Marcus, Millicent. *Italian Film in the Light of Neorealism*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1986.

______________. *Filmmaking By the Book: Italian Cinema and Literary Adaptation*. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993.

Parmeggiani, Francesca. "Lo sguardo rivolto al passato: Storia e storie nel cinema dei Taviani (1971-1984)." *Italica* 80: 3 (Fall 2003): 403-21.

Sorlin, Pierre. *Italian National Cinema 1896-1996*. London: Routledge, 1996.

Tassone, Aldo. *Parla il cinema italiano*. Vol. 2. Milan: Il Formichiere, 1980.

Testa, Carlo. "Paolo and Vittorio Taviani's *Saint Michael had a Rooster*." *Tolstoy Studies Journal* 11 (1999): 139-41.

______________. *Italian Cinema and Modern European Literatures*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Praeger, 2002.

______________. *Masters of Two Arts: Re-creation of European Literatures in Italian Cinema*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2002.

______________. "Paolo and Vittorio Taviani." In *Encyclopedia of Italian Literary Studies*. London: Routledge (forthcoming, 2006).

Tolstoi, Lev Nikolaevich. *Polnoe sobranie sochinenii*. Moscow and Leningrad: Khudozhestvennaia literatura. *Otets Sergii* in vol. 31, 1954; *Voskresenie*, vols. 32-33, 1933; *Bozheskoe i chelovecheskoe* in vol. 42, 1957. (*PSS*)

______________. *The Works of Leo Tolstoy. Tolstoy Centenary Edition*. Transl. Aylmer Maude. London: Tolstoy Society and Oxford University Press, 1929. *Father Sergius* in *The Devil and Cognate Tales*, vol. 16; *Resurrection*, vol. 19; no *Divine and Human*. (*TCE*)

Torri, Bruno, ed. *Il cinema dei Taviani*. Roma: Ministero degli Affari Esteri, 1989.

Interview with Paolo and Vittorio Taviani
(Rome, 14 April 2004)

Carlo Testa
University of British Columbia

Q. In an autobiographical sense, how did you cross paths with Tolstoy?

A. There is hardly any need to dwell on Tolstoy's importance as a literary figure: for pupils who attend a *liceo classico* [high school with option in classical letters] and belong to an intellectual bourgeois family, Tolstoy is one of the obligatory monuments of culture. However, well beyond that, for us *War and Peace* is *the* fundamental book, the book that is always at hand on our night-table. In the same way, Kurosawa used to say: "I always keep *War and Peace* on my night-table, and before I shoot a sequence, I always re-read a page from it." When we met the great master, we told him: "We know that you have a great love for *War and Peace*, and, if you allow us, it seeems to us that such-and-such a sequence in *The Seven Samurai* is an *exact* remake of a chapter from *War and Peace*." He had to admit that it was true.

Further upstream, our first contact with Tolstoy dates back to our childhood. In Italy there was at the time a collection of literature for adolescents, each of whose volumes presented one of the most important works of world literature, for children or otherwise. We owe our first relation with *War and Peace* to this collection. It was called *La scala d'oro* [The Golden Staircase], in 25 volumes; each volume had a summary, well-made and pleasing illustrations—hence our early familiarity. But later on years went by, and there was a suspension.

Q. Was this happening during the Second World War?

A. Earlier, during the 'thirties. Then I came to Rome after the war (this is Vittorio recounting) to work on a film as an assistant director. I found myself experiencing a very intense moment when, in the evening, in the room of my *pensione*, for the first time away from my family, I again picked up the five volumes of *War and Peace*. That reading experience lasted well into the night and built up again my energies for the day to come.

To this day we believe—and we are aware that we are not using an "orthodox" expression—that *War and Peace* is shot through with the very same flow as is life itself, as though there were no language in between to interpret that life. When we read *War and Peace* we have the sensation that we are having an experience of *indirect life*. For us, the great river of existence has the same energy and the same color as the words of *War and Peace*—I repeat, without the mediation of language. It is absurd, we know. Or, more exactly, it is a mystery.

Q. What translation was it?

A. I couldn't tell you; Leone Ginzburg's only came later. It was an early twentieth-century translation, and the five volumes weren't well printed either.

That reading experience was so lively that I still remember very well the bitter disappointment I felt when, having reached the end of the fourth volume, and anticipating the pleasure of more reading to come, I opened the fifth one—and discovered with consternation that the novel was finished. The fifth volume only contained Tolstoy's essays on history. I suddenly felt as though in a desert! Gone was the wondrous camel that had carried me over the dunes, beholding infinite horizons. It is now fifty years since, but the impression made on me by those readings—and the memory of that youthful disappointment—have never abandoned me.

In any event, for both of us—as for Kurosawa —*War and Peace* remains our companion book, which we take along with us to read on a trip, even for just a few days.

Q. One would almost say that Tolstoy is like a third brother for you two—

A. For us, Tolstoy is *the* author *par excellence*; we feel we are his brothers, his children—and, to utilize an unusual metaphor—even his fathers. Yes, "fathers" too, in the sense—a paradoxical one, be it understood—that in an epoch as difficult and deaf as the present one, we still want to "protect" him. This is why we are extremely pleased that in North America there is a journal actively and solely devoted to Tolstoy.

Q. And yet, paradoxically, far from bringing War and Peace *to the screen, you only re-created texts by Tolstoy that were written after his "conversion." Whereas* War and Peace *belongs to Tolstoy's lay epoch,* Divine and Human, Father Sergius *and* Resurrection *all belong to his religious period.*

A. Yes, but the reason is a different one. *War and Peace* is such an accomplished work that we do not want it, under any circumstance, to be cast in a light different than its own. When we take our inspiration from a literary work, the latter is obviously transformed as if it were clay in our hands. But, in our opinion, *War and Peace must not* be modified—*War and Peace* must remain what it is: a source, an absolute and unpolluted source.

We opted to focus on shorter texts, texts that are closer to the story [*racconto*, i.e., *povest'*] than to the novel; we believe that these lend themselves better to a film's duration—especially to a film

lasting less than three hours. In *Saint Michael* we condensed even more: from that story, which blends three narratives, we only chose one, in fact a segment from one—and transformed its meaning. Each passage from one artistic language to another always amounts to a passage from one poetics to another one.

Saint Michael Had a Rooster

Q. How, then, did Saint Michael *come about?*

A. We had received an invitation from RAI [the State-owned Italian broadcasting corporation] to make a film from a literary story [*racconto*] of our choice. Those were very difficult times for young filmmakers—for us no less than for all others, certainly up until the moment when our *Padre padrone* won the Cannes Film Festival in 1977. Therefore, we were very pleased by the generous invitation extended to us by Tullio Kezich, the well-known film critic, who at the time had been appointed by RAI as the director of this particular section. We proposed a novella by Luigi Pirandello, which he liked a lot. But, in the last account, he had to turn it down: "It's beautiful, my lads, but it's a bit too expensive, and my division does not have much funding."

Q. What novella was it?

A. Berecche and the War. We were about to walk out of Kezich's office, disappointed and in great dejection because of the difficulty of carrying out our profession, which we love so much, when, just on the threshold, we turned around and told him: "There might be another story, a simpler one. It is a *part* of a story by Tolstoy." "What is it?" We explained to him in a few words what it was all about, and he replied: "Wonderful." This is how Tolstoy came to meet us, endowed with all his strength and his imagination.

Q. The strength, the imagination we find in Mezhenetsky—or, more exactly in your case, in Giulio Manieri.

A. Correct. Fact is, in *Saint Michael* we narrate the story of an exceptional man: a romantic anarchist who, in the name of justice, wants to change the world with cobbled-up means, with means hampered by the small scale of his province. This man winds up in jail for ten years in complete segregation. When he is transferred to another prison, for the first time he meets the *new* revolutionists—those whom he considers to be his ideal children; and he addresses them with, let's face it, the pride of the hero. But what he finds out instead is that the new generation, far from admiring the older one, reproaches it for not having acted in a scientific manner, and thus for having delayed the revolution.

As we transformed the literary work into our own, personal cinematic work, we essentially articulated it in three movements, three sequences.

Q. Three movements—like a piece of music?

A. Yes, like a quartet. The first part is the failed insurrection; then comes Manieri's time in jail; and finally, the Venice lagoon. We felt the need to tell the story of this man, a truly exceptional man, who has an exceptional creativity and a deep vision of global dynamics, who has fantasy, the will to resist during ten long years of isolation, and who then suddenly realizes that history has moved on by a very different path.

Despite all the admiration, the love, the *confidence* we have in human beings and their creativity, we also know that all that only has a relative impact on history, the flow of history, and I daresay, the mystery of nature. Quite possibly, this is the very source of life's tragedy: whatever our ability to plan, it is history—the nature of things—that ultimately cuts our projects down to size. This does not mean that one ought to give up; rather, one must keep inventing new, adventurous projects.

Q. The sequences about Manieri's fantasies in jail are truly hallucinatory . . .

A. Paradoxically—and this is an autobiographical confession—the same creative energy which Giulio Manieri must pour forth in the solitude of his

cell, that same burst of fantasy, belongs to our own experience. Let me explain. We are the directors and we must make this film on a small budget, with minimal structures: thus in our production we, too, are locked inside a jail of sorts, inside an economic wire fence. From then on, we *are* in the same position as Giulio Manieri—and yet we must ensure that, without any material means, the imagination can *flourish*! This we must do by cinematographic fantasy, by inventing image after image, by inventing sounds. From a certain point on, we became aware of the identity between Giulio's position in his cell and ours vis-à-vis our film. In a word, to have told Manieri's story is very much like having told the story of two *auteurs* who are making a film within the four walls of a cell in Cinecittà.

Q. All this is truly revealing, and in my opinion makes those prison sequences even more extraordinary. However, in this perspective, I am hard pressed to understand Manieri's final suicide. The idea of suicide seems to go against the mental processes you just described.

A. Not so. When Giulio is released, he realizes—because he is a sharp man, an intelligent man—that history has moved on. What awaits him now? Manieri is now fifty years old, and he no longer has the strength to start everything anew. At this point he has two options: either to become a passive person, or to draw a line under his life story. He prefers to bequeath to the world the testimony of what he has been, rather than become someone who passively accepts his own decline, including in a physical sense. In a word, his suicide is a final act of strength, a reaffirmation of his identity for posterity.

Q. Thus, Saint Michael *must not be primarily understood as a political film.*

A. It is much more than that. In the early '70s, politics did not simply amount to mixing and matching various abstract ideologies; it truly was a comprehensive way of life. Those were the beautiful years of the early wave of social protest [*contestazione*]; later on, the situation degenerated, but things were different at the beginning. Sometimes we are berated, reductively, for having made "political" films. No way! What we did make were films that talk about us and about the people we knew, people who in those years found a reference point in politics. But, again, the issues at stake were not abstractly political and ideological; first and foremost, they were totally personal *existential, moral, ethical* ones—even erotic ones, I would almost say. It is from that terrain that *Saint Michael* was born, intending to portray the opposition between two incompatible types of souls: the romantic and the rationalist ones.

Having said that, we did not wish to be schematic, by any means. For example, the younger revolutionists on the boat, who wish to be more "scientific" than Manieri, also have attitudes that can be traced back to a more personal, subjective position. Think of Virginia, the young woman convict, who exclaims from her launch: "Yes, right now I am a prisoner here on the lagoon; and yet at this very moment I am enjoying life, I can see the sun and the light." These features are in contrast to any notion of a cold rationality. We never assume that human beings are made all in one piece, without contradictions.

The Night Sun

Q. The Night Sun *dates from the year 1990. Yet it is a film that sums up the entire decade of the 1980s.*

A. Correct. In *Allonsanfán* we had already explored the post-napoleonic Restauration of 1815. We had already dealt with the theme of the conflict between individual will and the world, between Utopia and the awareness that such an ideal cannot easily be implemented. [*After the Vienna Congress, it took another 45 years, two major wars and a number of failed insurrections before Italy could assert her aspiration to unification and independence from the Austro-Hungarian empire. CT*] In *Allonsanfán* the protagonist, who experiences such disappointment, becomes a traitor and sinks back into his own past.

In contrast—more than fifteen years after *Allonsanfán*—in making *The Night Sun* at a diffi-

cult historical moment, a moment of disappointments, of loss of social relations and friendships, we felt the need to talk about a different type of individual. We decided to explore to the end the personal itinerary of a man who upholds his determination to give a meaning to his life, who keeps wanting to shape his existence, even if the only reason for this was his sense of pride.

The Night Sun shows how Sergio goes through diverse experiences, be it at the Court in Naples with respect to his King, be it in his love story with Cristina, until he develops the need to collect himself, to be alone with himself. After his disappointing experiences at Court and within the papal Church, he comes to the conclusion that the best answer is the solitude of a hermitage. (Evidently, certain themes recall one another in our films.) For Sergio, solitude becomes the only path in his attempt to disentangle, if nothing else, some of the reasons why he can carry on living.

Sergio is trying to understand himself through silence. That silence is completely different from Manieri's: in isolation, Giulio really wants to continue the revolution.

Q. In other words, when Manieri is alone, he feels in good company; whereas conversely—

A. Conversely, for all his solitude Sergio never feels that he is sufficiently alone.

Clearly, in solitude one creates a rapport with mystery, and in this case—to say it all—with God. The two of us are not religious in the sense that we belong to a specific organization; but we are receptive to the sense of mystery of life. We believe that what human beings know and discover is a wonder; yet, for us what they *do not* know, what they will never discover, is infinitely greater. Here is located, in our opinion, the sense of mystery; it is the great enigma we have been trying to decipher, asking ourselves why we must die, without anyone ever answering us.

Q. What are then, in synthesis, the "conclusions" you arrive at in The Night Sun*?*

A. No film ever arrives at absolute "conclusions." One can only say that Sergio reaches the point where his rigor becomes rigorism. When one's will becomes excessively rigid and despotic, then life rebels. Even though his choice of solitude arises from the authentic, laudable, touching need of a man who is trying to understand, a man who, atop his mountain, attains visions of a rare intensity—this quest is brought to an excessive extreme. Life then takes its revenge on Sergio via the power of sex, which sweeps him away.

At that juncture all is over for Sergio, all has given way. His relationship with the woman he loved, with the society at Court, with the organized Church has given way; and his relationship with himself, in the solitude of the hermitage, has given way, as he has sexually abused the young woman seeking a miracle. All he has left is suicide. Yet life, after taking its revenge, saves him once more: from the darkness of the waters into which he has plunged, Sergio emerges again to see his landscapes, his sky.

Q. According to which criteria have you chosen the southern landscapes that we see in the film?

A. We said to ourselves that we had to find an open environment, an infinitely open landscape, almost like the bottom of a dried sea. For an example, let us think of the landscapes that act as backdrops to Leonardo's Monna Lisa or the Virgin of the Rocks. Those are fantasy landscapes. We set out to search for something that would give the sense of an absolute solitudine, where human presence was forgotten. We built the hermitage on the Appennines, near Campo Imperatore. Incidentally, as a curiosity—the local people came and told us: "That's just the spot where a hermit lived and died in the nineteenth century!"

Q. I would like to go back for a moment to the symbolism expressed in the merchant's daughter—were you seeking a symbolic valence to the merchant's daughter, that young woman whose growth was stunted?

A. In what sense stunted? Charlotte Gainsbourg, the one whom Sergio seduces?

Q. The girl, the merchant's daughter is misshapen—

A. Well she may be in Tolstoy, but she's anything but in the film. Charlotte Gainsbourg, the daughter of Jane Birkin and Serge Gainsbourg. . . In our film, there arrives an attractive woman who, in fact, has a mental deficiency, but despite being retarded has all the beauty and the strength of femininity.

Q. Was it then your intention, somehow, to ennoble this woman with respect to your Tolstoyan prototype?

A. That wasn't it either. Her diseased, pathological condition is unambiguously presented in the film; but it is located, or better yet, relocated to her psyche. It exists, but cannot be seen from the outside; externally, she is very attractive—in fact, deceptively so. This is what we wanted to stress.

Q. Let us now broach the ending of The Night Sun: *an ending not to be found in Tolstoy.*

A. In that ending we find, above all, the "miracle"—the only true miracle— worked by Sergio: the two old peasants, who had begged him for the grace of dying together, really do pass away at a short interval from each other. This is a victory of love for a couple that since youth, through old age, and unto death, has always been very close. The old man, Eugenio, had asked the hermit for a miracle: "Please, may we die together." Sergio learns that this wish has been granted at a time when he is aimlessly roaming the world on his quest for a reason to live. This is how the contradiction in his spirit is born anew: over the spirit of death, the spirit of hope is born again in him. Thus Sergio carries on in his journey.

Q. Could it be said that in your ending Sergio goes to vanish and merge among the people?

A. This would be a bit schematic. Yes, Sergio's more creative part does lead him to identify with the people. In this, indeed, there is a bit of populism of Tolstoyan lineage. But, on the other hand, some form of doubt always remains within him: he keeps doubting about everything. Sergio does not wander on in certainty, he wanders on in hope; it's not the same thing.

Q. The fact remains that your Sergio is warmer and more humane than Tolstoy's.

A. Tolstoy's Sergii ends up as a beggar in Siberia—

Q. Yes, at the end he is humble, but it seems to me that, especially at the beginning, he is prouder and more arrogant than yours. . . However, the theme of Siberia takes us straight to Resurrection.

A. Correct— more than ten years later.

Resurrection

Q. With Resurrection *we arguably enter a further historical moment. The 1980s were years of ambition, individualism and, indeed, solitude. By the year 2000, in contrast, we have left behind us the epoch of the cold war, we are living in the hope of a new world in a new century—although unfortunately that hope hasn't been fulfilled yet. . .*

A. We would not go as far in seeking epochal motivations. It is right for critics to investigate the connection between the epoch when a work of art was created and the work itself. We understand that. However, all this happened for us in a quite subconscious manner. Rather, the creative thrust that led us, as artists, to decide working on *Resurrection* was originated in the opportunity, offered to us by RAI, to tell that story in an appropriate time frame: that is to say, more than three hours' air time at our disposal for a long story that needs *largo* rhythms.

As directors, we have always envied writers, who can decide at will to write a novel, a novella, or then again a story [*racconto*, i.e., *povest'*]. In cinema, in contrast, there is practically only one

format: one must stay within two hours. This is fine, but it is even better to be able to make either a short film, or a long one. That's what the great nineteenth-century classics did: Tolstoy, Dostoevsky, Stevenson, Dumas, Balzac, etcetera. . .

Q. . .according to the pattern of the feuilleton.

A. Fact is, if one is planning to make a work of three hours' duration, one cannot pick just any subject: for that duration—as for any given duration, really— both rhythm and narrative plot must have specific characteristics. Some people claim that everything is possible for the artist. . . Well, that's just not true! There are laws, there are practical rules one cannot undo. For example: opera, our beloved melodrama, was articulated in three acts, because the candles in the theatres ran out at a certain time, and they needed to be replaced. The opportunity to turn *Resurrection*'s popular [*popolare*, i.e. *narodnyi*] story into a film —with a rhythm that we felt was the right one, without being haunted all the time by the need for narrative condensation—was an important reason that attracted us to *Resurrection*.

Mind you, in our opinion *Resurrection* is not Tolstoy's most beautiful book; on the contrary, we believe it is a fairly faulty book. Let's recapitulate for a moment. As you know, *Resurrection* arose from one of Tolstoy's short stories, which, in turn, was derived from a report made to him by a lawyer friend of his—one Koni, I believe. This friend told Tolstoy: "You know, there is a true story that has happened to me; I would like to write it down." And he told Tolstoy more or less the story that now makes up the plot of *Resurrection*: the story of a judge who realizes that he is sitting in judgement over a young woman he has seduced a long time in the past. A year later, Tolstoy meets his friend again and asks: "So, that great story, did you write it down?" "No, I've had no time." "Leave it to me then!" So Tolstoy writes this story, which is called "Koni's story" to the best of my recollections, similar to *Resurrection* but with a different ending. Its ending is consolatory: the protagonist marries the young woman in England. But the initial narrative plot is very strong, very powerful.

Thereupon it occurs to Tolstoy, who is at the time living through his most religious and social moment (it was the time of his contacts with Gandhi), that this story will *also* allow him to write a huge pamphlet against the society of his time. This is why in *Resurrection* we perceive the dyscrasia between, on the one hand, a story that is full of emotion, and on the other, a dispersive description of facts about society, a polemic strongly linked to Tolstoy's own time. Of course, it is an important book; among all of Tolstoy's books, it is the one that has had the most success, including among the common folk [*il popolo*, i.e., *narod*], and it has had a decisive role as an act of societal defiance. But, at the poetic level, it is uneven. In adopting the novel, we purified this story from everything that, in our opinion, it contained in the way of the excessive, the deliberate and the pamphlet-like, in order to be able to retell this great love story.

In our opinion, in the book's plot there are two very powerful elements. First, the story of a woman who, overcoming her earlier abjection, succeeds in reconquering her own dignity and self-respect—and succeeds at the cost of a terrible sacrifice, the sacrifice of her love. This type, this "portrait of a woman" is today more topical than ever, and it mesmerized us.

Second, we were also intrigued by the existential themes embodied in the character of prince Dimitri. We said to ourselves: in this historical moment, lacking in certainties and in any unified metadiscourse—when in politics, as in the world in general, everything is uncertain, in flux—it is necessary that every person find the strength fully to take charge of oneself, one's responsibilities and one's choices, starting from the most private and personal ones. Thus, if we were to say at what level our *Resurrection* unfolds, we would not talk of a political plane; rather, we would talk of an *ethical* plane.

In this sense, *Resurrection* is different from *Saint Michael*, where the political dimension is confirmed by both reality and fantasy. We were telling ourselves as we were making the film (and, after all, to make a film is a way to communicate with others): each of us must have the strength to stand up for our choices. In strengthening this

awareness, making *Resurrection* was a wonderful experience for us. It lasted for many months, and we coexisted with those characters so intensely and for such a long time that the stages in their lives became like stages in our own.

Q. In the ending of your Resurrection, *when the viewers see the train disappear toward the horizon, you show, at the dawn of the twenty-first century, the parallel dawn of its murderous predecessor, the twentieth. How is this image to be understood? Can you see any hope for our age, or none?*

A. The train must be understood in the context of the previous sequence, which does not exist in Tolstoy: the sequence late on New Year's eve, when Dimitrii winds up in the *izba* just before midnight. That sequence arose from something we were told in Russia by a peasant woman, which reinforced an idea suggested by our own fantasy—namely, that at midnight on the last day of the year everyone has the right to express a wish. It could be from getting back one's lost teeth, to owning one more cow, to kicking the *barin*, to experiencing happiness. It is a sequence that unleashes all sorts of desires in human beings. As for the soundtrack, whereas during the film a post-romantic, post-1900 symphonism predominates, at the moment when the wishes are expressed the instruments that emerge are tympani, drums, and percussions. This is because in life there is *always*, inside us, something that impels us toward a dimension of reality that is "other," non-mimetic and fantastic.

Just after that, we have the train that moves ahead and away toward the horizon; as we see written in superposition on the screen, the train is symbolically bound for the year 1900. By contiguity, the beginning of the scene of the train is still steeped in the warmth of all the hopes and the nineteenth-century Utopias whose intensity the previous sequence has just conveyed to us. However, given our knowledge of what would occur in the course of the twentieth century, the train gradually acquires a different symbolic dimension. Such a transformation is highlighted at the photographic level: against a backdrop of a gloomy sky and dull snow, the greyness of the wagons reminds us of Holocaust carriages—and indirectly suggests them. The same applies to the music in the soundtrack: after being, during the film, full of romantic melody, it now suddenly becomes harsh and strident as the train heads out for the new century—a new century of disappointed hopes and great tragedies. It's the wonderful soundtrack by Nicola Piovani.

Q. In what form has this film been made available to the public?

A. The film has been shown by the main television channels in Europe. In France it was aired as one event, on the night preceding the Christmas [of 2001], we believe. In Italy it was shown in two episodes, as it was in Germany; we do not know for sure about other countries. In Europe it hasn't been distributed in theatres; we know that in Italy it has been published in videocassette.

The most curious incident about our *Resurrection* is that, unbeknownst to us, the film was sent *as a feature film* to the Moscow Film Festival—where it won the first prize! The last time Italy had won, it had been with Fellini's *8 1/2*. What was touching for us was that the jury, which obviously also included Russian jurors, told us: "Cinema had never expressed our soul with so much precision." And we replied: "That's because you and we, we are all children of a great peasant civilization, which makes us all brothers."

Q. Have short (two-hour) versions been made in any country for distribution in theatres?

A. No, no short versions of *Resurrection* have been made. I repeat, certain things simply do not tolerate adjustments or substitutions. In Japan, the film is about to be released in the theatres in its full-length version (3hrs 04 min).

Q. Where did you shoot the scenes on location—those in the forest, for example?

A. For the scenes in the forest, we went to Slovakia. Bad luck: although it was very cold (it was wintertime), there was no snow. But we could make up for that, either by making artificial snow

or, in part, with a digital touch-up at the time of post-production.

Q. What were you looking for in the actors?

A. It was after a long search that we identified Stefania Rocca and, even more so, Timothy Peach; we wanted to have faces without any petty-bourgeois self-satisfaction, capable to express a profound interior quest, on the personal level as well.

Q. What is the next film by the Tavianis that the public will be able to see?

A. La Sanfelice (*Luisa Sanfelice*), inspired by Alexandre Dumas *père* and set in the Naples of the Napoleonic period. This, too, is a co-production by RAI, scheduled to be aired next month [May 2004] on the small screen for the Italian public.