yet, cheap moralizing, just as it is implicit that living the 'low life' excludes one from divine grace. In the end, Cibria is condemned anyway, and condemned to live in sin and loneliness, which she confessions to the garrulous little friate Giovanni (it is no accident that this part is played by the clown Tolido, someone who unites aspiration, joy and a pervasive melancholy).

And so, using the lever of ethics on the contradiction between the pursuit of happiness and the sense of guilt, the director grafted the magical/fatalistic element onto the story which, repeating itself, returns to the opening message: experience is useless when the subconscious and love both go to work. And when the word love is used with reference to these characters, a special kind of love is intended - perhaps more a form of affection, deriving from the need to
And finally there is Oscar, with a sharp nose for the frailty and feelings hidden beneath the chicken-feather bolo jersey and under the apparent self-assurance that allowed Cabiria to hold her own against the catcalls of the audience. The revolution towards street life - similar to Marcello's disgust in La Dolce Vita - a feeling taken for granted, allows Fellini to avoid the danger of easy sentimentality and, worse yet, cheap moralizing. Just as it is implicit that living the 'low life' excludes one from divine grace. In the end, Cabiria is condemnable anyway, and condemned to live in sin and loneliness, which she confesses to the garrulous little Fritz Gavranitzi (It is no accident that this part is played by the clown Polidor, someone who unites aspiration, joy and a pervasive melancholy).

And so, using the lever of ethics on the contradiction between the pursuit of happiness and the sense of guilt, the director grafted the magical/futuristic element onto the story which, repeating itself, returns to the opening message: experience is useless when the subconscious and love both go to work. And when the word love is used with reference to these characters, a special kind of love is intended - perhaps more a form of affection, deriving from the need to have faith in the next fellow, a lay grace conceded only due to the fact of living and sharing a life together. Cabiria's for Oscar and, earlier, for Giorgio, is the same forced attachment of Geomina for Tanaponi. And when Oscar's trap is set, Cabiria will no longer believe that she is destined to grow old miserably on the beat, and she will unhesitatingly turn to Wanda with the same mockery as Alberto for the road workers. "Take that!" - I've screwed you, you're staying here and I'm leaving. "Hey, Wanda", I'm getting spliced!

But this will not be the case, because the second detail inates itself into the picture, another meaningful gesture of apparently little import. A barely perceived action, because our attention is entirely concentrated on the dialogue. At the end of the lunch by the lake, Fellini frames Cabiria in a mid-range shot. She is about to pay for the lunch when, Oscar, wearing sunglasses and a cigarette in his mouth, picks up the bill, pulls out some money and puts it on the plate, in the small space on the left of the screen that is not occupied by the characters. The situation is captured at the precise moment immediately preceding the transformation. Cabiria has dressed like a 'normal' person, replacing the bolo jersey with a respectable little checked coat and a nice hat. Oscar, who has abandoned his office worker's briefcase and raincoat, looks like Giorgio without a jacket. Cabiria is saying that she wants to pay because, up until now, Oscar (like a good con man) has always paid for everything. He reminds her: "By now, everything I have is yours, isn't it?"

The director forces this moment, unpredictable and yet already caught up in the looming fatality, before the arrow, and he does this with a simple movement of the woman's hand, which she places on Oscar's right hand: the hand of marital faith placed on the hand of a thief. The two look at each other, but the spectator does not see their eyes because Cabiria is seen from the back and Oscar is wearing dark glasses. After a brief pause, still shot in mid-range, Oscar removes his hand and places it on Cabiria's: the moment has come to bring the film to its conclusion and, in the way that can men look at each other or quickly change their gestures, he moves his right hand to the wine bottle and pours. The switch to Cabiria reveals the pocket of money tightly held in her right hand. In the subsequent passage, Oscar finally removes his sunglasses - an almost 'disturbed' moment for one who appears to be anticipating the joy of victory - then puts them on again, becoming elusive and nervous, as a close-up shot reveals his muddy, malignant eyes in the disquieting light of sunset - a light that, together with the wind, reveals to Cabiria's mind the true face of her man, "one of those who takes money from women", one who has never loved her but only been after her savings.

All this is there between the folds of the images present in the scene showing the setting of the bill. It is a narrative and visual anticipation contained within an elliptical form of narration, which concludes the sociopolitical business of the emotional swindle, of the fear of death, of the re-emergence from the inner bartering into which Cabiria suddenly sinks, rather than physically falling into the lake. The author suggests the ambiguity in advance, without depriving the epilogue of its tension, which is to be seen, less in order to find out how it ends, but rather to get a just confirmation of it.

This procedure is developed in putting Fellini's characters into motion when they must surprisingly enter or exit from an incommensurable situation. The light breeze and those kids on a spree once again blow away Cabiria's illusions and her frigid cynicism - "one does everything for love," she had said - impelling her back on to the road again with an unforgettable smile: not onto her boat, for the time being, but towards her indestructible faith in an impalpable...
The last frame of *The Nights of Cabiria*, considered by André Bazin to be "at one and the same time the most audacious and the strongest of all Fellini's work", is the image of a fragile and sincere woman's desperate need for love, a hunger for affection that is also felt in varying degrees by the *villanoni*, by Zampanò, by Augusto and by Marcello Rubini, the hero of *La Dolce Vita*: an epic movie that, since the death of the director, is only now beginning to take on more normal proportions, after having been excessively exalted and denigrated. A movie whose unusual length (at that time) demanded an enormous effort by its producers and makers, and which constituted Fellini's first sumptuous 'artistic lump', a story constructed upon reality, interlaced with the tragic and the fabulous, a truly authentic joke such as *Eight and a Half* and *Casanova*.

As occasionally happens to certain great movies, and not always the loveliest ones, *La Dolce Vita* (1960) was destined to remain forever young and, with its bitter, astute prophetic confession, it was immediately interpreted as a prophecy of social disaster. A totem movie that expressed an idea and its antithesis, and, in the end, a movie-event because it marked the end of the cinema of the Fifties and its language, its customs, its socio-political complications, its polemics, its critiques, and much more. From a distance of almost fifty years, it is not easy to conjure up the provincial, curia-communist and 'vulgar' climate of those years, into which the movie came crashing like a meteor, yet it is still valid today, even if in a less intense way. Even if the rites and myths have changed, there has been no real change, except for the worse, in the ideology and the soul condition of that class of Fellini's *bon viveurs*.

To introduce this story, articulated into various episodes, and particularly in order to understand its true impact, it would not be a digression to refer to another Italian movie,
to remain forever young and, with its bitter, astute prophetic confession, it was immediately interpreted as a prophecy of social disaster. A totem movie that expressed an idea and its antithesis, and, in the end, a movie-event because it marked the end of the cinema of the Fifties and its language, its customs, its socio-political complications, its polemics, its critiques, and much more. From a distance of almost fifty years, it is not easy to conjure up the provincial, curia-communist and vulgar climate of those years, in which the movie came crashing like a meteor, yet it is still valid today, even if in a less intense way. Even if the rites and myths have changed, there has been no real change, except for the worse, in the ideology and the soul condition of that class of Fellini’s _bon vivants._

To introduce this story, articulated into various episodes, and particularly in order to understand its true impact, it would not be a digression to refer to another Italian movie, winner of the 1961 Oscar for its screenplay. It is Pietro Germi’s _Divorce Italian Style_, the bitter-sweet story of a crime of honor, a sarcastic comedy in which Baron Cefalu, in order to free himself of a penitulant wife, plans to carry out his crime during the showing of _La Dolce Vita_ at the town’s movie theater. Under the rubric of a movie event valid even in a remote Sicilian village, Germi cautiously plays with the leading actor of both movies, Marcello Mastroianni. In fact, the voice of the actor coming from the screen showing Fellini’s movie creates a duet with the voice of the same actor in the guise of Baron Cefalu: “Preceded by huge public scandal, echoes of polemics, protests, denouncements and hassanas, a sensational movie came to the small town. The parish priest of San Filippo had launched his thunderbolts against the licentious movie and admonished his parishioners to boycott it, but with little result. Nothing of the kind had ever been seen before. Not even the chains borrowed from the Central Bar and squeezed into the theater were sufficient to deter the crush of spectators. They had even come in from the countryside, travelling ten kilometers on horseback.”

Alternating between the bick at the main floor, transfixed by the exuberant beauty of Anita Ekberg letting herself go at _Canicattí’s_, and the well-bred bourgeoisie seated in the boxes, our curiosity is focused entirely on the ‘handsome actor’, ready to set his delicate criminal apparatus in motion, confident of finding his wife with her lover and finally having a motive for killing her while in the grip, as it were, of his wrath. With acumen, Germi uses the pretext of the showing of the scandalous movie, thus bringing to the fore the ironic paradox of the organized improvisation: “the plan must proceed without the slightest hitch, it’s success (and the alibi) will entirely depend upon this movie about the lustfulness and vices of Rome.” What better thing is there than mass hypocrisy in the face of an unapproachable world of bright lights and voluptuousness? Nothing. But the baron had counted his chickens before they hatched. He had not considered that his wife Rosalia would follow his own line of reasoning, and arrange an elopement with her peasant lover to coincide with the ‘desert’ effect created by Fellini’s movie.

Using this tactic, Germi obtains the full consensus of an audience that can be found in cinemas everywhere, guaranteed to participate because its morbid curiosity has already been attracted by counter-attacks widely disseminated in the popular scandal sheets and weeklies. Accused by politicians of having “thrown a defaming shadow over the Roman people and the dignity of the Italian capital itself, as well as Catholicism”, _La Dolce Vita_ is threatened with censorship and even more bitterly opposed by the Church, except for the enlightened views of Father Arpa. By recognizing the movie’s moral qualities as well as its unquestionable cinematic merits, his own life will be anything but dolce for a long time to come.

Marcello Rubini, having come to Rome from the provinces in order to work in the field of socially committed literature, is working as a journalist for a scandal sheet. For one week, he witnesses and participates in the daily life, and the even more lively nightly events, in Via Veneto, populated by the famous and the rich. On board a helicopter with the photographer Paparazzo, he follows a statue of Christ that is crossing Rome from the Police Aqueduct to St. Peter’s, without missing the opportunity of making an advance to a group of pretty women who are sunbathing. In the evening, he watches, for some spicy happening on Via Veneto, he meets Maddalena, a rich, bored heiress, with whom he goes for a car ride. In Piazza del Popolo, the couple offer to a prostitute, who lives on the outskirts of town at Cessati Spirits. In her squallid apartment, they spend the night making love.

Returning home at dawn, Marcello discovers that his jealous companion, Emma, has tried to kill herself. He takes her to the hospital and, after vainly trying to call Maddalena, he rushes to the airport to witness the arrival of Sylvia, a famous American screen star, eagerly awaited by a crowd of photographers, journalists and curiosity-seekers. The actress is holding her first press conference in Italy at the Hotel Excelsior, but Marcello cannot attend because he must look after Emma who has just been released from the hospital.

Sylvia, dressed like a priest for a promotional tour of the city, climbs to the top of St. Peter’s dome, and is joined by a breathless Marcello who, fascinated by her natural beauty, will see her again at _Canicattí’s_ nightclub, surrounded by the usual crowd of photographers. Sylvia lets herself go in a sensual, erotic rock dance. She gets into an argument with her husband Robert, who is constantly drunk, and then rushes away from the nightclub in a rage, followed by Marcello.

Sitting in the car in Via Appia Antica, they talk very little because of the language barrier, and Marcello, not knowing what to do, drives to Rome, after having phoned Maddalena. Whilst they are near the Trevi fountain, Sylvia falls in love with a kitten, and asks Marcello to find some milk for it. When he returns, the journalist finds that Sylvia has jumped into the fountain, fully clothed, and he is unable to refuse when she asks him to join her, dazzled as he is by that vision of pure beauty. Upon returning to the hotel, they discover Robert, who, awakened by the paparazzi, lobs Sylvia and punches Marcello, while the flash bulbs go wild.

The following day, while covering a fashion show at EUR, Marcello runs into Steiner, whose refinement and modesty he admires. They talk for a while in a church, but when Steiner goes to the organ and begins to play Bach, Marcello leaves in embarrassment.

Accompanied by the trustworthy Paparazzo and Emma, Marcello visits a place near Torri, where two children claim to have seen a vision of the Madonna. Naturally, it is pure fabrication, but, exploited by the media, the news is creating mass hysteria among the crowd. Emma, drawn in by the atmosphere, prays to the Virgin to let her marry her man. A violent rainstorm and a sudden death conclude the long day.

An evening spent with Steiner and his intellectual friends brings to a
The mediocre life he has forced
end. Spurred on by these thoughts,
of life, and goes to a tratoria
order to write something decent.
he meets a waitress called Paola,
in Via Veneto. But this time,
who has arrived from the
in the evening at the "Kit-Kat",
or old man appears to
dancer friend of Marcello's,
guests that they go back to her
Twist. When Marcello arrives
her has been taken ill and
laugh among the party guests at the
he once again encounters
moment of ambiguous intimacy,
visits the old villa, participates in
company when the bell signifies
first mass summons all the male descendants of that noble family to
follow the princess mother to the chapel.
Another of the endless violent quarrels between Marcello and Emma
ends up with a reconciliation in bed, following a series of violent
reciprocal accusations — a prelude to the tragedy which is about to
take place. Steiner, for no apparent reason, has killed his children and
then taken his own life. Along with the police commissioner, Marcello
waits in the street for Steiner's wife to return, while the paparazzi
ruthlessly take flash photographs of the woman's emotionless face.
A pathetic cry in a villa at Fregene, amidst crude undercurrents
and improvised strip-teases, saturates the final scenario of our hero's
week in Rome with cruel boredom. In the morning, a monster of a fish,
dropped to shore by the fishermen, seems to be staring right at
Marcello. In the distance, Paola, the young waitress from the trattoria,
beckons him to join her, but Marcello vanishes in the opposite
direction.

In *La Dolce Vita*, the highly mobile camera is at one and
the same time the mover and the mirror of events which
highlight solitude, cynicism, disgust and love. These are
classic Fellini themes, sometimes amply represented within
several figures, and other times subsumed in a single
character, such as the uneasy Marcello in the grip of a
malignant freedom, a kind of eye that does nothing but
record, more passive than a determining element in the
story's development as he pursues the trends of the reveling
city. He lives, looks, and describes the things and the people
from a constantly changing viewpoint — along with Fellini's
observations — subject to neither the realistic balance nor
the composite distortion. In this movie, Alberto Moravia
writes, "Fellini appears to change his manner according to
the subject matter of the episodes within a spectrum of
portrayal that ranges from expressionistic caricature to the
most sober realism. In general, one notes an inclination to
decomposing caricature whenever the moral judgment
becomes more cruel and more disdainful, not, however,
without a pinch of satisfaction and complicity, as in the
extremely vivid scene of the final orgy, or that of the
aristocratic party, which is admirable in its descriptive
sagacity and narrative rhythm."

The restlessness in the movements of the curious camera,
placing itself at the side of, on top of, and even inside the
heart of events, is sometimes frozen into snapshots, not
unlike the photos of the paparazzi, while, at other times, it
breaks up the story into a stylistically and thematically
efficacious solution, wherein Fellini is better able to move
than he could do within a rigid narrative context. Whereas
the author, any twentieth century author, can only grab at
confused scraps of reality, his alter-ego, Marcello, gathers up
these fragments, "pieces" of life, bits of a discontinuous
mosaic, heterogeneous, unstable, completed by what the
other eyes of the movie see, the camera lenses and the
director himself.

This discreet stalker of the *dolce vita romana*, without any
strong motivations, is another portrayal of the worn-out hero
of literary tradition, the one who clung to the sight of his destiny,
if only he did not have that small amount of humanity
dedicated to others like Moraldo, Gelsomina or Cabirio. His
contradictions are the image of his weakness, as well as that
of a sick society, inasmuch as *La Dolce Vita* represents the
sum of those single moments of crisis gathered together into
the form of a movie that does not refer so much to itself, as
to the idea of cinema, of "movie-cinema".

In contrast to "movie-movie", which is to say movies that
completely exhaust their text within the story, a "movie-
cinema", such as *La Dolce Vita*, is furnished with an
inexhaustible "classic" inner energy, having to broaden its
range of action in an absolute expressive enrichment.
unlike Il Bidone, a typical 'movie-movie', which, after
the death of Augusto, has nothing more to say. Instead, a
simple reading of the script of Il Viaggio di G. Mastorna, the
movie that was never made, conveys the feelings that
cinema imparts in a very intense way, because it
communicates a particular form of pathos, bound to the
written word, due to the world of the author and his
personage. With *La Dolce Vita*, one gets more or less this
same strange elevating experience of participation: the
story of the spiritual journey of Marcello and his *deus ex
machina* which, the more personal and suffered it is, the
more it unfolds, on the one hand, in the direction of
Cinema, and on the other, towards a sense of Death, light
but present, ready to dig silently among Fellini's obsessions.
For this reason, the word dolce, as it is understood in a
pagan and voluptuous sense, is another of the not few
equivoque points of the movie. Starting from the optimistic
idea that life may not necessarily be 'bitter', the message
was misunderstood to mean unbridled pleasure-taking
in the hedonistic individualism of the newly rich, up to the
point of post-modern exhibitions of empty and ignorant
television esthetics.

Loneliness. Cynicism. Disgust. Love. Four soul states with
which one can walk arm-in-arm in the dolce vita of the
southern dream of an inner Rome suspended between the
crumbling vestiges of a great Empire and the comprehensive
embrace of Christianity.
Marcello is lonely. He lives with Emma, suffocated by her possessiveness, her scenes, and her wild extremes. Emma, myopic and superficial enough not to notice her man’s torment, cannot look at things with reason: all she sees is the outward appearance of the intellectual world, and she allows herself to be hypnotized by religion in its simplest sense, the fruit of excitement over a (false) miracle. She loves in an obverse way, and despairs because her man disdains even her most ordinary attentions. Marcello is lonely even when by himself, because he wants to be what he is not, a writer, possibly left-wing, sent on extraordinary trips to important meetings, whereas his ignorance has turned him into an expert scandal reporter. All he does is concern himself with petty local news by day, and roam Via Veneto by night, accompanied by Paparazzo – the name that became a worldwide synonym for a society photographer – in order to inform his avid readers about what the VIPs eat, their love affairs and betrayals. In this sense, the reconstruction of Via Veneto at Cinecittà, confirming Fellini’s bigger-than-life fabricated magnifies the ephemeral society that populates that street, a microcosm of fearful moths that warm up their spirits around the lamp of incommunicability and anxiety. Maddalena’s loneliness complements this. Stimulated only by new experiences, she is happy with Marcello – who is made of the same stuff, only poor – both in the prostitute’s bed, and at the satin castle where, even when sincerely conversing at a distance with him, she cannot resist giving herself to another man, cannot bear the loneliness that, just for one instant, has encountered that of her friend/lover. Marcello is isolated when he is with just one other person, or in a group, when he accompanies the beautiful Sylvie to St. Peter’s, or with her at a nightclub, or at the sacred icon of the Trevi Fountain, convinced that he has found “everything, the first woman of the first day of creation, mother, sister, lover, friend, angel, home.” And instead, in his confused and mystical search, he is frustrated by a blast of wind, by the cry of an American actor, by the dogs and the uninterrupted flow of the fountain, moments which accentuate his alienation.

From page: Captivated by Sylvia’s radiant beauty, Marcello seems to be poised between reality and indifference, finally revealing all the signs of his personal existential crisis. Top: in the Via Veneto recreated at Cinecittà, we even see the Splai, one of the bilious ‘badges’ of the boom years. Marcello is teetering between memory (his father, Amabile Black) and the present (Paparazzo, Walter Santesso) (Right: Steiner, Alois Cayg), a destructive, uncontrollable model, completely fascinates Marcello, who, hoping one day to be a writer, must instead concern himself only with newspaper scandal...
Even the 'provincial' parenthesis of his father's visit reveals his isolation in the pathetic attempt to renew a bond that has not existed since he was a child. He looks for company among the guests at the party and at the orgy, with perturbed women already suffering for their own reasons, when refusing the Paolo's invitation on the beach, a prelude of his loneliness, cynically experienced.

In fact, Marcello is cynical. As someone who is completely disillusioned, having to adapt to the society of appearances, he must necessarily pretend to be insensitive. With Maddalena, he speaks about Rome, and then throws her wretch in her face: "I like Rome very much. It's a kind of jungle. Warm and calm, where one can easily hide. [...] Do you know what your problem is? Too much money. Listen, you don't have to worry, with all that money you've got, you'll always land on your feet if you fall."

He acts the part of the innocent representative of public opinion, even when invading the privacy of a pair of adulterers: gets angry with Emma for her blackmailing suicide attempt, during the pandemonium of Sylvia's arrival, he removes himself from the collective enthusiasm.
Even the 'provincial' parenthesis of his father's visit reveals his isolation in the pathetic attempt to renew a bond that has not existed since he was a child. He looks for company among the guests at the party and at the orgy, with perturbed women already suffering for their own reasons, when refusing the Paolo's invitation on the beach, a passage of his loneliness, cynically experienced.

In fact, Marcello is cynical. As someone who is completely disillusioned, having to adapt to the society of appearances, he must necessarily pretend to be insensitive. With Maddalena, he speaks about Rome, and then throws her wealth in her face: "I like Rome very much. It's a kind of jungle. Warm and calm, where one can really hide. [...] Do you know what your problem is? Too much money. Listen, you don't have to worry, with all that money you've got, you'll always land on your feet if you fall."

He acts the part of the innocent representative of public opinion, even when invading the privacy of a pair of adulterers: gets angry with Emma for her blackmailing suicide attempt; during the pandemonium of Sylvia's arrival, he removes himself from the collective enthusiasm.
and chats a while with the flight attendants, he takes a
cautious dig at the photographer at EUR; like Paparazzo, he
does not believe in miracles, but rather in the realism of an
existence he does not know how to change; he is rude to
Paola because the juke-box disturbs him, but is actually
angry with himself because he does not know what to write;
he gets into quarrels at the castle, and demonstrates his
cruel cynicism during the orgiastic games at Fregene. Here
the cynical behavior of Marcello is synthesized. Is it the
unveiling of his true character, helped along by the
influence of alcohol, or is it his despairing reaction to
Steiner's tragic death? Perhaps it is both. In any case, the
common denominator is his anxiety due to the fact that the
much-admired Steiner has renounced his life because there
was too much order in it.

Directly connected to the motifs of anxiety and cynicism,
is that of disgust which, in Fellini, is not detached from the
acceptance of the state of things. Accentuated above all in the
orgy episode, where we see how deeply Marcello, not
being able to withdraw, irrepulsively immerses himself in the
subject and physical acts which nauseate him, and wallows
in his aversion for hypocrisy, pretended modesty, repressed
impulses. Less a moral disgust than an aesthetic one for that
dolce vita and its disorder which, though not feeling himself
responsible, he cannot do without, considering that this
confusion and chaotic frenzy is what earns him his daily, or
more correctly, nightly bread. When all is said and done,
except for certain private episodes, he is the man who,
observing, noting, and even while having to accept the rules
of the information profession, often disapproves of the
paparazzi intrusions, and ignores their requests for a
photographic scoop of Steiner's corpse.

In the end, Marcello seeks love, and looks for it in women.
He needs to be considered a contradictory human being,
fragile and needy of affection. He seeks, and rejects, this
affection in Emma, the Italian mother: "I cannot spend my
life loving you, [I'm afraid] of you, your egoism, the
desolating squall of your ideals. Can't you see that you are
offering me the life of a worm? You cannot talk of anything
but food and bed! But don't you understand, a man who
accepts that kind of life is finished, has truly become a
worm? I don't believe in this aggressive, vain, maternal
love of yours. I don't want it! It's no use to me! This is not
love, it's stultification." Emma will never be on a par with
the women artists of Steiner's circle, but no-one knows as
well as she does how to heal, in bed, the wounds left by her
man's insecurities and cowardly actions.

The female American star, a more complete version of the
tiny Gelosomnia, is big, exaggerated, phosphorescent,
possessing something more 'mystic', some astral difference
from the usual 'good-looking', is full of an instinctive love for life, but not for Marcello. She, on the rare occasions when he tries to kiss her — not understanding that she is only an ideal, a Dream Woman — is regularly frustrated by a sudden obstacle.

For their part, Maddalena and Jane represent the taste for danger, the novelty that excites, in contrast to the foreseeable present and future, the sexual surrogate for Emma's disdainful love. For this reason too, Marcello, half immersed in the Trevi Fountain, barely allows himself to touch Sylvie's wondrous, distant face. The drops of water that she lets fall onto his head symbolize the return, the inner rebirth of a lay, existential nature. Perhaps one will exit from the disgust for the dolce vita with a new taste for the elementary things in life which, however, continue to keep some surprises in store.

The other love to which Marcello aspires is found in Steiner's house, where his gentle, smiling wife introduces him to a serenity that is interrupted only by the stormy wind — heard on the wire recorder — and the children waking up. In its satisfying tranquility, however, that love leads to suicide, a warning, or confirmation, of the fact that one must react in order to combat fear. Equally pointless was the brutish orgy, and the rising back from the depths of nastiness that occurs with the walk in the pine woods at Fregene, before the hideous disgust take form as a mysterious marine monster that, in absorbing the negative human factors, allows the 'soap-and-water' girl to be the one to take leave of the spectator.

It is certainly no coincidence that the locations and symbols of the movie, Via Veneto and the enormous marine creature, are false, only truly existing in the invented representation of a miserable world of lights that comes to life by reflection when the natural light of day disappears. It is a world like that of the cinema, taken from the reality of the years when the so-called Hollywood-on-the-Tiber existed, when the American cinema came to Cinecittà to shoot its epic, attracted by the low cost and high quality of the crew. Without that having happened, the mythologized Via Veneto would never have existed, and La Dolce Vita, the meeting point of two decades, is the documentation of an epoch from this point of view as well. Marcello's love is derived from Caffi's when his disgust for the degradation of feelings is transformed into a look that is almost inside the camera, we have arrived at the final frames of La Dolce Vita, with an innocent act to redeem the orgy by the simple...
fact of existing. And if the endings of the two movies, despite having strong similarities in their optimism, do not coincidce, it is because the buds of Fellini-style deformation are already beginning to turn into the psychoanalytic larvae of Eight and a Half.

Before shooting Eight and a Half, the second crucial emblem of movie-cinema, Fellini completes La Dite Viva with The Temptations of Doctor Antonio, an episode in Rococcò 70, directed in 1962 and featuring Peppino De Filippo and Anita Ekberg. The Fellini episode is the second part of a joke in four acts thought up by Cesare Zavattini, which also includes Mario Monicelli’s Senor and Lucia, Lucchino Visconti’s The Job, and Vittorio De Sica’s The Raffle.

A grotesque reprisal on the bigots who had censored La Dite Viva, the nocturnal adventure of the moralist Antonio Marzolo allows Fellini to play around a little more with the ambivalent mental fresco of Rome by night, alternating the small and the large, the true and the false, night and day and, to a large degree, prudery and the obtuseness of censorship. The Temptations of Doctor Antonio is, on the one hand, a Fellini divertissement about the movies and, on the other hand, the tempered oppositions of his hyper-realistic humor, similar in tone to the long list of things he likes and hates contained in Intervista sul Cinema. “I don’t like parties, holidays, trips, interviews, round table discussions, requests for my autograph, smails, travel, standing in line, the mountains, boats, radio playing, music in restaurants, music in general (submitting to it), jokes, soccer fans, ballet, Christmas crib, gogonzola, award ceremonies, hearing people talk about Brecht, Brecht, official lunches, toasts, discourses, invitations to places, requests for my opinion, Humphrey Bogart, quiz programs, Magritte, being invited to art exhibitions, theater opening nights, typescripts, tea, camomile tea, carafe, preview of anything at all, the Maddalena Theater, quotations from men, movies for young people, theatricality, temperament, questions, Phandellos, crêpes Suzettes, beautiful landscapes, political movies, historical movies, psychological movies, windows without blinds, commitment, non-commitment, ketchup.”
Temptations of Doctor Antonio is, on the one hand, a Fellini divette about the movies and, on the other hand, the tempered oppositions of his hyper-realistic humor, similar in tone to the long list of things he likes and hates contained in Intervista sul Cinema. "I don't like parties, holidays, trips, interviews, round table discussions, requests for my autograph, snails, travel, standing in line, the mountains, boats, radios playing, music in restaurants, music in general (submitting to it), jokes, soccer fans, ballet, Christmas cribs, gongonzola, award ceremonies, hearing people talk about Brecht, Brecht, official lunches, toasts, discourses, invitations to places, requests for my opinion, Humphrey Bogart, quiz programs, Magritte, being invited to art exhibitions, theater opening nights, typescripts, tea, camomile tea, caviar, previews of anything at all, the Muddalenah Theater, quotations, real men, movies for young people, theatricality, temperament, questions, Pirandello, crépes Suzettes, beautiful landscapes, political movies, historical movies, psychological movies, windows without blinds, commitment, non-commitment, ketchup."
There is no danger of using the list to interpret the reasons why and why it is that a certain person detests snails with ketchup, or eats caviar and gorgonzola — possibly before going to see a Pirandello play — but certainly the list of preferences, with its well-balanced combinations, is revealing. I like trains, stations, Matteo, airports, pistoia, oak trees, rosini, roses, the Morx Brothers, tigers, waiting to meet someone while hoping they will no longer be coming (even if it is a very beautiful woman), IoT, having missed being somewhere, Piero della Francesca, everything beautiful about a beautiful woman, Homer, Joan Blondell, September, terrazino ice-cream, cherries, Bunnello di Montalcino wine, big butts on bicycles, trains and lunch baskets on trains, Arieño, cocker spaniels and dogs in general, the smell of damp earth, the scent of hay, crushed hay leaves, cypress trees, the sea in winter, people who speak little, James Bond, the One Step, empty shops, deserted restaurants, squalo, empty churches, silence, Ostia, Torvaianica, the sound of bells, finding myself alone in Urbino on a Sunday, sweet boil, Bologna, Venice, all of Italy, Chandler, women concierges, Simenon, Dickens, Kafka, London, roasted chestnuts, subways, taking buses, high bed, Vienna (but I have never been there), waking up, going to sleep, stationery shops, Fober No. 2, pencils, vaudeville shows, bitter chocolate, secrets, the dawn, the night, spiriti, Wimpy, Laurel and Hardy, Turner, Leda Glória, but Greta Garbo I also liked a lot, soufflés, but also ballerinas.

It is hard to avoid the temptation of remembering the winter sea in Vitelloni, of the big bottom of the peasant woman on the bicycle in Amarcord, of the subway in Roma and Fellini's Director's Notebook, of the high beds in Eight and a Half and City of Women, not to mention the vaudeville shows (Variety Lights, The Nights of Cabiria, Fellini's Roma), and the Venice of Casanova, along with a Poe-inspired project that never came off. Also, the predilection for Georges Simenon, his great and good friend, located somewhere between Chandler (plot) and Kafka (the hallucinatory and the absurd), or else between the concierges and roost chestnuts — images of Molgat's Paris and Fellini's Rome and provinces. The points of conflict between Fellini and Simenon are surprisingly many — one need only remember the richness of fantasy and invention, the great rigor of their working methods, alternating between a furor of imagination and sudden 'vacuities', the alter-egos Molgat and Mostroian who, in the simultaneousness of different lives, somehow make reference to Jungian synchronicity understood as occasionality. These are questions to be taken up elsewhere, because they would lead us away from the fixations of Doctor Antonio who, far from being The Man Who Watched the Trains Pass, limited himself to watching, and while watching with prejudice, fell into temptation.

Doctor Antonio Mazzuolo, the impeccable moralist who wears luxurious black suits at hot Roman nights, has a fixation: the battle against the spread of immorality. He follows couples in solitory places and hates women in bikinis, as well as all other exhibitions of the female body. His iconoclastic fury is expressed in fervid rhetorical outbursts to brawny, nocturnal, snick, and the interruption of shows he considers indecent, up until the attack on a woman in a low-cut top.

One day, an enormous billboard is posted up directly in front of his window, with a provocative blonde inviting people to drink more milk, causing Doctor Antonio to start his anti-vice crusade. First of all, he tries to prevent the posting up of the poster, and then he goes to the pro-morality association, while the people of the neighborhood, unperturbed by his rage, merrily welcome the billboard with an outdoor party.

One morning, intent on shaving, he thinks he sees in the mirror the gloved arm of the woman on the billboard, and by now determined to
The Prostitute, the Innocent, the City and Love

The list to interpret the
4 a certain person detests
tovar and georgenzona –
Firandello play – but certainly
well-balanced combinations,
ons, Matisse, airports, risotto,
Rus Brothers, tigers, waiting
they will no longer be
beautiful woman), Totò, having
o delta Francesca, everything
man, Homer, Jean Blondel,
berries, Brunello di
bicycles, trains and lunch
her spaniels and dogs in
r, the scent of hay, crushed
sea in winter, people who
One Step, empty shops,

provoke a scandal, gets himself arrested after splattering it with ink. He accomplishes his purpose: the billboard is covered by, to the great
go on his unmarried sister, given to nocturnal ecstasy under a false

While playing the piano during a party with the friends of the
association, Mazzuola sees that disheveled blonde appearance, a
painlessly shining with a sudden rainstorm has entered the covering.
In the moonlight, he discovers that the photo has changed position,
and is singing at him and teasing him. When it finally stops raining,

Doctor Antonio dreams that he has been on the billboard but,
while the great glass of milk has melted onto the grass, the body of
the temptress has left the billboard.

`I have finally driven you away from the world of decent people`, he

The light of day finds him clinging to the border of the billboard,
and only by injecting him with a tranquilizer do they manage to
take him away to the hospital, while the tune of the advertising jingle plays (`Drink more milk`) and capriole to himself.

In 1961, Sergio Corbucci’s movie, Totò, Peppino ed il Dolce Vito, appears on Italian screens, aiming at profiting from the scandal provoked by Mazzuola’s movie while the iron is hot. A
strong parody in which Totò and Peppino De Filippo carry out their archetypal shady dealings in the nightclubs of Via Vimineto with a large group of pseudo foreigners. In The Temptations of Doctor Antonio, Peppino De Filippo – whom Fellini always preferred to his more famous brother Eduardos – continues partly in the role of the character of that parody. In
Fellini’s work, Antonio really takes on the ironic contours of the hypocrisies disguised as a respectable crusader, who represents the director’s answer to the wretched criticisms that greeted the appearance of La Dolce Vita.

In the opening minutes of the movie, following the pattern of the old comedians, Doctor Antonio reproaches a lady for her supposedly shameless way of dressing and, when she reacts, he gives her a couple of slaps, thus defending decency and recalling an episode which actually happened involving the censor, the Italian politician Oscar Luigi Scalfaro.

The middle part is devoted to promoting the joy of living,
as expressed in the femininity of Anita Ekberg playing the part of the corrupting demon of the upright male Italian. This characteristic is put in evidence by the agile reactions of the moralist, who awards ridiculous little
diplomas to boy scouts. Fellini has fun giving these big fat
kids the names of movie people such as Rodolfo Sonego (scriptwriter of many Italian comedies, for Alberto Sordi in particular) and ODELL Martelli, the movie’s director of photography.
The anti-sex sermons he preaches to these big kids in short pants are totally pointless, as life goes on and the
workers are already there to erect the billboard. The director uses this to return to the question of the relationship between true and false, this time in connection with the alternating of big and small. Thus, no longer just the false
resembling a dream-state, but the false in a real dream on a
reduced scale, with the result of confounding the eye and
the character. In the end the leading man engages in an
unequal battle against Love and feminine Charm, only to
be conquered by them under the amused eye of Cupid, the
only one able to make the expression on a poster figure change
and cause it to descend and do a strip-tease, before the
final seduction when the clock strikes midnight, the `non-hour`, suspended between the old day and the new.

The billboard figure enters and exits from that particular
screen, on which the director creates, somewhere between cinema and comic strip, an enormous cartoon for
magnifying the most desirable moments, more than the
incarnation of the exaggerated perception that the male
lead has of feminine sensuality. With an unerring
and sensual aim, his lance pierces her right breast, thus
rendering every more the point of the suppressed desires of the attacker. The problem of the reduced reconstruction of
reality fuses with the ‘very large’, which always analogically completes Fellini’s fascination, more than the proportions of the
temptation, which neutralize her
dangerousness with one stroke, ridicule whoever
considered them obscene.

Antonio Mazzuola would like that image to be invisible, as it were, to the spectator, because we are part of the
carceral nightmare or repression, and so it is necessary to
cover the camera lens – with one’s pants if necessary.
If he were to abandon himself to real life, the

temptations would vanish, and he too would be able to go out on the
goss without worrying. Once again, here is a finale in line
with the preceding ones: it is useless to look for the message
of hope, but one must become aware that one is dealing
with an author who does not like either ‘commitment’ or
lack of it. Rather he prefers ‘waking up’ and ‘going to sleep’
– which is to say, to dream. In fact, it is now the right
moment for the dislocations of Eight and a Half.
In Eight and a Half, director Guido Anselmi (Marcello Mastroianni, Fellini’s alter ego) looks to the religious authorities, the Cardinal (Tino Mecchi), for answers to his questions.
Nothing is Known. Everything is Imagined

Eight and a Half  • Juliet of the Spirits  • Toby Dammit
 Fellini: a Director's Notebook  • Fellini's Satyricon

Right in the middle of a traffic bottleneck, in a silence illuminated by a blinding white light, a man in a dark suit tries spasmodically to get out of the car in which he is trapped. People in the cars around him stare at him. Others look like distant mariachis.

Finally, the man manages to free himself and climbs on top of the car. He is floating high in space like a kite as an unknown person tries to pull him down to earth, and another figure arrives on horseback. That descent corresponds to the falling sensation the protagonist feels: he was dreaming, and a person in a white coat enters at the very moment of that perception.

In fact, it is the team of doctors at the Chianciano Thermal Baths, arriving to administer a tonic to the famous film director, Guido Anselmi, who is spending a restful holiday there in order to plan his next movie.

On a sunny spring morning, the guests of the spa promenade in the park and drink the medicinal waters. Guido imagines he sees a girl dressed in white offering him a glass of water, but in fact it is merely the woman who works at the spa.

Daumier, the French intellectual who is working as an adviser on the movie, is waiting for Guido, who exchanges some thoughts with him. The writer also talks with an outburst of reserve about the philosophy of the movie and the way it is being handled. Impatient, the director jumps at the chance of an interruption—a meeting with a friend of his, Mario Mazzabotta. Mazzabotta, who is with his young English fiancée, Gloria, an aspiring actress and university student, is waiting for his marriage to be annulled.

Guido goes to the station to meet his current lover, Carla. With a high-society air, the woman is laden with luggage, and Guido has put her up at a hotel near the railway station, embarrassed by her presence.

After lunch, the lovers retire to their room and谢邀 themselves with a little fooling around, in which Carla, dressed only in a sheet and heavily made-up, pretends she has put on the wrong room. After having sex, while Carla is reading a comic book, Guido dreams of his dead parents in a strange cemetery where his producer, Pasquale, and introduction director, Contacchin, are also present. Still as part of the dream, Guido puts on his college uniform and says goodbye to his parents. As he embraces his mother, she turns into his wife Luisa. Back at the hotel, he runs into some religious types who are attending to his Eminence, who has come to take the waters.

Other events follow which introduce us to the various characters who form part of Guido's movie: the collaborators, the production crew, the little old men saying for the part of the father, Claudia's agent, the French actress to whom Guido does not want to reveal the character of the role, the American newspaperman and wife who is always hunting for news, the fleeting vision of a beautiful hotel guest, and finally the arrival of the producer (with a horde of secretaries and a posse of mistresses) who regards his director with a cold look.

After dinner, there is an open-air dance. Pasquale checks the estimates proposed by the discontented Contacchin; the foreign newspaperman persists with his questions, and Carla has sat at a table far away from the movie crowd.

Private affairs and gossip about the wealthy Mazzabotta alternate with comments about the movie, until the atmosphere is lightened up with Maurice's display of telepathy, together with his partner Maya. The woman, blindfolded, guesses the contents of one woman's purse, and then the thoughts of a mature lady ("I would like to live another hundred years"), before going after Carla who, embarrassed, plays for time, and finally on to Gloria, who brusquely declines to participate in the experiment. When Maurice tries to transmit the director's secret thoughts, Maya is unable to pronounce the words and writes them in capital letters on a blackboard instead. ASA, NISI, MASA. At this point, the action switches to Guido's private childhood memories of the playfulness of today's bath with mother, of the court of other women in the house and of the grandmother who talked to herself in Romagnol dialect about her life. In the house, there is a stairway leading to the rooms on the upper floor where the children are being put to bed while, just before going to sleep, a little girl repeats the words, "ASA, NISI, MASA" several times to Guido.

Late at night in the hotel lobby, the French actress, Mazzabotta and Gloria arrive just before the director's telephone call to his wife asking her to join him at the spa. Passing through the rooms used by the production crew, Guido, in spite of the lateness of the hour, has a quarrel with Contacchin, who reproaches him for not giving clear directions.

In his room, the director is assailed by existential and erotic doubts. Not even knowing what the movie's plot is going to be, he abandons himself to his imagination. Claudia appears, moving around the room, caressing him and lying down on the bed... The ringing of the telephone brings Guido back to reality. Carla, alarmed because she feels unknown, asks him questions about their relationship. But Guido is distracted with thoughts about the next day's meeting with the cardinal. This meeting turns out to be nothing but a polite formality, because the priest is preoccupied with the sobbing intoxication of the albatross—the bird that sang the funeral song for the death of Diomedes.
Disappointed, Guido loses himself in the memory of Saraghina, and the image he went with his friends to see her dance the rumba for a few pennies, and was caught and severely punished by the priests at his school. Guido will return to the women at the end of the episode.

While at lunch, Dussier continues to talk about the movie's poetic/ramatic structure, and the mention of Sartorius and the Caesars impels the action into the spa's steam baths, where the guests, swathed in white sheets, are immersed in sulphuric vapors. It is time for the second discussion with the religious authorities, which everyone expects to come up with a solution to their problems, but Guido only learns that the Church is everything, and that no salvation is possible outside of it.

Meanwhile, Luisa arrives with her sister, her friend Rosella and Enrico, a rejected sailor. All of them visit the spacecraft set, an impressive science fiction construction where the main scene of the mysterious movie is going to be shot. As some of them mount the scaffolding, Rosella, a clairvoyant, tells Guido that it is time for him to make up his mind. The evening ends with an argument in bed between husband and wife, who is wild with jealousy.

The following morning, at the coffee bar, Guido denies that he still has a relationship with Carla (scared by the lurid), but Luisa is more scared about the betrayal and the vulgarity of her rival. The director imagines that his wife, his mistress, Saraghina, the French actress, Gloria, the charming lady, Rosella and all the other women in his life and in the movie can live together in the great house, surrounding him with attentiveness. One sees how the older ladies of that harem, the focal point of this scene of jealousy, love, gratitude and also of rebellion, must leave the field to the younger ones, and retire to the floor above.

The conclusion of the harem episode coincides with the beginning of the showing of the rushes. Guido imagines he has Daumier hung. Although it is late to be choosing the actresses for the women's roles, Guido cannot make up his mind. His seems incapable of continuing with the movie. He is in crisis. He only wants a fight with Luisa, who can no longer stand his hypocrisy.

Meanwhile, Claudia arrives, the girl he imagined at the spring, which allows him to remain vague with Pace. Together in his car, he talks about the movie with her, of his fears and feelings, of love. They stop near the spring and, after a preview of the scene, Claudia realizes that there is no part for her.

Just when everything seems to be lost, the movie-machine goes into action: the movie is going to be shot. Pace has already called a press conference for the following afternoon.

At the spacecraft set, which is crowded with photographers, radio and television newsmen and foreign journalists, the producer presses the director into finally revealing something about the movie. Guido, not knowing what to say, hides under the table. His failure is complete, just like his confusion between the figures in the
In the memory of Saraghina, and her dusk the rumble for a few
by punished by the priest of his son at the end of the episode,
and we who the movie's mention of Sartorio and the
the steam baths, where the guests, in solitary vapors. It is time for
ous authorities, which everyone to their problems. But Guido only
, and that no salvation is possible
a visit, her friend Rosella and
visit the spacecraft set, on
where the main scene of the
As some of them mount the
Guido denies that it is true for him to
is an argument in bed between
jealousy.
bar, Guido denies that he still
d close by), but Luisa is more and
the vulgarity of her rival. The
mistriss, Saraghina, the French
Rosella and all the other women in
his life and in the movie can live together in the great house,
surrounding him with attentiveness. One sees how the older ladies of
that harem, the focal point of the scene of jealousy, love, gratitude and
also of rebellion, must leave the field to the younger ones, and retire to
the floor above.
The conclusion of the harem episode coincides with the beginning of
the showing of the rushes. Guido imagines he has Daumier hanged.
If there is to be choosing the actresses for the women's roles, Guido
cannot make up his mind. He seems incapable of continuing
with the movie. He is in crisis, exacerbated by the fight with Luisa, who
has no longer stand his hypocrisy.
Meanwhile, Claudia arrives, the girl he imagined at the spring,
which allows him to remain vague with Pasquale in his car, he
talks about the movie with her, of his fears and feelings, of love. They
stop near the spring and, after a preview of the scene, Claudia
realises that there is no part for her.
Just when everything seems to be lost, the movie-machine goes into
action: the movie is going to be shot. Pasquale has already called a press
conference for the following afternoon.
At the spacecraft set, which is crowded with photographers, radio
and television newsmen and foreign journalists, the producer
pressurizes the director into finally revealing something about
the movie. Guido, not knowing what to say, hides under the table. His
failure is complete, just like his confusion between the figures in the

movie and those in real life. Perhaps he would like commit suicide: one
pistol shot and his mother's voice calling him, and the fantasy is over.
At this point, the movie is called off. The scaffolding is dismantled,
while Daumier draws his own rational, consoling conclusions. Guido is
about to leave the set when Maurice approaches him and announces
that everything is ready, they are about to start. As Daumier continues
saying, Guido sees the characters in the movie, together with those
from his life, appear, all dressed in white: Claudia, the women from his
childhood, Saraghina, his mother and father, Carlo, the prefect, the
lady of the spa, Luisa and all the others. They form a line.
They have come for him, the filming can start. Four clowns and a
boy wearing his old school uniform enter the scene. Playing
instruments, they welcome the characters who, under Guido's
direction, form a circle, joined by all the faces Guido has dreamed of
and that right up until that moment. Guido closes the circle, asking
Luisa to take his hand once more.
Night has fallen. The musicians leave the illuminated track. The last
one to leave the scene is the boy, as the lights begin to dim, and then
go out completely.

If one called La Dolce Vita an epic, one can say that Eight
and a Half (1963) is an extraordinary vision of memory

The procession of characters and figures from Fellini's movie world proceeds towards the unforgettable enrichment at the end of the movie.

Nothing is Known. Everything is Imagined.
Fellini and Marcello Mastroianni sort out how a track is going to run during the preparation of filming for Eight and a Half.
so much at the disposition of life and other people as to be caught in a spider-web from which he does not know how to free himself. He runs away and everyone runs after him, calling Guido, Guido, Guido, and naturally Guido (the producer) and Guidone (Mezzabotta). 

_Eight and a Half_ is the culmination of this theme, whose echoes make us think of Viaggio con Anita (Journey with Anita), or Viaggio d'Amore (Journey of Love), and its hero Guido a project, originating in the memory of his father's death, that Fellini wanted to realize ever since 1957, in order to tell about the trip home of a writer with his wife, directed by Mario Monicelli. The movie came out in 1973 with the same title — Viaggio con Anita — but with specific changes. In the meantime, Fellini will disseminate many of his ideas up until the time of _Amarcord._

In any case, Guido (derived from the Germanic _widewald_, woods, forest; or _wide-distant_, reveals spaces and contexts analogous to inner labyrinths in which the personage is lost as if in a dark and menacing forest. Not only that, but in a movie in which so much is at stake, so to speak, is essential — _metamorphoseological_, _metacartographic_, _metacartological_, _metapsychoanalytical_, and one could even reach the point of saying _metapsychoanalytical_ and _metabolic_, like the great spaceship set — it is interesting to interpret the etymology of _Anikin_. It is composed of _a_ (god, divinity) and _helma_ (protection, helmet, magic hood), and its original meaning could be _helmet of the gods_. So we have a god (the director), equipped with a magical hood (Fellini's well-known hat, black and wide-brimmed, a kind of Faustian _Narrenkappe_) who, for some reason, he himself, has gone astray from the road of reality (of protection) which his earlier movies have followed. He has gone astray in a forest of symbols, in a dense mass of faces and situations which straddle and mix into each other within his own reality. At a certain point in the movie, Guido explicitly asks himself where he has gone wrong, and finds himself facing a menacing, futuristic forest of metal scaffolding — a return to the structure in The Temptations of Doctor Antonio, and a passage of the opening silhouettes of _Fellini's A Director's Notebook._

The self-analysis of _Eight and a Half_ clearly makes it a therapeutic movie, like _La Dolce Vita_. However, if the latter was an open occasion, a society on trial, the story of Guido is a confession. In other words, that which before moved outward, here is introjected with an implausible dynamic because the protagonists of the mind and reality demand a precise place within the director's body and spirit.

Among the many ideas that one can follow within the narrative of the movie, mutatis mutandis, a set-up analogous to the experience of the hero in revisiting chosen tableaux, not necessarily in chronological order, but according to the logic of the dreams and psychic associations that permeate the whole movie.

The dream—creation motif, even if nothing new, is treated in an original way due to the lucid description of that relationship, and because of the switching that happens to the memory/fever equation. This latter is a mix en abyme, which is to say, that practice in hieratic science that consists of placing, within a coat-of-arms, another smaller version of the first one, and a third identical coat-of-arms that is smaller still, and so on. In this study of artistic creation oscillating between private life and psychoanalytic cinema, Fellini, in the guise of Guido, seems truly to refer to the phrase in Gide's _The Counterfeiters_: "I am very fond of the fact that, within a work of art, one can find the subject of that work again, transposed to the list of characters."

The human types in _Eight and a Half_ are not on a Pirandellian search for their author, but it is rather the latter who calls them, and is himself called. When reality is going nowhere, boring, or slowed down with fatigue, it is then that Guido/Fellini, always eager for the unforeseeable, looks around in search of an antidote to the fear of the vacuum, and ends up invaded by visual or inexplicable pretenses that trigger memory and, along with it, the people, events or places of childhood.

The "there" comes from Claudio's vision, the girl at the spring. In an overexposed photo — and so, for the whole movie, this will be the chromatic solution for the black and white "fear and memory" color — the young Claudio Cardinale, with his deep, hoarse voice, triggers the stream-of-consciousness, the flow of a man's consciousness, in teetering balance between the possible and the illusory. The post only exists in being rendered anew, and memory does not express itself as something always the same, something fixed away once and for all, and so Fellini's art of memory is the imaginary recreation of traces of the past. All of this, while igniting the joy of those who consider Fellini to be a great visionary outside the freedom of pre-packaged time, helps to confirm, if it were necessary, the false character of his cinema, expressed in the arbitrary invention of memories and of the past, among which live the true data of reality and the equally true ones of imagination: in _Eight and a Half_, memory enriches even more the artifice of his poetic imagination.

Guido's second dream episode comes after the love affair with Carla. The mother's gesticulations introduce the cemetery dream, where his father (once more played by Amilcare Necchi of _La Dolce Vita_) awaits him. The two are expecting the producer and Conochi — both figures incarnating for Fellini "same and reciprocal difference" — and the substitution of Luisa for the figure of his mother.
Conversely, the episode with the mind-readers, Maurice and Mayo, is one of voluntary memory stimulated by the gibberish “ASA, NISI, MASA”, which can be the word ‘animal’ (soul), that which is continually threatened in Guido’s mind by the difficulty of accepting reality for what it is. If the future, which is to say, the movie that is to be shot, is full of inner disquiet, a little peace can be found by the flight into childhood, the collective both, the women of the big house and the high beds, before the three words which serve to make the images slide in the direction of the present time.

The space-time inconsistencies, with the waddled, extremely white elements which obliterate the coordinates of metropolitan modernity and, above all, the flashback and flash forward, splendidly ‘unnecessary’, are touchstones that come close to Last Year at Marienbad (1961), but less cerebral, simpler and more Mediterranean. This is illustrated by the elements of the blocked film director’s private life as well as the regressive episode of Saraghina, subsequent to the second vision of the girl at the spring, and the useless encounter with the priest. Guido/Fellini knows very well – unlike the writers of the epiphanies of the nouveau roman Bourais and Bobbe-Girlet – that the characters’ prison is not spatial (the great hotel or the spa) but mental, interior and, having to decide that it is finally a good idea to do so with a little coup de théâtre, stature and moving. That is why both Guido and Fellini need Saraghina by now, the autobiographical is introjected in order to make clear how and why a Catholic education interacts with an interior monologue, with the impulses, the fascination with the Prohibited, Sin, Woman.

In this film-essay so full of poetry and bravura – an excellent example of that kind of ‘umbilical cinema’ so frequently attacked because of the propensity of certain directors to “vomit out everything all over themselves” – there are other important problems. Above all else, the question of grace, bound to that of happiness. When enveloped in steam, the cardinal reminds Guido: “Why should you be happy? That is not your business. Who told you that you come into the world to be happy?”; during the first conversation, Guido had explained: “The hero of my story had a Catholic upbringing, like everyone else for that matter, which gave him certain complexes, certain needs... no longer possible to suppress. A prince of the Church appears to him like a holder of a Truth which he can no longer accept even though it fascinates him. And so he seeks a comfort, help, maybe a stroke of lighting... “And if the ‘cinematographer’ is “too nonchalant about mixing sacred and profane love together”, the question of revelation and ritual leads the problem back to Guido the man, his weaknesses and his confusions, with which he has to live. After the night-time discussion with Conocchia, he wonders if his is not a crisis of inspiration? And what if it were not one that passes, my dear man? What if it were the final collapse of a huge liar who no longer has any flair or talent?”, concluding with ‘Updated’, a trivializing comment lifted straight from the comics.

The problem of desire is related with that of chaos, to which the girl at the spring wearily tries to provide a solution: “I have come for good and all. I want to create order, clean things up. I want to create order. I want to clean...”, maybe through love, while erotic love breaks the
The space-time continuum, like the world
of the unification of the
infinite and the finite, is
fundamentally complex.

In the realm of
existence, the
unfathomable
infinity of the
universe is
manifested.

The problem of
existence is
fundamentally
complex.

The problem of
existence is
fundamentally
complex.
roast chestnuts in summertime are perfectly plausible, and the golden buttons of our uniforms might suffice, or the candies that we stole from church. She lived in a little fortress on a high rock from the time of the great war, a kind of den that smelled of tar, rotting wood and fish. For two cents, she would let us see her rear, which entirely blocked out the heavens. For one cent more she moved it a little, and for four cents she turned face forward. What an immense belly! And under that hairy part, what was it, a cat? It is true, in my movies there is often the image of an abundantly formed woman, big, potent,... But Saraghina is an infantile representation of a woman, one of the many and varied expressions of the thousand ways in which a woman can personify herself. It is a woman rich in animal femininity, immense and impossible to seize; but at the same time nutritive, just as an adolescent, hungrying for life and sex, perceives her; an Italian adolescent obstructed and thwarted by priests, the church, family and a tainted upbringing; an adolescent who, seeking a woman, imagines and wants her to be ‘a big hunk of woman’. Like a poor man who, thinking about money, talks and raves, not about thousands of lire, but of millions, even billions.’ 

And there is no continuity between all these women of the world and those of Guido’s movie. Woman, as she is presented in the cinematic image, is gigantically enlarged, connected to the symbolism of the protagonist, who sees himself and his childish world in macroscopic dimensions. We are dealing with Fellini’s esthetics of memory in an invented past revisited (and not its photography). A dialectic of memory that, without special effects, mixes items from personal life with those about the making of the movie, the harem episode, the finale. Let us look briefly at them in this running order.

At the spa, because he is physically a bit run down, Guido has nightmares about the movie, which does not satisfy him. He hides, he flies. This flight is impossible in reality, as in the opening dream, he is tied to a metal structure, which may be a symbol of the spacecraft set. And then, while taking the waters, not being able to avoid seeing the girl at the spring, he begins to experience real and evanescent phenomena, which come and spontaneously impede themselves, as in an alternated montage.

Mezzabotta is the first person in real life to call him ‘old Soap opera’. He does not talk to him about movies, but about his new love situation, in which he does not feel ridiculous even though he knows people are saying catty things about Guido being with him because of his money. Guido, unfortunately, does not feel this kind of indifference, does not want to be seen with Carla, and, when Luisa throws his relationship with ‘that cow’ in his face, he claims, without convincing her, that he put an end to that episode years ago.
roast chestnuts in summertime are perfectly plausible), and the golden buttons of our uniforms might suffice, or the candles that we stole from church. She lived in a little fortress on a high rock from the time of the great war, a kind of den that smelled of tar, rotten wood and fish. For two cents, she would let us see her rear, which entirely blocked out the heavens. For one cent more she moved it a little, and for four cents a bit forward. What an immense belly! And under that hairy port, what was it, a cat? It is true, in my movies there is often the image of an abundantly formed woman, big, potent... But Saraghina is an infantile representation of a woman, one of the many and varied expressions of the thousand ways in which a woman can personify herself. It is a woman rich in animal femininity, immense and impossible to seize, but at the same time nutritive, just as an adolescent, hungering for life and sex, perceives her; an Italian adolescent obstructed and thwarted by priests, the church, family and a failed upbringing; an adolescent who, seeking a woman, imagines and wants her to be 'a big hunk of woman', like a poor man who, thinking about money, talks and raves, not about thousands of lire, but of millions, even billions."

And there is no continuity between all these women of the world and that of Guido's movie. Woman, as she is presented in the cinematic image, is gigantically enlarged, connected to the symbolism of the protagonist, who seems himself and his childish world in macroscopic dimensions. We are dealing with Fellini's esthetics of memory in an invented past revisited (and not its photocopy). A dialectic of memory that without special effects, mixes items from personal life with those about the making of the movie, the harem episode, the finale. Let us look briefly at them in this running order.

At the spa, because he is physically a bit run down, Guido has nightmares about the movie, which does not satisfy him. He hides, he tells his wife that all is impossible in reality, as in the opening dream, he is tied to a metal structure, which may be a symbol of the spacecraft set. And then, while taking the waters, not being able to avoid seeing the girl at the spring, he begins to experience real and evanescent phenomena, which come and spontaneously impose themselves, as in an alternated montage.

Mezzacotta is the first person in real life to call him 'old Saporone'. He does not talk to him about movies, but about his new love situation, in which he does not feel ridiculous even though he knows people are saying catty things about Gloria being with him because of his money. Guido, unfortunately, does not feel this kind of indifference, does not want to be seen with Carla, and, when Luisa throws his relationship with 'that cow' in his face, he claims, without convincing her, that he put an end to that episode years ago.

With regard to his private life, the figure of Maurice takes on great importance, a character who is the opposite of Dauwier, the only one to really read his soul and thus be able to set the production of the movie in motion.

Dauwier, in turn, displays Fellini's antithesis between reason and feeling, and remarks on the heavy impediments of the culture. Culture is not the place of the manifestation of naturalness, passion, art. Throughout the whole movie, this French 'oracle' warns Guido about the non-essentials of the script, thus offering Fellini a formidable critical and self-critical escape hatch - a total and ferocious shield against the possible limitations of Eight and a Half and an ideal final commentary on Fellini's opus amnis, but also capable of really pushing Guido towards the completely fascinating border with the indefinite and the magical.

Dauwier begins right at the heart of the matter, as if, by questioning the script, he wanted to block the girl's action: "Look, even at a first reading, it is obvious that the lack of a problematic idea or, if you will, a philosophical premise, turns the movie into a succession of absolutely gratuitous episodes... even if they could be amusing to the degree that they are realistically ambiguous. One asks oneself, what are the authors really after? Are they trying to make us think? Do they want to scare us? From the very start, the project reveals its poverty of poetic inspiration... Excuse me, but this could be the most pitiful demonstration of the fact that the cinema is fifty years hopelessly behind all the other arts. Then there is the narrative, which is not even up to the level of an avant-garde movie, while having all the deficiencies of the kind."

A little later, almost in a kind of juncture between the beginning and the arrival of Carla at the station: "And the wilful apperations of this girl at the spring, what are they supposed to mean? An offer of purity, of warmth to the hero? Or of all the symbols with which the movie abounds, this one is the worst." And then, in commenting on the Saraghina episode: "What does this mean? This is a character from the memories of his childhood! It has nothing to do with a true critical conscience. No. If you really want to mount a polemical attack on the Catholic conscience in Italy, well then, my dear friend, in that case, believe me, the first thing absolutely required is a much higher cultural level, as well as inexorable logic and lucidity. Excuse me, but... your tender ignorance is entirely negative. Your little memories bathed in nostalgia, your offensive and fundamentally emotional evocations are the actions of an accomplice... The Catholic conscience... but just think for a moment of what Suetonius was during the time of the Caesars! No, you begin with an ambition to denounce, and end up aiding and abetting like an accomplice! Don't you see all the confusion, the ambiguity...?"
this movie, I will ruin you." It is a caustic representation of those whom Fellini fought all his life in order for his movie titles and endings not to be changed and, in the final analysis, to defend tooth and nail his dignity and identity as an artist. Certainly the part of the producer Pace, played by Guido Alberti, does not speak like the 'legendary' Peppino Amato, who once said apropos of La Dolce Vita that "there is sporadic interest in the arrival of this movie", or who maintained that, with the title Viva Venezia, the movie would remain a 'milestone' in cinematic history.

It is Daumier again who thinks he can sum it all up with the following words: "You have done very well. Believe me, this is a great day for you. Decisions are hard to make, I know, but we intellectuals – I say that because I consider you to be one – have the duty to remain lucid to the end. There are already so many superfluous things in the world, one ought not to add more disorder to disorder. In the final analysis, losing money is part of a producer's job. My compliments, there was nothing else that could have been done, and he has got what he deserves for having gone so capriciously into such a frivolous venture. No, believe me, do not be nostalgic or remorseful. It is better to destroy than create when one does not create those few necessary things. And then too, is there anything so pure and righteous in the world that it has the right to live? A wrong movie for him is just an economic matter, but for you, at the point where you are now, it could be the end. Better to let everything collapse and stew salt as the ancients did to purify the battlefields. All we really need is a little hygiene, cleaning up, disinfectant. We are drowning in words, images, sounds that have no reason to exist, which come out of a vacuum and return to a vacuum. All one can ask of an artist truly worthy of the name is this one loyal act: train himself to silence. Do you remember Mallarme's praise of the blank page? [...] If you cannot have everything, nothing is true perfection. Forgive me for this excess of quotations, but we critics do what we can. Our true mission is to sweep away the thousands of abortions that everyday obscenely try to be born. And what you want is nothing less than to leave
A caustic representation of a life in order for his movie to be finished and, in the final analysis, to destroy his dignity and identity as the producer Pasci, played by the ‘legendary’ Peppino Via Veneto, the movie would be a remake of the history.

A critic can sum it all up in words very well. Believe me, such words are hard to write, I can add that because I consider it rather difficult to the end of this particular thing in the world, or to disorder in the final result of a producer's job. My excuse was that could have been done, and he has got what he deserves for having gone so capriciously into such a frivolous venture. No, believe me, we do not have the luxury of a mere producer in a movie. It is better to die than to remain if one does not create those few necessary things. And then, too, is there anything so pure and righteous in the world that it has the right to live? A wrong movie for him is just an economic matter, but for you, at the point where you are now, it would be the end. Better to let everything collapse and then be the end. We really need a little hygiene, cleaning up.

dis官兵. We are drowning in words, images, sounds that have no reason to exist, which come out of a vacuum and return to a vacuum. All one can ask of an artist truly worthy of the name is this one laudable act: train himself to silence. Do you remember Mallarmé's praise of the blank page? [...] If you cannot have everything, nothing is true perfection. Forgive me for this excess of quotations, but we critics do what we can. Our true mission is to sweep away the thousands of abortions that everyday obscenely try to be born. And what you want is nothing less than to leave...

Behind an entire movie like a cripple leaves his deformed footprint behind him. What monstrous presumption to imagine that others would profit from the squalid catalogue of your errors. And why does it matter to you to sew together the tatters of your life, your various memories or the faces of people whom you were never capable of loving?"

During this eulogy of silence, which we will come across again in The Voice of the Moon, the director and Ouamer are once again in a car, in the same location where the opening scene occurred. No, however, reality no longer intrudes on the dream, but just the opposite, as the wind of the unforeseeable has begun to blow again, causing the abandonment of reason in favor of Maurice, the personification of show business, of pretence, the voice of the imaginary.

Other phases of the narrative also see the fusion of existential segments with those relating to work: the phone call to the wife is placed between the French actress and the production rooms; the visit to Carlo, who is sick, is shoved into the space between the creation of the figure of the girl at the spring and the distraction caused by the cardinal’s visit; not to mention the steam baths into which the prelate’s visit is immersed in anticipation of the creative mist that embroils Guido on the visit to the set.

The height of the confusion and panic comes with the press conference, a necessary step in the overcoming of the cinematic and real dreams contained in the harem episode, the personal place of Guido the man, just as the set will be his artistic place. In effect the two narrative locations are one and the same, the place where all the women of his lives are gathered in the harem without jealousy or lies so that his desire for Woman can finally be realized. Before Women and Characters can unite in a complete festive circle, the characters will first have to go through a screen test. Here cinema demands his attention, requires clear ideas and no more embarrassing and metaphorical playing around, analogous to what it will demand at the press conference where the two worlds of the director reach the deepest pit of negativity, total defeat.

But it is the world of feelings which creates a crisis for that
man of the cinema. In fact, no sooner does Guido, freed from a sense of guilt, feel a new sensation that makes him tremble with happiness than the Cinema, as a character within the movie, which has up to then been frozen by the paralysis of insincere feelings, spreads its imaginative wings and, with a touch of Maurice's magic baton, without taking or owning— which is to say, with all the blessed bag of tricks and deceptions of the director Fellini—gets down to work.

The table-making effect of those remembered is white—white clothes, veils, hair and white surroundings—at the moment when they are "guilted" with the movie people. Guido's ghosts crowd around his collaborator in a final regenerating bath after the purifying immersion (holy water, infants' baths, both in the harem with hat on head) while the angels of the circus, the clowns, give the musical rhythm and the melancholy atmosphere necessary to spur Fellini's self-awareness towards its epilogue. Here the whisper of the harem has become the megaphone and the clown with the black director's hat can set up the final celebration of life, the last turn on the merry-go-round. Afterwards, the movie might even truly begin.

For us, meanwhile, eight and a half remains an intangible research, a psychoanalytic journey in which the couch is replaced by the trolley, and mounted on it a movie camera that 'speaks' sotto voce, fluttering in the entrancing wind. An experiment in deciphering the individual and his feelings, beyond which, however, there lies a mysterious territory which one cannot clarify either in life or in the cinema. And this problematic aspect of Eight and a Half refers one to something behind it, which refers to another Eight and a Half, and another still. There remains the intangible itinerary on three levels, the projected film, the existence of the director/individual, and the ranks of the phantomlike characters in his imaginary universe. It is a little as if, parallel to Jung, Guido Anselmi, alias Federico Fellini, were in himself a kind of 'collective imagination,' a fantasy of the singular, secretly hidden in the intimacy of his inner but intolerant eye under that magic cap given him by the gods of the seventh art which is the cinema.

Nearly ten years had passed since Giulietta Masina had last worked with her husband. The imprinting of the legendary Gelsomina, her strong characterization, the wide-open eyes and the clownish expression on her face, which had merged in the "buffoonery" of Cabiria, had really left their mark. The ten-year break, a very long period for the actress, had only partially succeeded in making the public forget the expression and the humanity which had decreed her international success. Ten years before finally being able to recount a different reality, almost as if Fellini, too, had wanted to dig into the universe of his "unfamiliar woman in order to render it in dream images probably referring to a delicate phase of their lives.

Not that there was a lack of other projects: before Juliet and her spirits had delineated themselves, Fellini had thought of having his wife act the role of a nun (after the discovery of an ancient diary in the convent of La Strada), a famous medium (Eileen Garrett, a personal acquaintance), a fortune-teller and other characters. All of these subjects were never realized, partly because the director feared being accused of mysticism and magic, but perhaps mostly because they were roles that may have been unsuitable for Masina's personality. All of them, however, ideas dispersed into underground rival projects, as often happens with Fellini, only to reappear in the construction of the interpretation.

Juliet of the Spirits (1965) "was born of Giulietta and for Giulietta. It had a long, long gestation that went back to the time of La Strada. I wanted to do another movie with Giulietta, but above all I had the feeling that my desire to use cinema as an instrument to penetrate certain manifestations of reality could find its best guide in Giulietta."

His experience of Jung's theories by way of long conversations with Ernest Bernhard not only deepened Fellini's ideas about the importance and meaning of dreams, but stimulated his interest in magic and the occult, convincing him that there existed a 'secret of the unknown', and fascinating him with the 'promise of the arcane', the contact with dimensions that go beyond the senses.

The discovery of Jung also helped him have more confidence in intuition and to better understand its importance. His visit to the Room of the Smalls Memories in Switzerland enlightens him with regard to the deep influence of dreams on the understanding of oneself. "It was as if Jung had written specifically for me [...]. I managed to apply what I found there to my way of being and to shake off the sense of inferiority or guilt that had remained since the days of my childhood, the recriminations of my parents and teachers, the mockery of the other kids for whom being different meant being inferior. To follow Jung is like going through a door already opened, that of 'the other' black and white reality of Eight and a Half. That reading taught him that mystery can be assimilated perfectly well by reason, and suggested a point of contact between the real and the imaginary, like the inner life of Juliet of the Spirits, torn between dream-like visions and hard, depressing reality. Such a balance requires the conservation of that sensory perception within which every individual's life is wrapped and which, if it is suppressed or not acknowledged, tips the balance of the unconscious towards the prevalence of fantasies and, as Jung once again teaches, of ghosts."
Juliet's life is really quite unstable. We encounter her, a bourgeois woman on the threshold of middle-age, as she is preparing a candle-lit dinner to celebrate her fiftieth wedding anniversary. Giorgio, her brilliant, worldly husband (very much like Mezzabotta in Eight and a Half), appears in the company of many friends. Vol, the lawyer; the sculptress and medium, Giusa, who subjects Juliet to her experiments.

During a seance, Iris is evicted and interrupted by Olaf, an evil spirit who speaks to Juliet, telling her that she is a sibyl and no one has to tell. Juliet takes this with emotion, while a telephone call with no one on the line interrupts the proceedings.

The next day, as soon as Giorgio leaves, Juliet believes she sees a monster emerging from the fountain. In reality, it is just the gardener On the beach with her nieces, she describes her childhood visions to a doctor friend. She holds her eyes and realizes she is seeing Iris. In reality, it is Suzy, her distant neighbor who lives in the next village. Juliet dozes off and sees an old man pulling on a rope which he passes to her. She also pulls and, from the sea, emerges a raft with several dead horses, a crocodile ambushing laden with obscene figurines, and a second with fantastic ones. On the way home, Juliet meets the sisters Adele and Sylvia with their beautiful mother, all three sophisticated, grasping, all too humanly. Guising, they make excursions against Giorgio, but Juliet apparently takes no notice of what they say. Before they go off, the mother seriously warns Juliet to take more care of herself.

When her husband comes home, Juliet wants to tell him about her dream adventure, but Giorgio falls asleep and calls out the name of Giorgio, his doctor. Juliet is worried and, the next morning, asks for an explanation, but without results.

Vol invites her to a meeting with Bismarck, the man-woman. In the big hotel where the meeting is being held, Juliet thinks she sees a wedding feast, and then again when she is ushered into the room for a private audience with the bride: once more she sees Iris transformed into Fanny, the immoral ballerina who eloped with her grandfather years ago. In the car, Juliet tells her friends about that flight and how, in her imagination, she saw her grandfather fly off in the old circus airplane followed by the family.

At home in the evening, Juliet encounters Jovis, a Spanish friend of Giorgio's who is preparing the 'abominable' drink that Bismarck had foreseen. While Juliet listens to the conversation, attracted by the poetic nature of their guest, Giorgio points the telescope towards Suzy's house, whose orgiastic parties have provoked innumerable protests. In bed, Juliet tries once again to speak to her husband and, late that night, discovers him on the telephone to his lover.

More and more worried, she takes Adele's advice, and goes to the Lina detective agency. While at the home of her sculptress friend, she remembers a scene from her childhood. Convinced that God was hiding behind the trap-door on the ceiling of the room, she writes a postcard with her friend Laura that whoever saw him first had to tell the other who he was like. During a play, Juliet, playing the role of...
a little girl, is tied to a grotto as a martyr, and is being elevated to
to heaven. She is not about to reach the trap-door while her grandfather
interrupts the show and brings her back down in the name of reason,
ranting against all forms of mystification and mysticism.

On the pretext of bringing her cat back, Juliet manages to make
friends with Susy, who ostensibly gives her a tour of the villa, and
introduces Juliet to her strange, ambiguous guest. A bicycle ride
through the pine wood seals the women's friendship. But Juliet runs
away when Susy invites her to be lifted in a basket to a tree house,
where two boys are waiting to 'entertain' them.

Meanwhile, the detective's report on Giorgio is ready, and when she
is shown the film of his betrayal, timid Juliet's reaction is to go to the
party being held at her new friend's house. There, Juliet feels ill at ease
and a little afraid of the guests, particularly Susy's Middle Eastern lover
and his very handsome son who, after a voyeuristic visit to surprise the
couples making love, waits for Juliet in order to spend the night with
her. Attracted by the boy's sensuality, Juliet is about to give in when,
looking up, she sees in the mirror over the bed the martyr saint
admonishing her, and she rushes off home.

Juliet gives a garden party for her and Giorgio's many friends,
including an American psychotherapist. But the hostess is reluctant to
give Giorgio's many friends, because she is in the throes of a new and more
disturbing vision: the house is invaded by spirits. And she sees other
ghosts when she goes down to the garden (the nuns, the martyrs, Iris
and others). Giorgio goes off and the psychotherapist takes Juliet aside
to make her own opinion known: unconsciously, she wants a definitive
break with her faithless husband.

Juliet finally finds the strength to confront her rival, and goes to

Two opposing female characters square up to each other: the striving and slightly lascivious Susy (Sandra Milo) and the calm, passive
wife, Juliet (Giulietta Masina)
Gabriella's house, ready to make a big scene. After a long wait, a telephone call makes her realize that Giorgio is now lost to her. At home, Giorgio is pacing his bags and mutters excuses while Juliet stands in front of the television set where the close-up face of a clown looks at her reminiscent.

Now Juliet is alone. Spirits and real people invade every corner of the house: in the living room, in front of a wardrobe door where God may be hiding, her mother appears, prohibiting Juliet from opening it. But this time, Juliet refuses to obey, saying that she is now no longer afraid. All the ghosts and spirits, in their magical world, in her beloved mother's immediate family. Opening the wardrobe door, Juliet sees herself as the little martyr in the childhood photo, and as her grandmother and Fanny arrive on the scene. The spirits return and Giorgio, in turn, sets off towards the pine wood, and a friendly voice murmurs that perhaps it can be of use to her.

The subject of matrimony is the pretext for Juliet of the Spirits, a story composed of various other stories, probably including that of the Fellinis. Juliet "exemplifies one kind of Italian woman who, due to her upbringing and what she has been told of the state of matrimony, believes that marriage automatically brings happiness. Each time she discovers it is not true, she does not understand or know how to face the situation."

In La Strada, Gelsomina nullifies herself in Zampanò, even though she is far superior to him. But Juliet, faced with a similar insensitivity in Giorgio — the vacuous second lead in the life of a couple in crisis — will learn through hard knocks not to defend him all the time, and, in time, she will escape from under that repressive education which has turned her into an insipid woman, an unhappy prisoner. In short, a rich, modern Gelsomina, she allows herself to be abandoned, only to begin living a real life again.

"In my movies I have often felt the need to represent the degeneration, the caricature of a marital relationship. It is problematic, the most problematic of all. It is profoundly individual. You cannot regulate it with collective norms imposed from the outside by the power of taboos. It ought to be forbidden to sit back in a marriage. Many of us stretch out passively on the laws of nature deformed by current usage and let ourselves be sucked out and swallowed by matrimony, neglecting its highest aim, the only one: the attempt to form a true union. " Giorgio and his wife only achieve the appearance of a true union, a little like Guido and Luisa in Eight and a Half. The reference is not an accidental one, because in Juliet of the Spirits one gets the impression that Fellini wanted to complete the portrait of a marital relationship that had only been sketched out in the preceding movie, where Guido-Fellini was too distracted by his own crisis of inspiration to pay any real attention to Luisa's anguish.

Within the story of the protagonist, the simple autobiographical reflection of the fulfillment of a true marital union is loaded with psychoanalytical meanings, touching upon communication, "a man's difficulty in speaking of woman", but of the contrary as well. As if, once having overcome the existential crisis to a large degree, Fellini felt the impelling need to expose the question of the couple's alienation, even while knowing that he had not the necessary clarity or honesty to do so. Here he aims, in words, at the intention of "giving woman back her true independence, her unsurpassable and inalienable dignity."

It is a first goal, a prophetic vision of the new feminine condition at a time when one scarcely heard the word feminism pronounced, and coming furthermore from the creator of La Dolce Vita, the man who exalted Anita Ekberg. This vision, however, was not shared by Giulietta Masina who, perhaps for the first time, opposed her husband's with a will of iron on several counts. First of all, on aesthetic grounds, because she wanted to look more attractive in the movie, but mostly because of the content. "Giulietta and I were in disagreement: each of us interpreted the future of the character in a different way. Because of my respect for her ability to delineate character, I asked for her advice. But from the moment her husband leaves her, our ideas were completely different. I stubbornly defended my position. But, with the passing of time, came to understand that she was right. [...] In her opinion, Juliet was not on the point of finding herself, but of losing herself. This was because, as usual, Fellini the clay-rayon was too far ahead of the times. During that time, an abandoned woman with her upbringing would have actually been a woman destroyed. Incomprehensible, however, is the heroine's flight into her very private world of memories. Under the influence of Bernhard and Jung — the older brother — Fellini puts the dreamer front stage, together with a whole series of symbols connected with them. Naturally, the director cannot but begin with the world of childhood: like children, Juliet has "a happy, emotional, dreamy relationship with reality: Everything is fantastic [...] a gigantic spectacle, gratuitous and marvelous, a kind of boundless, breathing amoeba where everything lives, subject and object, confused in a single unstoppable flow, visionary yet unaware, fascinatory yet terrifying, from which the watershed, the boundary of consciousness, has not yet emerged." For Fellini, those infantile visions had continued into maturity, they would probably swallow up one's entire capacity to think and act. "The important thing would be to rediscover, on the conscious level, that visionary faculty, just because it is one of the possibilities of human nature and there is no reason to deprive oneself of it."

In the light of this information, one can give a better focus on Juliet's character, which is that of a woman who has to learn to walk alone, even while experiencing situations that put her in a disadvantaged position with regard to any sort...
Sandra Mila, who in Juliet of the Spreads also plays the part of the frivolous fancy, enliches the gallery of spilts which haunt Juliet.
of provocations, ready to bow her head right up to the threshold of middle age, when she is conceded that which was denied to Gelosima and Cibria: assistance from that particular power of her visions, not a repressed nebula, but assimilated into her personality as a balancing element. Having a simple nature, Juliet is prey to phenomena which, in a more structured personality, would have little influence, or at least be kept under control. Instead, she allows herself to be contaminated, to be influenced by that magical world inhabited by subhuman beings, petulant spirits, which she perhaps faces with less anxiety than she does the humans around her: hypocrisies like Giorgio, the detectives, her sisters or women friends, swindlers like the lawyer, the sculptress, Bishma and his court, and the most repressive and regressive of all, her very beautiful mother, the model of a woman and, at the same time, of a movie star (played by the superbly elegant and charming Caterina Boratto).

The magical landscape that opens up before this ‘Alice in Spirit Land’, with its intense colors (Fellini’s first color movie), is an intimate part of herself, which is why Juliet forms an immediate familiarity with sinful Susy, who is so apparently different from her, and slips pleasantly into the ambience of her court of miracles, the very antithesis of the beautiful people who frequent her own villa at Fregene.

The spirit world that endows the foundations of the subconscious deeply affect Juliet’s life, even if they seem, at first, to escape from ordinary sensory perception. Far too much of a contrast to real life, but gradually more absorbing, little...
by little Juliet accepts them as representing 'another' reality that is gradually less frightening. At bottom, Susy's villa, the witch's house of fairy tales, belongs to all climes and epochs. "Our dreams and nightmares are the same ones that people had three thousand years ago. The same basic fears that enjoy living in our homes were experienced by them in their caves." With regard to the myriad characters and visions of her inner conflict, Juliet's courageous act consists of breaking that circle of fear and reliving the infantile role of the holy martyr to which her life has conformed by enduring her husband's lies, the superciliousness of her sisters, the repressions – including the aesthetic one – of her mother.

Furthermore, Juliet settles accounts with the men in her subconscious who are – unlike the single one in her life – many: tempters, Middle Eastern satraps, bowling headmasters, barbarians, monsters. Her very human grandfather gets off scot-free, even though he abandoned her for the dancer Fanny. The reality of Juliet's soul finally emerges with the vision of the play, that is to say, when she manages to make contact with her childhood (the door behind which is God): an ingenious dream to re-create, by recognizing it, her new personal equilibrium and a coming-to-terms with the complex reality of her conscious existence, a long journey which gives her the strength to face life.

To return to a famous old quotation, one could really affirm, if it were still required, the ambivalent character of Fellini's personality: if the director was both Gelsomina and Zampano, this time he really is Juliet in the deepest sense of the words: "Juliette c'est moi".

As we have said, Juliet of the Spirits is also his first feature movie in color. Color as an expressive element in a movie where the protagonists are dreams, and inner life constituted no small challenge considering that "the story, its structure, its feeling, are determined and come to life exclusively through the colors, and it is therefore only the colors that can relate it, interpret it, express it." And they are the colors of memory and of visions "concept, feeling, as in truly great painting... Those who dream may see a red meadow, a green horse, a yellow sky, and these are not absurdities. They are images saturated with the feelings that inspired them." From now on, Fellini will give them his utmost attention and Casanova will be the test of his personal theory about colors.

In Juliet of the Spirits, Fellini takes a vaguely impressionistic...
representing 'another' reality. At bottom, Susy's villa, the city to all climes and epochs. We are the same that people with the same basic fears that experienced by them in their daily characters and visions of Jesus Christ's life, the holy man by enduring her to her sisters, the repressions - her mother's heart - with the men in her life - the images, bowling alley. Her very human, even though he abandoned reality of Juliet's soul finally that is to say, when she her childhood and the door she turned to re-create, by the equilibrium and a coming-
to-terms with the complex reality of her conscious existence, a long journey which gives her the strength to face life.

To return to the famous old quotation, one could really affirm, if we were still required, the ambivalent character of Fellini's personality: if the director was both Gelso and Zampano, this time he really is Juliet in the deepest sense of the word: "Galatea est mora".

As we have said, Juliet of the Spirits is also his first feature movie in color. Color as an expressive element in a movie where the protagonists are dreams, and inner life constituted no small challenge considering that "the story, its structure, its feeling, are determined and come to life exclusively through the colors, and it is therefore only the colors that can relate it, interpret it, express it." And they are the colors of memory and of visions -"concept, feeling, as in true great painting... those who dream may see a red meadow, a green horse, a yellow sky, and these are not absurdities. They are images saturated with the feelings that inspired them." From row on, Fellini will give them his utmost attention and Casanova will be the text of his personal theory about colors.

In Juliet of the Spirits, Fellini takes a vaguely impressionistic direction: the eye, a selective organ, brings out the things that strike him most in relationship to the emotional and cultural burden of the spectator, but who must come to terms with the lens that records "what the light, so variable in its movement, suggests to him from moment to moment!

Trying to accommodate everything within a "result that interprets, by means of faithfully expressing them, his idea, feeling and meaning, his reconstruction of color without the whole being spoiled, betrayed by the imponderables of lighting, shooting and printing." To visualize thoughts, create the magic of dreams where everything monstrous takes on plastic beauty was a problem that could have made the expressionism of old black and white despair. But no, because Fellini, very modern, grants color the recognition of its power, the capacity to enrich his "living pictures" and give them a new expressive dimension. In other words, he paints the images with the colors he carries within himself.

The movie subsequent to Juliet of the Spirits was to be Il Viaggio di G. Mastorna. Fellini recounts: "My first idea came during a plane journey in 1964, as we were landing. It was winter in New York, and I had a sudden vision of us crashing. Fortunately for the cinema, that vision did not come true, but it transformed itself into the reflection of another vision, that is to say, the theme of Mastorna, which Fellini proposed in 1965 to De Laurentiis. The following year, the director fell ill, perhaps because "I was afraid of doing that movie, or did not feel I was up to it." The set had been built, the people hired, the money had been spent, but I did not feel like going ahead with it. I was suffering from acute neurothemia aggravated not only by the need I felt to escape everything I had done up until then, but also by the usual debilitating arguments with the producer. I even thought the movie was killing me, because it did not want to be made. However, that may be, I found myself in a hospital room at the beginning of 1967, convinced that I was terminally ill."

Happily recovered from the illness (the argument with De Laurentiis not entirely resolved), Fellini has a new producer, Alberto Grimaldi, a new scriptwriter, Bernardino Zapponi, and a new office in the auspicious Via della Fortuna in Rome. All those are positive promotional signals for a proposal by Raymond Eiger to make a movie of Edgar Allan Poe's The Tell-Tale Heart as one episode of three for a movie entitled "Three master directors for the master of the shiver". Fellini does not give a definitive reply. He waits for more signals, and in reality he is giving the project a lot of thought, sucking on it like a sweet to draw the last drop of taste out of it and then let it sink into his world of visions.

Poe is not an author easy to translate into images, his dense style being constructed on a philosophy of composition with precise and deceiving rhythms. For Zapponi "to violate that intimacy is an impious as well as difficult proposal. There is something shameless about disposing those mists, extracting the episodes, the characters, giving them their independence. In the light of the sun, those characters turn to dust, the reflectors of the cinema put the shadows to flight."
Even a dreamy and mercurial director like Fellini, well disposed to extra-sensory magic and fascinated by the mysterious, could find himself in trouble faced with the disturbing atmosphere of Poe, unless he managed to produce the same neuroses, even, perhaps, without actually working with the text itself. In fact, unconvincing by the choice imposed by the French producers, Fellini tries to find an alternative story, and commissions the 'historical' secretary Liliana Bettì, to make brief summaries for him. Fellini would like to use the story L'Appuntamento, but it is too hard to handle (he will take up the idea again for the movie Venezia), and he turns to L'Angelo Bizzarro. Finally, his imagination is captured by the clean, surreal demon of Never Bet the Devil Your Head. Not that he is entirely convinced by that “old limping man with the appearance of a venerable gentleman, as clean as his immaculate collar with a black apron and hair parted like a maiden’s.” But giving the devil the innocent appearance of a maiden, according to the mad law of contrasts, overturns the situation: “Is the devil ugly and evil? Let us make him attractive and innocent. He shall be a young boy. Better yet, a young girl!” — in short, a familiar tempter, like the baby Cupid of Dr. Antonio or the tiny voice that offers help at the end of Juliet of the Spirits.

Probably due partly to the photo of the writer that Fellini keeps in his wallet, he galvanizes himself and accepts the commission. The advance payment and the chance of putting Mastorna to one side seem to have given him enough enthusiasm to begin. Except that, after signing the contract, the project, as usual, loses motivation due to a hint of indisposition and an associated rejection crisis. He wants to do a different story, proposes Zapponi’s L’Aurata (but the rights for it have already been sold) or a different Poe, The Premature Burial, to be located in the Castelli Romani. This idea is rejected by the producers, so that there is nothing left for him to do but hedge his bets on the ‘devil’ movie.

All he has prepared is “that ending, created with all the coldness of the great clowns”, but there are the remaining 25 minutes of the movie to be thought out, the most interesting of the three episodes to be released in 1968 with the title The Spirits of the Dead (the other two entrusted, by a process of elimination, to Roger Vadim’s Metzengerstein and Louis Malle’s William Wilson).

And so begin long nights of cruising in the car with the scriptwriter, primarily in the Castelli area, full of mysterious ruins that are an antithesis to the pleasure trips outside town and the meals in numberless trattorias that display effigies of chefs offering inviting plates of fettuccine (figures which, in the movie, will suddenly leap out of the darkness
as anguished, disregarded signs of danger for the hero. With the problem of the location resolved, there remains the site where the hero is to die (it will be the broken bridge at Aricia), but above all the selection of the leading actor.

Peter O'Toole would appear to be the perfect choice for the Shakespearean actor in his decline who comes to Italy to film the first 'Catholic Western'. After the first enthusiastic contact, however, O'Toole has second thoughts, probably recognizing himself too well in the inscrutable and drunken Toby Dammit. Afraid of losing the public's favor, he declines, thus becoming perhaps the only famous actor ever to reject a part with Fellini.

After considering Richard Burton and Marlon Brando, the choice finally falls on Terence Stamp, rebaptized as Terenzio -Franceschelli- (literally 'postage stamp' in Italian), an actor sufficiently distraught and hallucinated to accept the challenge of an impossible wager. Terence Stamp, Fellini writes, arrived in Rome and, at first sight, I liked him for his boyish modesty. He was subjected to a long trial of make-up with Pierino Tosi, in an attempt to make him look as much as possible like Edgar Allan Poe, with imploring, frightened eyebrows. Then Pierino invented for him that black velvet jacket with violet trimmings and a violet foulard. The result is a Romantic, anguished hero, altogether similar to the timeless 'Edgaro' - as Fellini familiarly referred to the writer - for whom he nevertheless had such great admiration and respect as to impose upon himself a kind of detachment with regard to another artist's creative work whose primogeniture he recognizes, as he also did in the Satyricon and, more subtly, in Casanova.

Toby Dammit, an unemployed English actor and an alcoholic, is signed up to shoot an Italian Western financed by Catholic priests. He arrives in Rome and, while stuck in a nightmare traffic jam, he is approached by a gypsy who wants to read his hand through the car window. But, at the sight of his palm, she flies into alarm. Toby sees a little blonde girl, who invites him to play with her by throwing him a ball. During a television interview, the actor replies laughingly to the reporters' stupid questions, stating that he believes in the devil who is a little girl...

During a social evening at an eccentric night club, a Lupa d'oro award is presented to a blind old comedian. When Toby's turn comes, he recites the passage from Macbeth, "Life is a tale told by an idiot/ Full of sound and fury/ Signifying nothing" and, disgusted by the human fauna applauding him, he drives off in a rage in the flaming red Ferrari the producers have given him.

director like Fellini, well accustomed to the trouble faced with the talent he managed to produce, without actually working convinced by the choice the 'historical' secretaries, stories for him, Fellini would pick up, but it is too hard to regain for the movie Veneciaz, finally, his imagination is mon of Never Bet the Devil convinced by that "old occasion of a venerable gentleman, with a black apron and a white beard" that the devil the idea is rejected by the producers, so that there is nothing left for him to do but hedge his bets on the 'devil' movie.

All he has prepared is "that ending, created with all the coldness of the great directors", but there are the remaining 25 minutes of the movie to be thought out, the most interesting of the three episodes to be released in 1968 with the title The Spirits of the Dead (the other two, entrusted by a process of elimination, to Roger Vadim's Metzenbergelstein and Louis Malle's William Wilson).

And so begin long nights of cruising in the car with the scriptwriter, primarily in the Castelli area, full of mysterious ruins that are an antithesis to the pleasure trips outside town and the meals in numbers that display effigies of chefs offering inviting plates of fetuccine (figures which, in the movie, will suddenly leap out of the darkness
This despairing man's tragic destiny frightens the gypsy who reads his palm.

His own father, Spagos (Salvo Randone), senses Toby Bennett's inner intensity, and forebodings about his desperate fate when he meets him at the airport.
Driving aimlessly, he arrives at the Castelli Romani where, in the darkness, the car headlights illuminate the advertising cut-outs outside the restaurants, a flock of sheep, night workers and several closed streets, like the hallucinatory course of his disrupted mind. He finally finds himself at a collapsed bridge, where the little girl reappears and invites him to play again. Tidy accepts and launches the car at full speed in order to leap the gap in the bridge. He succeeds, but his head is cut off by a cable stretched in mid-air. The ball bounces over to where the head is lying: the devil-child has won the bet.

In 1969, when all Italian society is being rocked by youthfull dissident, Fellini shoots A Director's Notebook and the Satyricon, works which, at first glance, appear to be entirely removed from the new demands for change. The former, made for television, represents a pause for meditation, a director's interval of indissoluble interest, not so much because it offers revelations of surprises it is to be more explanations of what has been, but because it is a vision, with commentary on projects, ideas, fragments which the director, always retrocedent about these things, has in his sights on the set of his imagination.

The part dedicated to Il Viaggio di G. Mastorna is almost as touching as the text published in 1964. A Utopian movie, a ghastly frame, a journey and a character constantly pondered, periodically taken up anew, feared, hated and never made, but it is nice to think that all his work constitutes the dream journey of Fellini-Mastorna. In time, it was transformed into an icon of cult movies for which re-edition and a revisiting of his little-troupe constitutes a fine monument to the dream of a dream, to Fellini's Unfinished.

And speaking of dreams, it is well to remember that along the route from neo-realist to the fantastic, which is to say from La Dolce Vita to Eight and a Half, there is to be found the Book of Dreams, which Fellini began to compile along the lines indicated by Ernest Bernhard, writing down drawings and comments about his inextricable nightly dream activity. He methodically devoted time to these notes for about twenty years, filling large notebooks bound in leather or Varese paper, writing with China ink or felt-tipped pens. They are preserved at the Fondazione Federico Fellini in Rimini, presided over by his sister Maddalena, and have never been published except for a few dreams in the magazine 'Dolce Vita', No.3, 1987 and No.12, 1988, in the monthly 'Il Grifo', Nos.1-9, 1991, and particularly those printed in the catalogue Federico Fellini edited by Letizia Tornabuoni for the exhibition/conference held in 1993. These are seventeen dreams in color with titles, dates, handwritten notes and a brief commentary: 'Il Cardinale', April 15, 1961 (about Fellini's encounter with Montini, Archbishop of Milan, later Pope Paul VI, as 'separation' to the director for the negative position taken by the prelate towards the unity that the Jesuits and Father Angelo Arpa of the Centro San Federico in Milan gave to La Dolce Vita); All'Interno, June 23, 1974 ('Myself at the wheel of a black car that sped dizzyly in reverse along a path spiralling around a mountain'); 'Venti Interrogativi', August 22, 1974 (Fellini points out question marks that run under the ironic look of Oreste Del Buono); 'Colla Acustica' and 'Sti Bisini', October 30, 1974 (two depictions: seated on some railway tracks with a woman in a large yellow hat, Fellini talks on the telephone, but the words are incomprehensible; and then a second scene, which was described, with some variations, in the television advertisement that Fellini shot for the Fonac di Roma with Paul Villaggio and Anna Feltra); 'Eccentrico', January 1, 1975 (one of the typical women of Fellini's imagination - a hypnotic image): Happy, Unhappy, January 21, 1975 (the director's interpretation: 'A dream about a word game can be an invitation to recognize that, if you do not know English, a foreign language, just as the language of the unconscious is unknown to you, how can you dare to reach conclusions about the meanings of things and make definitions and diagnoses that are based on premises deeply sunk in ignorance?'; 'Gigaetic New-born Babe', April 1, 1975 (a hypnotic image, a nude woman, 'P', seated on a cloud in a blue sky, Fellini blows the cloud floats in space and the woman takes her big breasts in her hands while it rains); 'Folle Vele', November 25 and 26, 1975 (on elevator that scars up towards room No. 672 of a hotel occupied by others, and a projection of the scenes relating to Eight and a Half, 'Mastorna', September 9, 1978 (a photograph of the face of the elusive personage that has now been my obsession for years, striking me and then abandoning me'); 'Le Betre', June 22, 1980 (a representation of the figure of the 'painter of wild beasts' who does portraits of licensees that smile with human lips, in reference to women and the preparations for City of Women): 'Giuseppe Verdi', 'Giovanni Agnelli', 'La Mia Fine', 'Sempre Pin Nuoto', 'Sandrochii', 'Guerrini', are all dreams deliberately left without a date and an original text, but with the director's comment that they refer, in this order, to: shots of the backs of four women, all with very heavy axes, that make an airplane fly crookedly until the musician appears, after a party at the house of the lawyer (popular nickname for Giovanni Agnelli, translator), a woman with a lovely round rear end gets out of the bed in which there are Fellini and Agnelli; ..., a hypnotic vision of Fellini who, encircled by flames, is machine-gunned by the Germans; a crocodile grabs him by the waist to drag him 'endlessly into the depths of the river which gets darker and darker ...'; the pet name Sandrochii is for Sandro Millo as she appears dressed in laurel of the spirits, and there is also a black and white monkey who nibbles at the director's left hand, Fellini, blocked and turned to stone, standing before a grotto where a powerful woman is sitting on the ground, perhaps an Artemis, and above the arch of the grotto is written
"Everything you can do has already been decided long ago!" while a merry little boy is crouched down, laughing and saying: "Yes! Yes! But making poo is something you can still always do!!! Hah! Hah! Hah!"

The cinematographic fantasy of the Great Dreamer, therefore, owes much to these nocturnal creations that he transferred to the heavy sheets of paper of the Book of Dreams, a sum of sequences, of visualized dream rushes, the precipitation of the effervescent Fellini solution of reality-dream-sleep-memory. This generally abstract activity, colored and fleeting, had absorbed him ever since childhood: "When I was about six or seven, I was convinced that there were two lives, one with open eyes and one with eyes closed. In the evening, I could hardly wait to go to bed. I had named the four corners of the bed after Rimini's four movie theaters: Fulgor, Savoia, Opera Nazionale Bollito, Sultano. The show began as soon as I closed my eyes. First, a velvety darkness, deep and transparent, a darkness that flowed into a second darkness. Then flashes began to break across the darkness like over the sea at evening when a storm threatens and the watery horizon is bombarded with lightening. Then I found myself deeper within it, the flashing happened behind me, and all around me as well. There appeared colored spirals, constellations, bright points, scintillating spheres, sometimes circled by rings like the planet Saturn. The dark sky was constellated by blinding forms and colors that began slowly to rotate around me at the center. The spectacle enchanted me. While rotating, little by little the splendor of the galaxy of light became attenuated and faded, like a merry-go-round that runs down. Everything became paler. This meant that, in that corner, the show was over, and I changed to a different corner of the bed. Once again the vortex of light started up, became filled with lights, was extinguished. I changed corners once more. These shows repeated themselves every night. For years. They were not real dreams – I saw the lights, heard the noises of the house..."

Even if Fellini, the great faker Fellini, had never dreamt all these things, the simple fact of having invented them for the written page would make him an extraordinary, eclectic narrator, an 'absent' artist, a little 'à la Nino Rota'. So one can understand how Il Viaggio di G. [Giuseppe] Mastroi can open up the images of Fellini: a Director's Notebook, a notebook that, even while preoccupied with the movie that never was, is already sending out feelers towards the future incursion into the ancient Rome of the Satyricon.

Mastroi, a surname that Dino Buzzati casually took from the Milan telephone book, established itself in Fellini's poetic world as a synonym for obsession, perhaps of a most particular obsession connected with the figure of his friend...
'Everything you can do has already been decided long ago', while a merry little boy is crouched down, laughing and saying: 'Yes! Yes! But making poo is something you can still always do!! Ha! Ha! Ha!'

The cinematographic fantasy of the Great Dreamer, therefore, owes much to these nocturnal creations that he transferred to the heavy sheets of paper of the Book of Dreams, a sum of sequences, of visualized dream rushes, the precipitation of the effervescent Fellini solution of reality-dream-sleep-memory. This generally abstract activity, colored and fleeting, had absorbed him ever since childhood. "When I was about six or seven, I was convinced that there were two lives, one with open eyes and one with eyes closed. In the evening, I could hardly wait to go to bed. I had named the four corners of the bed after Rimbaud’s four movie theaters: Fulgar, Savola, Opera Nazionale Bailla, Sultano. The show began as soon as I closed my eyes. First, a velvety darkness, deep and transparent, a darkness that flowed into a second darkness. Then flashes began to break across the darkness like the sea at evening when a storm threatens and the watery horizon is bombarded with lightning. Then I found myself deeper within it, the flashing happened behind me, and all around me as well. There appeared colored spirals, constellations, bright points, scintillating spheres, sometimes circled by rings like the planet Saturn. The dark sky was constellated by blinding forms and colors that began slowly to rotate around me at the center. The spectacle enchanted me. While rotating, little by little the splendor of the galaxy of light became saturated and faded, like a merry-go-round that runs down. Everything became paler. This meant that, in that corner, the show was over, and I changed to a different corner of the bed. Once again the vortex of light started up, became filled with lights, was extinguished. I changed corners once more. These shows repeated themselves every night. For years. They were not real dreams – I saw the lights, heard the noises of the house...

Even if Fellini, the great fater fellini, had never dreamed all those dreams, the simple fact of having invented them for the written page would make him an extraordinary, ecletic narrator, an ‘absent’ artist, a little ‘a la Nino Rota’. So one can understand how Il Viaggio di G. [Giuseppe] Mastrocin can open up the images of Fellini: a Director’s Notebook, a notebook that, even while preoccupied with the movie that never was, is already sending out feelings towards the future incursion into the ancient Rome of the Satyricon.

Mastrocin, a surname that Dino Buzzati casually took from the Milan telephone book, established itself in Fellini’s poetic world as a synonym for obsession, perhaps of a most particular obsession connected with the figure of his friend Bergnard, upon whose death in 1965 he writes this singular journey, a journey that neither begins nor ends. Like a dream somewhere between memory and oblivion, it truly has no point of origin, but does not want to die for at least twenty years, as long as, at Domodossola, in the spaces occupied by Dino De Laurentiis productions, there are still the structures, the building facades and the great framework of the airplane with which Mastrocin, landing in the plaza, was to have begun a story of death, a subject that was still far from the magic circle of the mart and the cinema.

For the Notebook trusts, the same thing that happened on the set of Eight and a Half occurs once again, where, faced with the structure having to be dismantled, the force of the characters brought to life had determined the ending. In its own way, this ending was false, because it was not written into the script, but invented on the set, that is to say on a duplicate of the spaceship meta-set.

Fellini, the cameraman, the sound man and the secretary roam among the surviving carcasses of the Mastrocin sets, to which the director attributes a greater attraction than he did at the time of the project. Some young foreign hippies are living among these old structures, where they have even celebrated an ‘alternative’ marriage ceremony. The site and the objects there inspire one of them to write a poem, which sees Mastrocin as a non-place, a ghost town, a storehouse of ‘sleeping’ materials: I live in a place called Mastrocin, which a madman’s dream placed upon the grass, a useless place where no one lives, where no one loves, works, hates, dies. There is an airplane nailed down that cannot fly, and the ships have wooden doors that never open. Mastrocin, sad and lonely town, with a beauty I love above all others because it is called Dementia, city of dust and rage, like all other things. I want to die in Mastrocin, be buried in that paper church where no priests enter.

Framed in the airplane’s window, we see the silhouette of Mastrocin/Mastalorcani, on whose image the rushes faces. Here too, as in Eight and a Half, there is a character inscribed within an actor who, in turn, is filtered by the director, with the difference that Guido was spared from the girl at the spring, whereas now no character survives: Fellini’s wind blows up strong, almost viciously, sweeps the landing area violently, shakes the young people, raises the dust, enters the fuselage and makes it look like a long coffin, brings on snow and, within its swirling, also causes Mastrocin to appear from the back with his violoncello. But Mastrocin’s world arouses “something like remorse” (in Fellini), as if I felt millions of eyes fixed upon me in expectation.”

And falling, as usual, from sneakiness, he diverts the spectator’s attention, turns a page in his notebook and projects himself into the sites and sensations of the Satyricon to come: the Colosseum at night,
almost a small, independent birth, a movie within the movie in
gestation: I open an office, begin to receive people and let hundreds
of focus fall past me. It is a kind of private sight for the creation of the
atmosphere. For me, it is the most joyful phase: the one in which the
movie is open to all possibilities, with everything still unsettled. It can
become something quite different from what it was originally
intended to become. The point is to find the faces which will give it a
life. And, in the meantime, I remain in a kind of limbo, while my office
comes to a police station waiting room, with my assistants calling London,
New York, investigating, trying to find people on the basis of the vaguest
traces. The photo archives are continuously searched, thumbed
through. One discovers that, among the candidates for a role, one
has had to Latin America, another has had a sex change, yet another has
turned from an ephemeral skirt-chaser to a hairy, sweaty military
recruit. I would like to see every face on the planet. I am never
contented, and if I should be contented, I still want to compare the face
that satisfies me with others, with all possible faces. It is a neurosis.[...]
When I am in my office, the door opens and in comes an old
man, a whore, someone who wants to sell his watch, a coatless, a
fat man. I see a hundred faces in order to cast two parts in the movie:
but I take note of their clothes, their dialect, moustaches, fics, attitudes.
[...]
I have never chosen an actor on the basis of his acting skill, his
professional ability, just as I have never discarded a non-actor because
of his inexperience. Expressive faces are what I am after, with
character added on them, faces that say everything about themselves as
soon as they appear on the screen. Furthermore, I tend to
emphasize, with makeup and costume, everything that illustrates the
person's psychology. I have no system for choosing. My choice
depends upon the face in front of me, and on how much I can divine
behind the faces of people who are generally stronger I am seeking for
the first time. [...]
Everyone has a face that suits them; one can have no
other; and every face, in the right one, he does not make mistakes.

The description of this ritual fills the final pages of A Director's
Notebook, first with the sequences shot at the Mortara, a Buddhist
the old Rome stockyards, trim, [...], and then in the studios of Cinecittà
(as will also be seen in Interview), when a heterogeneous procession
from a court of miracles begins to file past: faces, self-consciously,
improvable musicians, street vendors, pensioners, foreigners. In
short, a chain of men and women, Roman and non-Roman of every
size and shape, every age and condition, including those who are not
actually looking for a part, but just hoping for a hand-out in cash, or
trying to sell a villa or a painting by an unknown artist "better than
Raphael", up to the giant who, running the whole length of the
corridor, stops in front of the movie camera and, with a kind of surity,
greets the director, whose notes are scattered everywhere. In fact,
Fellini is thinking of ancient Rome and the words of Genius at the tomb
of Cecilia Metella: "It is not easy for us to grasp: to have a psychology
that goes back to times before the Christian myth. I told you this about
the butchers: eat, drink and enjoy. There was no sense of the suffering
in life. They were butchers, but Blackie", portrayed in a very beautiful,
strangely-moving way in Fellini's Satyricon.

His encounter with Petrusius goes back to high school
Latin classes, contemporaneously recalled: "The professor
was comical when he demanded enthusiasm from sixteen-
year-old rogues for the recitation in his tiny voice of the last
The movie opens with a train arriving at the station, followed by a scene of the city streets and the people going about their daily lives. The protagonist, an unemployed man, is looking for a job and walking through the city, trying to reach his destination. The scene is set in a busy urban environment, with the hustle and bustle of the city adding to the general atmosphere of uncertainty and tiredness.

As the man walks, he encounters several characters who are also experiencing their own struggles and hardships. These encounters lead to a series of events that unfold in a manner that seems to be without any clear purpose or direction. The protagonist’s life seems to be full of difficulty, and it is only through these encounters that he is able to find some semblance of meaning.

The story takes place in a city that is in a state of decline, with the people living in poverty and struggling to make ends meet. The protagonist’s job search highlights the difficulty of finding work in such an environment, and the encounters he has with other people add to the sense of hopelessness that pervades the story.

The narrative is characterized by a sense of constant movement, with the protagonist walking through the city and encountering a variety of characters. This sense of movement is heightened by the use of long shots and wide angles, which give a sense of the vastness of the city and the people within it.

The story is told through the protagonist’s point of view, with the audience being taken on a journey through the city and the various encounters he has. This creates a sense of empathy and connection with the protagonist, and the audience is able to share in his struggles and experiences.

The story is also characterized by a sense of desperation and hopelessness. The protagonist seems to be unable to find a way out of his situation, and the other characters he encounters are also struggling to find their place in the world. This sense of desperation is heightened by the use of dark and muted colors, which give a sense of the sadness and hopelessness that pervades the story.

In conclusion, the story is a powerful exploration of the difficult circumstances of modern life, with a sense of movement and a deep empathy for the people who are struggling to find their place in the world. The use of long shots and wide angles, as well as the protagonist’s point of view, create a sense of connection and understanding with the characters, and the story is a powerful reminder of the struggle that many people face in modern times.
he recalls: "It was a stupendous spectacle, that fabulous army of hippies that had arrived on incredible motorbikes and in brightly colored cars with blazing lights, a volcanic public with whom the Satyricon seemed to find its natural place. It no longer even seemed to be mine in the sudden revelation of so secret a bond, of such subtle, uninterrupted ties between that ancient Rome and that fantastic audience of the future."

Confronting Petronius with his own personal sensibility, Fellini seems to get younger, even though he has to renounce satire, an easy way to interpret the Satyricon, and a sure-fire way of making it a success. Having chosen to document a dream, he also abandons the sly winks and identification with the character, returning to the detachment displayed in Juliet of the Spirits, almost as if taking that world into a mediumistic zone, this time more mediumistic than ever before, required a special attitude of amazement. Because the pagan world cannot be figuratively retrieved, the director will shoot the dream of the painter of the final fresco, an icon taken from the subway episode in Fellini's Roma.

Faced with so complex a task, all of Fellini's baroque aspects come to the fore in the Satyricon - a negative connotation for many people, but an important component of his genius. It is the ideal way to express the precarious feelings of an epoch, the cognitive anxiety condensed in experimentalism which, in turn, creating a break with the limits of form and space, brings on complex geometries whose points multiply into a dynamic background. These points are Petronius's fragments 'replayed' in the director's figurative imagination who, within the missing sections - the dark zones between one episode and the next - creates 'his' Satyricon in Fellini's Satyricon (a title chosen to distinguish it from that of Gianluigi Polidori, a movie of scarce quality and success, shot in competition).

When choosing which dream fragments to reconstruct an awakening, Fellini avoids the extreme situations and avoids himself of Luca Canali's advice (the Latinist who now, some thirty years later, is writing a new translation of Petronius, considering it to be unquestionably modern, thus confirming that Fellini's version had hit the mark). Stating in several interviews that he is creating historical fiction, the director intends to create historical fiction out of that remote past without excessive respect for the original text, immersing the fragments in an unhealthy atmosphere, the same atmosphere, with different faces, as he had created in Fellini's Roma and would create in Casanova. In so doing, he opened a phase of his cinema that could certainly not be