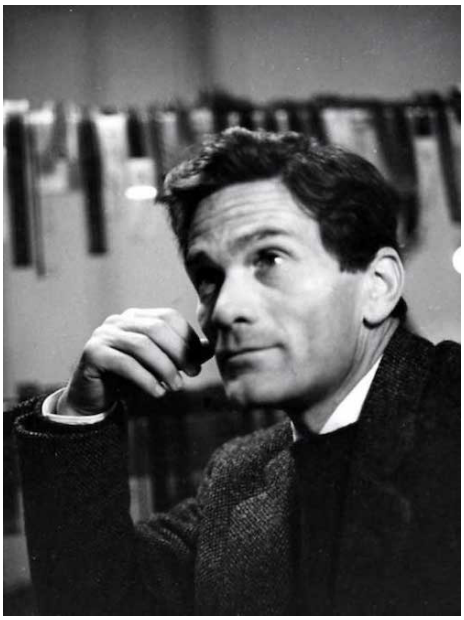
Pier Paolo Pasolini
(1922–1975)

This month's essay subject is a person that I have written about very briefly in earlier essays. He was an important and controversial mid-twentieth-century film director, poet, writer and intellectual. In addition, he also distinguished himself as an actor, journalist, novelist, playwright and leftist political figure. In the various media he used, he voiced strong criticism of petty bourgeois values and the emerging "totalitarianism of consumerism" in Italy, juxtaposing socio-political polemics with a critical examination of taboo sexual matters. He was also a prominent protagonist of the Roman cultural scene of the post-World War II period, and he became an established major figure in European literature and cinematic arts.



Pier Paolo Pasolini was born on March 5, 1922 in Bologna, Kingdom of Italy, which was traditionally one of the most politically leftist cities in Italy. (This year marks the centennial of his birth). His father, Carlo Alberto Pasolini, was a lieutenant in the Royal Italian Army and a strong supporter of Mussolini's Fascist government; his mother, Susanna Colussi Pasolini, was an elementary-school teacher; they were married in 1921. Pier Paolo's sympathies while growing up and in adulthood always remained with his mother, who loved books and poetry and who transmitted this devotion to her son. During the early years of his life, the family relocated several times as his father was posted to different cities in northern Italy. They moved to Conegliano, Province of Treviso, in 1923, and then to Belluno in 1925; both towns are located in the Veneto region north of Venice. A second son, Guidalberto (Guido), was born in Belluno in 1925. The following year, when Pasolini's father was arrested for gambling debts, his mother once more moved with the children to her family's home in Casarsa della Delizia, Province of Pordenone in the Friuli-Venezia Giulia region.

Pasolini began writing poems at the age of seven, inspired by the natural beauty of Casarsa. One of his early influences was the work of Arthur Rimbaud, a French poet known for his transgressive and surrealistic themes. His father was transferred to Idria in the Julian March in 1931; in 1933 they moved again to Cremona in Lombardy, and later to Scandiano and Reggio Emilia. Pasolini found it difficult to adapt to all these dislocations, though he did expand his poetry and literature readings, becoming fascinated by Dostoyevsky, Tolstoy, Shakespeare, Coleridge, and Novalis. In school in Reggio Emilia, he met his first true friend, Luciano Serra. The two met again in Bologna, where the family returned in the mid-30s and where Pasolini attended high school. Here he cultivated new passions, including soccer, and formed a club with other friends that was dedicated to literary discussions.

In 1939, Pasolini graduated from high school and entered the Literature College of the University of Bologna, discovering new themes such as philology and aesthetics of figurative arts. In addition

to his literary studies, he studied art history with the renowned art historian Roberto Longhi, an experience that would later profoundly influence the visual style of his films. He also joined the cinema club at the University. Always presenting a virile and strong exterior to his friends (that totally hid his internal sexual turmoil), he took an active part in the Fascist regime's culture and sports competitions. He spent most of his academic vacation periods in his mother's native town of Casarsa, falling in love with its peasant culture and beginning to include fragments of its Friulian dialect in his poetry. In 1941, together with a group of friends, he also attempted to publish a poetry magazine, but the attempt failed due to paper shortages.

In 1942, Pasolini published at his own expense a collection of poems in Friulian, *Versi a Casarsa* (Verses in Casarsa), which he had written at the age of eighteen. The work was noted and appreciated by several intellectuals and critics. At the same time, he was chief editor of a magazine called *Il Setaccio* (The Sieve), but was fired from that position after conflicts with the director, who was aligned with the Fascist regime. A trip to Germany helped him also to perceive the "provincial" nature of Italian culture at the time. These experiences led him to revise his opinion about the cultural politics of Fascism, and he began gradually to switch to a Communist position. He also abandoned his Catholic faith and began to identify as an atheist.

As World War II progressed and Italy's fortunes looked bleak, Pasolini's family took shelter in Casarsa, considered a more tranquil place to wait for the conclusion of the war, a decision that was common among Italian military families. He joined a group of other young enthusiasts of the Friulian language who wanted to give Casarsa Friulian a status equal to that of Udine Friulian, the official language of the region.

As the end of the war approached, Casarsa suffered Allied bombardment and forced enlistments by the Italian Social Republic, as well as partisan activity. Pasolini tried to distance himself from these events. Starting in October 1943, Pasolini, his mother and other colleagues taught students who were unable to reach the schools in Pordenone or Udine. This educational workshop was considered illegal and was broken-up in February 1944. It was here that Pasolini had his first experience of homosexual attraction to one of his students. His brother, Guido, aged 19, joined the Party of Action and their Osoppo-Friuli Brigade, taking to the bush near Slovenia. On February 12, 1945, he was killed in an ambush planted by Italian partisans serving in the lines of Tito's Yugoslavian guerrillas. The death devastated Pasolini and his mother.

Six days after his brother's death, Pasolini and others founded the *Academiuta di Lenga Furlana* (Friulian Language Academy) to encourage, facilitate, and support the writing of literature in the Friulian language. In November 1945, because of his son's death, Pasolini's father was returned to Italy from his POW-detention period, settling in Casarsa. That same month, Pasolini graduated from university after completing a final thesis about the work of Giovanni Pascoli (1855–1912), an Italian poet and classical scholar. With the war over and his university education completed, Pasolini returned to Casarsa where he worked as a schoolteacher while also being active in cultural-literary circles and becoming secretary of the local branch of the PCI (the Italian Communist Party).

Pasolini continued to write during this time. In 1946, he published a small poetry collection, *I Diarii* (The Diaries), with the Academiuta. His poetry collection, *I Pianti* (The Cries), was also

published by the Academiuta in 1946. It was accompanied by a funeral portrait of Giulia Zacco, Pasolini's maternal grandmother, and dedicated to his uncle Gino Colussi, brother of Pasolini's mother. It was the pain of the death of the grandmother that prompted these poems, written in 1944, a series of twenty-seven elegies arranged in the form of an epigraph for a compact lament. The following May (1947), he began the so-called *Quaderni Rossi* (Red Notebooks), handwritten in old school exercise books with red covers. This diary contains an intimate and tormented inner monologue, a self-analysis in which he faces and struggles with his homosexuality. He also completed a drama in Italian, *Il Cappellano* (The Chaplain) in 1947.

However, in October 1949, Pasolini was indicted for corruption of minors and obscene acts in public places. He was charged with having had sexual encounters with three youngsters, aged sixteen and younger, after dancing and drinking during a local outdoor festival in September in Ramuscello. Although he was never arrested and jailed, he became profoundly disillusioned with life in small-town Casarsa which became unbearable with the gossip and innuendoes that were constantly hounding him. So, he quickly moved to Rome with his mother in January 1950 (after leaving his *Quaderni Rossi* in safekeeping with his cousin) and settled in one of the *borgate* or shanty-towns at the margins of the city. Here, he witnessed first-hand the poor proletarian immigrants who lived in horrendous sanitary and social conditions, and he began to write about their way of life and the petty-criminality going on around him.

He later described this period of his life as a very difficult one. "I came to Rome from the Friulian countryside. Unemployed for many years; ignored by everybody; riven by the fear to be not as life needed to be." Instead of asking for help from other writers, however, Pasolini preferred to go his own way. He found a job as a worker in the Cinecittà film studios, and sold his books in the *bancarelle* (sidewalk stalls) of Rome. Finally, seeking the help of the Abruzzese-language poet Vittorio Clemente, he was able to find a job as a teacher at the Francesco Petrarca School in Ciampino, a Roman suburb.

In 1955, he published his first full-length novel, *Ragazzi di vita* (literally- boys of life, idiomatically- hustlers), that dealt with the world of the borgate and its rough Italian street language. It is an unsentimental depiction of the poverty and chaotic lives of those in the slums of 1950s postwar Rome. The novel follows Ricetto, an Italian youth, and his gang who survive by their wits, their cruelty, and their instincts for survival. Their lives are shaped by hunger, theft, betrayal, and prostitution, and they celebrate their triumphs with brutal abandon and, in the end, die bleak deaths. This harsh world is portrayed with an understanding that humanity and even humor can exist amidst a hard and amoral society.

Following the novel's publication, Pasolini was officially charged with offences to public decency. He was eventually exonerated, in part due to the strong support of many of the leading intellectuals and writers, but this would be only the first of many times that Pasolini and his "scandalous" work would be subjected to official censure and harassment. In fact, from this point until his brutal death in 1975, Pasolini would continue to play the role of Italy's most notorious *intellettuale scomodo* (intellectual provocateur or troublemaker), with his books, films and ideas consistently generating controversy and with Pasolini himself often ending up in court. On the positive side, however, his graphic depiction of life in the Roman underworld in *Ragazzi di vita* and other works brought an increasing number of offers of scriptwriting from established Italian directors like Mauro Bolognini and Federico Fellini so that Pasolini's move to cinema became almost a foregone conclusion.

He soon followed this first novel with another, *Una Vita Violenta* (A Violent Life), which tells the story of Tommaso Puzzilli, whose family had been bombed out during the Allied invasion of Italy and had moved to Rome, where they now live in a hut in a shanty town called "Little Shanghai." Tommaso soon joins a gang of youths, who commit petty thefts, get drunk and generally behave badly. They are also linked with the Italian neo-Fascist *Movimento Sociale* (Social Movement) party. Tommaso meets and falls in love with Irene but does not treat her particularly well. When he gets involved in a knife fight, someone is stabbed, Tommaso is blamed for it and is sent to prison.

The second part of the novel opens with his return from prison, to his family's new flat in a block of flats set aside for low-income people. Tommaso, in his new surroundings, decides to adapt to these surroundings, becoming more bourgeois. He gives up the gang and even decides to join the Christian Democrat party. He also decides that he has to marry Irene and start a family. However, he then contracts tuberculosis and has to go to the hospital. Both the patients and the nursing staff are objecting to the conditions in the hospital and go out on strike, with Tommaso sympathizing with them. He now develops a class consciousness, and this is shown when the river floods and submerges Little Shanghai. Tommaso helps the poor inhabitants, and ultimately saves a poor woman from drowning but the effort exacerbates his tuberculosis and this ultimately kills him. (The novel became the basis for Pasolini's 1962 film of the same name).

These two novels were followed by six others over the years until his untimely death in 1975. He also wrote numerous poems throughout the remainder of his life and published them in various anthologies of his poetic works. His last novel was left unfinished when he died and was published posthumously in 1992. A work in progress, *Petrolio* (Petroleum) is made up of a series of notes - some extended and polished narrative passages, others cryptic messages from the author to himself that consist of no more than a few words. Many of his previous themes appear in this novel as well. At the novel's center is Carlo, an oil executive who undergoes a profound personality split: Carlo 1 is a super-Machiavellian power-monger; Carlo 2 lives only to satisfy his perverse and insatiable sexual desires. Carlo also experiences a sexual metamorphosis in which he becomes, at will, female. The story of Carlo is interspersed with re-visions of myth - Oedipus, Medea, the Argonauts - and of Dante's hell. The teller of this story is also dual in nature. There is the author - the external shaper of the novel - who interrupts the text to comment on its mechanics and its meaning. And there is the narrator, whose cynical and seductive perspective comes from within the *Petrolio* fictional world.

The Films

Pasolini's novels were the transition to his film work. His characters and plots fit perfectly the post-war Italian cinema genre of Neorealism. As an established poet and writer, he personally came to embrace cinema above all as an alternative form of self-expression, equal in potential to writing itself. In fact, in the film theory that he would develop from the mid-1960s onward, he would characterize cinema precisely as "writing with reality;" the more the filmmaker was able to stylistically manipulate the film writing for the purposes of self-expression, the more the writing would yield what he called a "cinema of poetry." However, self-expression for him was never just a matter of aesthetics but it always opened onto the social and the political. Probably more than

any other artist-intellectual in recent Italian history, Pasolini felt completely and personally co-opted by the massive social, economic and cultural developments that were profoundly transforming Italy during the post-war period. This meant that his films, as with everything else he wrote or said, always became, at some level, his personal responses to, and ways of intervening in, the reality of modern Italy. His cinema was thus always a blend of the lyrical and the political, the poetic and the ideological, the passionate and the analytical.

As one would expect, Pasolini's first films centered on the same petty-criminal underworld of the Roman borgate that he had explored previously in his novels. After working in several minor, behind the scenes activities on other films, he made his film directorial and screenplay debut in *Accattone* (Literally: Beggar, but used in the movie as slang: Pimp, 1960), working with another young poet, Bernardo Bertolucci, as assistant-director. The film was not a polished presentation; in fact, it made a virtue of his inexperience behind the camera. In a sense, it invented its own cinematic language to present the harsh reality of the borgate. Despite certain superficial similarities with classic Neorealism (the use of non-professional actors, on-location shooting amid decaying buildings and urban settings, shooting in black-and-white, etc.), the film was ultimately less a denunciation of the existence of the borgate that one would expect in a classic Neorealist film than it was — in a typical Pasolinian way — a celebration of the borgate inhabitants' radical otherness to the culture of consumer capitalism that was rapidly replacing traditional values in Italy in the wake of the post-war "economic miracle" and which, for Pasolini, represented a social and cultural degradation.

The central character in the film is Vittorio "*Accattone*" Cataldi, who actually prefers to be called *accattone* (pimp) as a badge of honor. He leads a mostly serene life as a pimp until his long-time girlfriend and prostitute, Maddalena, is assaulted by a gang of thugs and sent to prison. Finding himself without either a steady income or much inclination for working himself, he is reduced to begging for food from Ascenza, the estranged mother of his child, and then tries to reconcile with her. However, he is quickly driven away by her relatives. He next meets the (apparently) naive Stella and, seeing a way back into his former profession, tries to lure her into becoming a prostitute for him. She is willing to try, but when her first client begins pawing her, she cries and jumps out of the car, abandoning her new "profession" on the spot. Vittorio tries to support her, but gives up on honest labor after one day. Following a bizarre vision of his own death, he goes on a small-time robbery with a couple of friends and gets killed in a traffic accident when he tries to evade the police on a stolen motorcycle.

The film's sympathetic attitude to its amoral characters immediately caused a scandal, as did Pasolini's first use of his technique of what he termed "contamination," in particular that insistent commingling of the sacred and the profane that would characterize his films from then on. For example, a violent street-brawl between Vittorio and his ex-brother-in-law is glossed over by the strains of Bach's *St. Matthew's Passion*, and a wealth of biblical and Christological references in the film ultimately work to make the low-life Vittorio into a sort of negative Christ figure. (In fact, he dies between two thieves, one of whom makes the reverse Sign of the Cross over him). The film also clearly displays the distinctive use of the camera and the frontal visual style that would become characteristic of Pasolini's early period, with the camera often panning slowly over the young, delinquent faces of pimps and petty thieves with the same care as an eye moving over the faces in a fresco by a Renaissance painter. Such a positive portrayal of pimps and layabouts immediately drew censure from the political and Church authorities who originally sought to ban the film outright and eventually only allowed its release under what was effectively an R rating.

In his second film, *Mamma Roma* (1962), Pasolini pairs young nonprofessional actors with one of Italy's most celebrated actresses, Anna Magnani, who plays the mother of a doomed youth, Ettore. In the closing sequence, the camera films Ettore from the bottom of his feet as he lies dead on a bare slab, a clear reference to Andrea Mantegna's famous painting *Lamentation over the Dead Christ* (c. 1480). Pasolini uses a flat pictorial style that would come to define his filmmaking, enhancing the viewer's sense that he is writing or painting on the film frame.

Pasolini then contributed a segment to *RoGoPaG* (1963). This film comprises 4 segments, with each segment written and directed by a different director. (The title is composed of letters from the surnames of the 4 directors: Roberto ***Ro***ssellini, Jean-Luc **Go**dard, **Pa**solini, and Ugo **G**regoretti). Pasolini's segment, *La Ricotta*, tells the story of filming a movie about the crucifixion of Christ at a slightly hilly wasteland near a residential area outside of Rome. The "production" of the Passion represents a society that is interested in superficial beauty and yet possesses a corrupted core (a familiar Pasolini theme). The director of the film is played by Orson Welles, acting very much like Pasolini. The most biting social critique is shown through the main character *Stracci* (rags), who is a poor and starving man from the borgate working as an extra (ironically, the good thief) in the movie and who is not given pity or mercy by anyone. Stracci tries everything to get something to eat and finally succeeds. Unfortunately, the ricotta cheese and bread he avidly gorges on, combined with the awkward position he is forced to assume while being "crucified" in front of the camera, prove a fatal combination and he dies from indigestion.

Stracci represents the poor and the marginalized people, who, according to Pasolini, are "the ones who hunger for bread" and are neglected by a society that prides itself on being Christian. Thus, in this view, the Roman Catholicism of Italy is more concerned with status and prominence than helping the poor, which was a teaching of Christ that Pasolini greatly admired. The film extras' lack of interest in the film itself, preferring instead to dance to twist music, lying lazily around during their break-time, and tormenting Stracci all add to this feeling of utter disconnectedness and unconcern for other people. Further making the point Pasolini wishes to convey to the viewers, when the film director (Welles) is interviewed by a reporter following the tragic event, he calls the reporter an average man and conformist, telling him that if he should die right then, it would be a nice plot development. He then reads to the reporter from Pasolini's book *Mamma Roma*.

Although the film as a whole and certainly the figure of the director were something of a playful self-parody, most of the irony and self-reflexiveness of the film was lost on the authorities who interpreted Stracci's death on the cross from indigestion as an "an outrage against the established religion". Pasolini was consequently tried for holding contempt for the state religion and received a three-month suspended sentence and a fine. This was later quashed on appeal and the film eventually was allowed to be released with significant cuts. In the process Pasolini went to a great deal of trouble to explain that he hadn't meant to lampoon the Christ story; far from it, he affirmed that the Passion was the greatest event that had ever occurred. However, his definitive answer to the charges really came a year later, in 1964, when he made *Il Vangelo Secondo Matteo* (The Gospel according to Matthew).

Il Vangelo Secondo Matteo is a Neorealist cinematic rendition of the life of Jesus (portrayed by non-professional actor, university economics student, and Marxist, Enrique Irazoqui) and incorporating other non-actors (e.g., Pasolini cast his own mother as the older Virgin Mary) in the

telling of Matthew's Gospel from the Nativity through the Resurrection. From the start of the project, radical as always, Pasolini began by throwing out the entire tradition of pietistic representation in the gospel-film genre and starting from scratch. Risking fragmentation and incoherence, he adopted a variety of expressive strategies and a multiplicity of often contrasting styles to create a socially-committed, quasi-Marxist version of the Gospel preached by a harsh and uncompromising Christ who was in many ways a revolutionary and a provocateur not unlike Pasolini himself.

As usual, however, a Pasolini film ignited polemics. Surprisingly, this time the work was praised by international Catholic organizations. At the 25th Venice International Film Festival, *Il Vangelo Secondo Matteo* was screened in competition for the Golden Lion, and won the OCIC (Office Catholique International du Cinéma) Award and the Silver Lion. At the film's premiere, a crowd gathered to boo Pasolini, but instead cheered him after they had watched the film. The film later won the Grand Prize at the International Catholic Film Office, was nominated for the UN Award at the 21st British Academy Film Awards, and, after its release in the US in 1966, was nominated for three Academy Awards.

But there was intense criticism of the film as well. It was severely attacked by left-wing and Communist critics who accused it of pietism and hagiography. In spite of all the controversy, or perhaps in part because of it, the film did bring Pasolini his first international recognition.

Il Vangelo Secondo Matteo was followed by *Uccellacci e Uccellini* (Bad Birds and Little Birds, but translated in English as The Hawks and the Sparrows, 1966), a picaresque—and at the same time mystic—fable. Pasolini hired the great Italian comedian of the day, Totò (Italy's equivalent to Charlie Chaplin), to work with Ninetto Davoli, Pasolini's lover at the time and one of his preferred "naif" actors. The film allegorizes the intersection between Marxism and Christianity, but with a much harder satirical edge.

By 1967 Pasolini had turned to a much more abstract and conceptual filmmaking. This phase comprised two adaptations from Greek mythology: *Oedipus Rex* (1967) and *Medea* (1969), the latter starring Maria Callas in the title role. With *Teorema* (Theorem, 1968) and *Porcile* (Pigsty,1969), Pasolini pursued a broader inquiry into pre-industrial mythology, militating against its loss in an increasingly commodified Western culture.

In his three subsequent films, Pasolini attempted to reach a wider, less strictly intellectual audience. Known as the *Trilogia della Vita* (Trilogy of Life), they are adaptations of popular canonical works of literature: Boccaccio's *The Decameron* (1971), Chaucer's *The Canterbury Tales* (1972), and the collection of folk tales, *Arabian Nights* (1974). Originally, he characterized these films as his "non-political films." Lavish in their costumes and settings and splendidly-photographed, with non-professionals chosen, as in the borgate days, for their stunningly-expressive faces and powerful screen presences, these were thoroughly "consumer" films and in fact provided Pasolini with his greatest commercial success. Later on, contrary as ever, he would suggest that, in another way, these were also his "most political" films. However, the politics here was not ideological but sexual: in the erotic, sexually-energized human body which was being everywhere celebrated in these films and which Pasolini claimed was the only place to have yet escaped domination by consumer capitalism. However, the runaway commercial success and popularity of the films,

coupled with the hundreds of soft-porn imitations that were allowed to flood the market in their wake, forced Pasolini to rethink the extent to which the sexualized human body could have been said to have escaped being taken over by consumerism. Thus, the result of this rethinking led to his public "abjuration" of the *Trilogy*, which was printed as the introduction to the published screenplays.

His final film, *Salò o le 120 Giornate di Sodoma* (Salò, or the 120 Days of Sodom, 1976), constitutes a violent rejection of the *Trilogy of Life*. It is a loose adaptation of the 1785 novel (first published in 1904) of *The 120 Days of Sodom* by the Marquis de Sade, updating the story's setting to the World War II era.

The film focuses on four wealthy, corrupt Italian libertines in the time of the Fascist Republic of Salò (1943–1945), the northern town from where Mussolini ruled during this time frame and which was also a puppet state of Nazi Germany. The libertines kidnap 18 teenagers and subject them to four months of extreme violence, sadism, and sexual and psychological torture. The film explores themes of political corruption, consumerism, authoritarianism, nihilism, morality, capitalism, totalitarianism, sadism, sexuality, and fascism. The story is in four segments, inspired by Dante's Divine Comedy: the Anteinferno, the Circle of Manias, the Circle of Excrement, and the Circle of Blood. The film also contains frequent references to and several discussions of Friedrich Nietzsche's 1887 book *On the Genealogy of Morals*, Ezra Pound's poem *The Cantos*, and Marcel Proust's novel sequence *In Search of Lost Time*.

The film, as one would expect, was banned in numerous countries because of its graphic portrayals of rape, torture and murder—mainly of people thought to be younger than eighteen years of age. It exceeded what most viewers could accept at the time in its explicit scenes of intensely sadistic violence. It is considered Pasolini's most controversial film. The film remains banned in several countries and has sparked numerous debates over the years since its release among critics and censors about whether or not it constituted pornography due to its nudity and graphic depiction of sex acts. (The film was never banned in the US, although it received limited distribution).

The unmitigated bleakness and nihilism of the vision of this movie are clearly a far cry not only from the celebration of the body in the *Trilogy of Life* series, but also from the possibility of an outside escape from dominant power as in his borgate films, or a life separate from neocapitalist consumerism as expressed in his adaptation of the Greek plays. Yet this utter desperation and lack of hope represented Pasolini's response to what he saw as a corrupted and degraded Italian reality around him in the mid-1970s. In fact, as he was making Salò, Pasolini was also calling publically for the arrest and trial of all the major Italian Christian Democrat politicians for their part in Italy's degradation.

Because of Pasolini's untimely death, he was not able to complete his plan for 3 films (a sort of *Trilogy of Nihilistic Depravity*) to counter his *Trilogy of Life* series. *Salò*, the only one of this planned new series that he was able to complete, was released two weeks after his death.

Assassination

Pasolini was brutally murdered, run over several times with his own car, dying on November 2, 1975 on the beach at Ostia, near Rome, in a decrepit location typical of his novels. Giuseppe Pelosi, a 17-year-old hustler, was arrested and confessed to his murder. During his interrogation, he told police that he had seized Pasolini's car after a failed sexual liaison and murdered him. He was arrested not far from the murder scene while driving the stolen car, and was convicted in 1976, initially with "unknown others," but this phrase was later removed from the verdict.

But even in death, Pasolini could not avoid controversy. On May 7, 2005 Pelosi retracted his confession, which he said was made under the threat of violence to his family, and claimed that three strangers with southern Italian accents had committed the murder while insulting Pasolini as a "filthy communist."

Following the retraction, the authorities reopened the investigation into Pasolini's death, even though it was almost 30 years later. To this day, the murder is still not completely explained. Some of Pasolini's friends, especially his close friend actress Laura Betti, began to suspect that it had been a contract killing. They pointed to: numerous contradictions in the declarations of Pelosi; a strange intervention by Italian secret services during various parts of the investigations; and finally, a lack of coherence in related documents during the different parts of the judicial procedures. The inefficiency of the investigations was also exposed by his friend, Oriana Fallaci, writing in *Europeo* magazine. Many clues suggest that it was unlikely that Pelosi killed Pasolini alone.

Other evidence, uncovered in 2005, points to Pasolini having been murdered by an extortionist. Testimony by Pasolini's friend, Sergio Citti, indicates that some of the rolls of film from *Salò* had been stolen, and that Pasolini had been going to meet with the thieves to get the reels returned on November 2, 1975, after returning from a visit to Stockholm.

Despite the Roman police reopening the murder case following Pelosi's statement of May 2005, the judges charged with investigating it determined that the new elements were insufficient for them to continue the inquiry, and so the case legally stood as it had in 1976.

Pier Paolo Pasolini was buried in Casarsa, in his beloved Friuli. In the grave, he wears the jersey of the Italian Showmen national team, a charity soccer team he founded with others.

Adapted by James J. Boitano, PhD from:

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