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The most famous of these “wastes of realism,” as Chiarini referred to pink neorealism, was *Pane, amore e fantasia* (Bread, Love, and Fantasy, 1953), drawing on a stylized peasant mythology and a contrived anecdotal approach. Its heroine (a glamorous Gina Lollobrigida clad in a high-fashion minidress), a poor village girl, ends up living happily ever after because she is modest, goes to church, never complains about her misery, and believes in good and evil, just as the priest has always taught her. The success of *Bread, Love, and Fantasy* gave rise to a whole series of pink comedies and farces, evolving against the picturesque Italian countryside (*Bread, Love, and Jealousy*, *Bread, Love and . . .*, etc.). Their central characters were affable priests, charming policemen, poor and pure girls, and village villains. The neorealist heritage enlarged their scale by adding farm laborers, shepherds, prostitutes, and World War II veterans.

Pink neorealism was unthinkable without the glamour of its main protagonists and the so-called “pink vamp” as the leading lady. Dressed in sexy rags, with carefully unkempt hair and made up to look like a true poor peasant girl, the pink vamp was the Italian version of the American pin-up. The images of Gina Lollobrigida and Sophia Loren were created as a national reaction to the stardom of Rita Hayworth and Ava Gardner. (Lollobrigida was often referred to as “the most beautiful Italian housewife.”)