Rossellini's "Viaggio in Italia": A Variation on a Theme by Joyce

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Viaggio in Italia (*Voyage to Italy*), made in 1953 by Roberto Rossellini, has not received (outside of France) the critical acclaim it deserves. Starring Ingrid Bergman and George Sanders, the film was co-scripted by Rossellini and Vitaliano Brancati, the southern Italian novelist who wrote *Don Juan in Sicilia* and the novel on which Mauro Bolognini's film *Bell'Antonio* was eventually based. Brancati died just after the completion of *Viaggio*. Recently, serious critics have begun to appreciate this and other Rossellini films of that period. The English critic Robin Wood, for example, in an article that appeared in *Film Comment* in 1974, attempts to show that the films Rossellini made with Ingrid Bergman after their notorious encounter in the late 40's are "classics of the cinema." He calls *Viaggio in Italia* "one of those rare films in which one senses a human being naked before one," but, although he says much about a D. H. Lawrence quality to the film, he never mentions its obvious connection to the works of James Joyce. Not even Rossellini, in several interviews about the film, ever mentions its Joycean source. Perhaps Rossellini was unaware of the inspiration his literary co-worker Brancati had drawn from Joyce's greatest story, "The Dead."

Viaggio in Italia, however, uses its literary source in an unusual way—for the movies. James Joyce's "The Dead," the last, longest, and most complicated of Joyce's fifteen stories in *Dubliners,* is the source of one important scene in the film; and the main characters in the film are called Mr. and Mrs. Joyce. Aside from those two details, there are no other explicit similarities between the film and the story. Still, once one realizes the connection between the two works, an essential similarity emerges—one that lies deeper than the surface events of their plots. Rossellini's film could be considered a variation on the theme of "The Dead."

Joyce's story, which was written coincidentally while Joyce was living in Trieste and Rome, is set at the annual Christmas-time party of two old sisters who represent a genteel tradition of Dublin society that is dying out (around 1900—the approximate time of the story). The main characters are the old ladies' nephew, Gabriel Conroy, and his wife, Greta. Gabriel, it has often been suggested, represents what Joyce himself would have been had he not fled into self-imposed exile on the Continent. Intellectual and aloof, Gabriel views his aunts and the other guests at their party, all of whom are deeply involved in the past—the dead artists of Dublin's musical past and the deader heroes of the more remote Gaelic past—he views them with amused detachment and disdain. Toward the end of the evening, he observes his wife lost in reverie while she listens to an old song—and, later in their hotel room, she tells him what the song reminded her of. The evening that she was packing to leave her native Galway in Western Ireland to go to Dublin to marry Gabriel, another young man—Michael Furey, who used to sing the song she had heard again that evening—appeared in the rain under her window to say good-bye. Furey was already ill with consumption and that night in the rain cost him his life. The effect of Greta's story on Gabriel is overwhelming as he realizes that Michael Furey lives in his wife's memory more vividly than he himself does. This climactic epiphany develops the main theme of the story—that the deadliness of modern life is not a result of living in the past, but rather the result of losing touch with the past. The dead live in their remembered passions, and sympathy for the dead can supply passionate feeling for the living.

Rossellini's film is also concerned with the passionless death-in-life of a modern British couple who travel to Italy to sell the villa of a dead uncle (significantly called Homer) who had lived outside Naples on the slopes of Vesuvius. Katherine Joyce, the wife, tells her husband, Alex the story of Michael Furey near the beginning of the film, but Katherine's young man is called Charles Lewington, and though many of Katherine's lines in this scene are taken verbatim from Joyce's story, Lewington, as we shall see, represents almost the opposite of James Joyce's Michael Furey. The rest of the film shows the encounters of the British couple as they sightsee around Naples. The contrasts between them and the southern Italians they observe from their car as they drive around Naples are visually vivid, but their main encounters are with the dead relics of Naples' ancient past—dead and yet teeming with the possibilities of life that the sterile British couple have carefully avoided.

The opening sequence of the film establishes Katherine's and Alex's alienation from each other, the world of nature, and themselves. By the end of the sequence, which closes with a shot of a crucifix at a crossroad, we perceive them as the prototypes of the Nordic soul, fearful of dying but unresigned to living by the risks that nature and mortality involve. Rossellini delineates the journey to a potentially new world view in this sequence both verbally and visually. The film opens with a rapid tracking shot of a road running parallel to a railway. A car is seen moving speedily south; a train makes its way northward, in countermovement to the car. The cinematic sign of this visual metaphor clearly reads: Alex's and Katherine's voyage is taking them from their industrialized world order to

something new. Not without their resistance, though. Succinctly, sparely, Rossellini introduces us to the couple in the car, and, even before they speak, we know who and what they are from visual clues that function as signs of their wealth and status: the expensive leopard-skin coat that Katherine is snuggled into; the sleek Rolls Royce that Alex asks to drive to avoid falling asleep (or to die? We notice later that Alex oversleeps on several occasions and is upset by this). When they speak, they sound irritable and discontent: their dialogue establishes their fear of nature and their distance from each other.

"The air is full of insects," Alex notes. "Is there danger of catching malaria?" responds Katherine, burrowing deeper into her leopard coat as though taking refuge wihin the symbol of her wealth and nature tamed. "They say not," is Alex's laconic answer. The dialogue proceeds haltingly, uncovering their estrangement: "This is the first time we've been alone together since we were married," says Katherine tentatively and elicits no response from Alex. Goaded by his indifference, she retaliates at the snub with, "What a pity John and Dorothy couldn't come with us." As he remains implacably aloof, she turns her attention to the road. Herds of bulls, sheep, and cows slow the progress of their trip. These images function as the alternative to the train, signifying the world of nature waiting to be discovered as the Joyces travel south, the direction from which the animals are coming. Katherine finds the encounter with the animals annoying and distressing: she sniffs distastefully at the manure smell, but he ignores the pastoral scene altogether, verbalizing, instead, his annoyance at the natives' bombastic and wreckless driving: "What noisy people! I've never seen noise and boredom go so well together." And there we have it: they're on different tracks and speak from opposite perceptions. Katherine, more obviously than Alex, is already besieged by the fear of nature and by the frustration of being unable to communicate with Alex. Alone with the budding fear of her own mortality—since she sees nature as a threat—and of her estrangement from Alex, Katherine begins to assume the traits of the dissociated self. Denied the possibility of even expressing love, refusing to accept the limitations of mortality elicited by nature, unable to rebel against the serfdom of marriage that Alex's behavior toward her implies, Katherine has no life at all.

In Alex, Rossellini gives expression to a different kind of living death which is the quandary of his class. Alex prattles about time: when will they get to Naples, how much faster it would have been to fly; he hopes to be able to dispatch the business of selling eccentric Uncle Homer's inherited house in as short a time as possible; he looks forward to very little amusement and hopes to get back to the "Lewis deal" in London as quickly as he can. He is bored with this whole villa enterprise, and we perceive, as Katherine does later, that for Alex life is work and has no other meaning. In the opening sequence, for instance, Alex is animated only when he talks about his work in London. This holiday, on the other hand, thwarts his energy and zeal for work—a zeal that can encounter no appreciation in this—in his eyes—slovenly, bored, and noisy country. We intuit that Alex wants to be doing things—not beautiful and useless things like writing poetry (he has only contempt for that as he crisply equates a poet and a fool

for Katherine in a later sequence) or looking at art and artifacts as Katherine does. For Alex, who has lost curiosity and imagination (or never had it), life is time which must be filled by work—and work is rewarded by money. To paraphrase Marcuse, Alex is a capitalist not because he has money, but he has money because he is a capitalist. Money is merely the symbol of his contract with life, bought in terms of time stolen from the opportunity of fulfilling his nature as a human being. Significantly, the incident that triggers his most violent quarrel with Katherine is a petty squabble about her tardiness at bringing the Rolls back from one of her jaunts. Time, then—not the immortal one of nature and art that succeeds in working a temporary spell on Katherine, but the time of clocks and routines, of meetings and business deals—is Alex's oblivious fortification against the messy, erratic tangles of existence. And so, Alex's death in life is representative of his class and of anyone who denies potential satisfaction in an experience other than that of making money. Thus, Alex, who represents the managerial executive class, rules a temporal world but cannot aspire to master the mortality of his body or the ultimate insult of death that knows no time.

Alex's fear of wasting time and Katherine's fear of being conquered by it work to form an allegory of the modern bourgeois soul, divided against itself. As a couple, they represent the Janus-like face of a social system that crushes the individual self (which Alex and Katherine also represent in their separate characterizations) under a ruthless yoke of progress and production. This observation of a political nature is necessitated by the wrong-headed criticism lodged by most Italian critics at Rossellini's door for his alleged lack of political responsibility in the film. On the contrary, the film yields political meanings of such rich clinical nuances as to be twenty years ahead of its time!

This dualism and antagonism, as a couple and as individuals, work on both the literal and the symbolic levels to express their cut-off existence. Sketched in the first sequence and later elaborated in detail, the conflict within and between the two is obliquely offered a resolution at the close of the first sequence when the two pass the crossroads with the crucifix. It would be wrong to assume that for Alex and Katherine the cross is a literal choice. It is merely a symbol of the past, like so many others to come, a forgotten way of life which, in this context, has very little to do with the divine, or at least as much as the cave of the Sybil and the temple of Apollo have in common with pagan devotion. The cross is merely there to invoke the possibility of a Joycean epiphany and to suggest that we must prepare for the eventuality that Katherine and Alex are heading for just such an epiphany. But, lest our hopes be raised too high, Rossellini is careful to underline the careless ease and velocity which punctuate the couple's choice of roads at the intersection, marked not only by the crucifix but by a road sign announcing the twenty-mile distance from Naples. We know, of course, that Katherine's and Alex's choice is dictated by the practical need to get to Naples, but we are also aware that, as repeatedly afterwards, the two are unconscious of the warning and invitation signified by symbolic signs like the crucifix. What we are left to guess at is the resolution of Alex's and Katherine's numbness into what degree of consciousness.

The scene on the terrace of Uncle Homer's villa picks up Alex and Katherine sitting in modern butterfly chairs, sipping wine, relaxing in the sun with the massive bulk of Vesuvius ominously in the background. The house servants are asleep or making love. The dialogue between them is at once pedestrian and evocative of the Northerner's contempt of Mediterranean customs. "You hardly touched your food," says Katherine. "All garlic and oil," protests Alex. As Katherine, warmed by the winter sun, sinks into a reverie, she begins to mutter some verses about the purity of form, about bodies that are only spirits. "These are Charles Lewington's verses," she explains to Alex. "You remember him. He was stationed in Italy during the war. Right here as a matter of fact." Alex is hardly interested in Katherine's memory, but his vanity or his need to embarrass her prompts him to ask, "Was he in love with you?" "We went about together a bit," she answers evasively. "He sounds like a fool," counters Alex. "He was not a fool; he was a poet," she replies with passion. "A poet and a fool are the same thing," he replies gloatingly. Hurt and offended, at first tight-lipped, and then smiling poignantly she begins to evoke the thin, tall, fair friend of the days before her marriage who showed her his unpublished verses and who on the eve of her departure for London to marry Alex threw some pebbles at her window and stood waiting, shivering with cold and fever in the rain. "He was so strange and romantic—or maybe he just wanted to die." As Katherine ends her reverie, Alex breaks in with, "How very poetic, much more poetic than his verses." His scornful sarcasm jolts Katherine into a tempest of resentment personified on the screen by a quick succession of merciless close-ups of her hard and strained face.

Alex's rejection of the memory of her past prompts her to try to establish the validity of Lewington's vision of the past by visiting the Naples Museum, but this visit also signifies her subconscious need to enrich her barren life with the artifacts of the past.

She is startled to discover at the museum that the past is not dead, nor is its art spiritual and that it was only Lewington's vision of it that was dead. In fact, Lewington's anemic verses, his bloodless and effete sensibility, his wish to die—all symbolize for Rossellini (and for Katherine intuitively) the lack of vigor of modern art out of touch with the sensibility of the past, hopelessly self-centered, romantic and self-destructive. Unlike Greta's bard, Michael, that tragic folk archangel of a Gaelic past whose memory survives in the Bog of Allen and in the "thunderous Shannon waves," in that Galway of Gabriel's despair where the world of imagination is alive with folk legends and with love immortalized by death and to him denied forever—unlike Greta's Michael, Katherine's Charles may be full of sound but very little Furey. Charles Lewington's is the poetry of anguish, of solitude, of lack of connections. In other words, it's the bleating sounds, the whiny complaint of the bourgeois artist, spokesman of his class who can grasp the flaws of existence but cannot fathom the causes nor foresee the solutions. In contrast, Rossellini's bravura camera reveals to us in the museum the flesh, muscle, bone, and sinews of life as it pulsates in the marble statues of a drunken fawn, a discus thrower, a lusty Hercules, and a ripe-bodied Venus. The tortuous yet flowing camera movement, weaving in and out of these emblems of immortal flesh, and the unsettling musical score endow the statues with a

restless vitality that perturbs and fascinates the watchful Katherine, captured by high-angle shot in distorted proportion to their looming mortality. The circular camera movement and the high-angle shot cinematically signal Katherine's confusion at beholding the passion of art in the past and her dissociation from it respectively, at the same time that they portray her awakening curiosity.

At the villa that evening, Katherine conveys to Alex her delight at discovering realism in ancient art. "Then they weren't ascetic," remarks Alex, referring to Lewington's verse interpretation of them. "No, not at all," she smiles indulgently. "Poor Charles, he had a way all his own of seeing things." Thus, Katherine's own limited concept of the past represented by Lewington is rejected as invalid. Her pleasure in discovering the enduring past in the beauty of art leads her inevitably to appreciate the wonders of nature. When next she visits the sulphur springs of Vesuvius, she looks in the very bowels of the earth and into nature's awesome power whose boiling cinders and lapilli buried Pompeii and has the potential, still, as her guide reminds her, to destroy more.

These two ventures seemingly function as plot devices that provide Katherine with the *divertissement*
curiosity and of distracting her from the strain of dealing with Alex. But the audience, as Katherine herself will later at the Cumaeam Grotto, at the Fontanelle Skeleton Museum, and finally at Pompeii, begins to perceive a larger picture, as the thesis of the film that the dead are more alive than the living unfolds. The beautiful and the inert, art and nature, in their enduring deadness which somehow affects and fortifies life are the thematic core of the film reminding the watchful audience and the distracted protagonists that these forces are life-giving and life-taking, dynamic, powerful, and that only by reckoning with them can one hope to be saved from the anguish of mortality. "In my end is my beginning," said Eliot, and Rossellini endorses this paradox for our heroine. And if Katherine's emotional awakening will ultimately be stifled by her fear, at least it will have been something hovering on the border of consciousness. Katherine, therefore, is almost reborn in her moments of being—to use Virginia Wolfe's phrase—triggered by her vision of the past.

No such fate visits Alex, who remains an aloof entity. His excursion to Capri, playground of Tiberius and Caligula, is brief and inconclusive. Blind to the evocative power of the island, unmindful of its orgiastic past, he's merely bored by its mundane inhabitants who are pale shadows of their ancestral counterpart-revellers and whose 9-o'clock curfew, far from appearing anticlimactic in such a place, merely frustrates Alex's flirtation with a vacuous woman significantly limping from a minor injury. A suggestion of a modern, genteel version of debauchery is lightly hinted at in the lesbic overtones of the relationship between two charming and attractively depicted women, but if Alex notices it he doesn't let on. In point of fact, he doesn't know what to do with his leisure unless he can occupy it with a banal seduction of the limping woman at which he fails. For Alex, hurt in his vanity, Capri holds no lure and the past that lives hidden in it is dead to him because the past means nothing to him. Capri is a passing humiliation, a blow to his male-conquering pride—to be expected in the unbusinesslike world of the island. Hence leisure has its price, but

Alex cannot afford to take the risk of paying it: he must rush back to the mainland, and eventually from there to London, and to the ubiquitous "Lewis deal," to a world where defeat is not measured by emotional embarrassment. When Alex returns to Naples, however, we catch his fumbling attempt to restore his bruised ego by engaging in a "deal" he can control with money: he picks up a prostitute. This substitute "Lewis deal," however, aborts since the prostitute proceeds unceremoniously to throw in the appalled Alex's lap the misery of her existence. She is obsessed with the recent death of a friend and is contemplating suicide. Repelled and insulted by the woman's unconventional way of handling "business," he lets her go. Alex's pitiless dismissal of the prostitute's despair is no different from the way he pooh-pooh's Katherine's tormented feelings and his apostrophying the woman as a "wanton hussy" is different only in degree of vulgarity from the epithet of "romantic fool" with which he brings Katherine to heel.

In this episode, Alex is all superior male, addressing the prostitute in an English he does not believe she commands, although she does—and very well since it probably is the legacy of her initiation in the trade during the occupation after the war. More significant than the theme of social oppression developed in this episode is Alex's instinctive refusal to deal with anything having to do with death. Like Katherine at the Fontanelle, and more categorically, Alex dismisses the touch of death even when it can buy him a moment of love, no matter how spurious. The Alex who is afraid of falling asleep and who unconsciously longs to drown his fear of sleep, which is death, in sex, cannot perceive in the universe of the damned his own likeness and therefore is helpless to change his fate.

Paralleling Alex's stillborn perception of his mortality is Katherine's birth of the fear of it. After Vesuvius she visits Cumae, the cave of the Sybil where lovers came to question the prophetess and which was later turned into catacombs by the Christians. Her guide, a satyr-like old man, invites her to listen to the echo that reverberates in the underground corridors. The past comes alive: Katherine is visibly distressed. The same editing, camera activity, and musical tones punctuate this scene as the one in the Naples Museum. The camera weaves restlessly from corner to corner of the cave; montage isolates then identifies the images; rapid, choppy editing distorts spatial and temporal continuity; while the music is an eerie echo of the past's lament. As in the Naples Museum sequence, the cinematic style, its visual contortions and aural distortions, reflect Katherine's confused emotions. Fascinated and disgusted, she is held spellbound until her leering guide illustrates for her a fantasy: the Saracens used to rape beautiful women like her in this cave by first tying them with chains against the wall. As he lifts her arms to the wall, she shakes herself free and asks to see the temple of Apollo. Sex and death, as for Alex, are for Katherine revealed to inhabit the same realm and she, frightened by the thought, rejects the verity of the principle. Aptly, for her temperament, she wants to escape the underground, womb-like prison of death and sex, which is her mortality, by rising to the light and reason of the temple of Apollo, where her guide refuses to take her, noting that he never goes there, and to which she ascends alone, putting on her dark sunglasses to hide her outrage from the world or

from herself after the old guide's ambiguous seduction efforts. "Men," she mutters, "they're all alike," as the camera veers around to the point at Capri where Alex is. Ironically, in choosing Apollo, a masculine god, in preference to the Sybil, handmaiden of the ancient mother goddess of chthonic realms, Katherine inadvertently denies her own femininity at the same time that she feels profoundly offended by the guide's attempt to violate it. Rebellious and conventional, Katherine's femininity is at war with itself, and, thus besieged, she takes refuge in Apollo as she later will in Alex. Not yet ready to face her sexuality, Rossellini's heroine runs for protection to the comfort of patriarchal arms. In denying her sexuality, of course, she denies her being and resumes the path toward the living-dead world of Alex and marriage—the trappings of convention on which her class survives.

After Cumae, Katherine's ordeal of rebirth takes a fatal turn toward negation of life. Characteristic of the film's ironic vein is the coda to this upsetting episode: that night at the villa Katherine plays solitaire in a solitary house without a mate. Prefigured in this is the resolution that marriage, for Katherine, will be a game of solitaire.

The skeleton museum sequence at the Fontanelle in Naples where Katherine goes with the villa caretaker's wife Natalia, clinches with categorical finality Katherine's lack of courage to be. "'These poor dead are abandoned and alone,'" says Natalia at the villa where she recounts a tradition observed at the Fontanelle of adopting a dead soul to pray for it and bring it flowers. Significantly, Natalia Barton and her archaeologist husband are caretakers for Alex and Katherine, an oblique reference to the couple's isolation and need of love. At the Fontanelle, we observe Katherine's distaste as Natalia kneels and prays for her brother buried in an unknown tomb in Greece. Katherine then watches as Natalia kneels before the skeleton of a child. She remarks that it is strange to pray for a child in a place of death. Indeed, Katherine's fear of death is so crippling, so life-denying that we are not surprised to discover later that she refused to bear Alex's child. At the Fontanelle the camera literally barrages her with images of skulls and bones.

Profoundly distressed, Katherine, with Natalia, arrives at the villa where Alex confronts her with her lateness at bringing the car back. A quarrel between them flares up with unprecedented fury and concludes with their agreeing to get a divorce. Just then Barton approaches them excitedly, begging them to come to Pompeii where the digs have uncovered new clues of the events on that fateful day when Vesuvius unleashed its full fury and crushed a civilized community under its burning lava. As the couple begrudgingly agrees to go, the final epiphany takes place as, together for the first time before a relic of the past, Alex and Katherine are made to face the sterility of their relationship.

As archaeologists with painstaking care fill with plaster the hollow spaces of what once was life, bodies caught by sudden disaster emerge in agonized postures. One particular find throws Katherine into turmoil: a pair of lovers, possibly a husband and wife, locked in a last embrace that is 2000 years old stare at her horrified realization that "Life is so short! It is too sad!" As she breaks down sobbing and Alex tries to comfort her, we intuit that for them the epiphany—or revelation—of the nexus between love and death is only half-under-

stood. That love is powerless against time and against death is the obvious conclusion to derive from the lesson of the Pompeii lovers. But they fail to comprehend the fuller message—that passion, however brief, is all we have to pit against the indifference of eternity. These two lovers, immortalized by time the moment it reaped its vengeful harvest, are living icons of mortality made immortal. They remind us that in passion lies eternity—a kind of death, perhaps, but a living one and more enduring than time which seeks to destroy it.

But Alex and Katherine, perceiving only that life is short, recoil in horror at the brutal finality of time. Like Gabriel in "The Dead," they discover that they cannot hope in life to compete with time nor with its grip on the living. But unlike Gabriel, whose memory of Greta's dead lover instills a measure of compassion for his and Greta's desolation, Alex and Katherine scurry back to the safety of convention, unequal to the task of elevating their fear to a compassionate bond. Joyce's protagonists at least accept their despair lodged forever in the showy landscape of their hearts. Their epiphany, if no consolation, is at least a coming-to-terms with their pride. But for Alex and Katherine the Pompeii epiphany is a nightmare that assails the rationality of their existence. They reject it as they escape the dark and potentially saving vision of Pompeii, hurrying away in their car, she already regretting the decision to divorce, he superficially calm and in control. "Is the divorce going to be painful?" asks Katherine. "Well...complicated," answers Alex. Their relationship has resumed a balance, but not a new one. It is the same as at the start: she self-centered, he indifferent.

Suddenly their car is surrounded by a mass of people parading in the San Gennaro procession, with all the panoply and paraphernalia of a ritual that checks their progress. Forced to park the car, they stand in the crowd. Tall, lean, foreign, they stick out from the mass like giants among dwarfs. Separated by the flux of humanity (and, symbolically, from it) they search for each other, besieged by the fear that separately they may never stem the tide of this mass that stands in direct opposition to their customs and their class. A frantic rationalization is implied in the couple's decision to patch up their differences, that only in marriage and in upholding the pillar on which order and society are based can they hope to insure the continuity of their species against the brooding discontent implicit in this sea of underprivileged humanity and their yet unconscious but potentially realizable rebellion. Organized under the sign of traditional religion, this sea of people might just as readily take up another standard. The historical threat that this mass poses to the couple is no idle speculation, for the film abounds with political alternatives rejected by the couple as a matter of course. From the Coca-Cola signs to the posters of the PCI, Rossellini surrounds his characters with historical reality with which they are now in harmony and now in dialectic variance. In a key sequence earlier in the film Rossellini has Katherine stop in a car as a funeral enters the screen in background right; in foreground right, above her car, is a poster inviting voters to endorse the Communist Party while in foreground left a priest crosses the street and leaves the frame. As representative of a second-class citizen, the woman in Katherine is offered a choice, but like so many other choices offered, the wife in Katherine, and particularly *Alex's* wife, is unprepared to

respond adequately. Lacking ripeness and readiness, the woman in Katherine accepts her oppression. And so in this last confrontation with historical threat, Katherine, clutching Alex in desperation, seizing on his moment of weakness, pleads, "Say it." "Promise me you won't use it against me," he retorts, condescendingly, indulgently, as though soothing a child—and then, finally, "I love you," he says embracing her. They kiss and the film comes to end with as bitter a resolution to their dilemma as a surgical imagination can carve.

The metaphoric and political impetus of their reaffirmed marriage, the first generating from the misunderstood lesson at Pompeii and the second emanating from an instinctively perceived threat against them in society, give us an allegory of marriage as a form of death and as a conservative force that denies self-realization. Thus Rossellini seems to be suggesting that to be married under the condition of fear is to exercise, and be subjected to, cultural, economic, and emotional blackmail.

This thwarted selfhood is tragic, particularly for Katherine, since Alex, with his lack of sensibility, is irretrievably lost. It is for Katherine, in her childlike selfishness and fear, and for Katherine, in her frustrated potential to take conscience of herself, that we feel the most pity. No words are more apt as an epitaph to Katherine's surrender than Rossellini's own written on the day of his death, "One cannot be adult if one isn't prepared to spend the only capital which everyone can dispose of if he has a precise aim to reach: courage Lacking courage, Katherine cannot envision her goal: liberation from subservience and living death. More poignant still are Jean-Luc Godard's words, "To be sure of loving one must be sure of dying," in an interview about his 1962 film *Contempt*, an explicit tribute to *Viaggio in Italia*. Clearly, Godard was not fooled by the apparent happy ending of Rossellini's film. He grasped instead the tragic waste, born of cowardice and ignorance, of Katherine's and Alex's fusion as a couple: in escaping the fear of death they were doomed to remain "the dead."