For a Cinema of Inbetween-ness: *Emanuele Crialese's* Nuovomondo *(2006)*

Emanuele Crialese's *Nuovomondo* [*The Golden Door* (2006)] powerfully expresses a trend that has characterized contemporary Italian cinema since Gianni Amelio's *Lamerica* (1994): the representation of migration as an existential condition suspended between worlds and identities.[1] Literally "floating" between the stony, heavy, gray dimension of realism that marks the establishing shots of the film in Sicily and the liquid, light, white dimension of the seemingly surreal dream in the closing sequence in the new world, *Nuovomondo* refigures the historical phenomenon of mass emigration from Southern Italy to the United States. Stylistically, *Nuovomondo* intertwines the tradition of neorealism, as is epitomized by Visconti's *La terra trema* [*The Earth Will Tremble* (1948)], with the creative legacy of Italian art cinema, as the intertextual reference to Fellini's *E la nave va* [*And the Ship Sails On* (1986)] underlines. The result of this cinematic hybridization is an open-ended narrative infused with the dreamlike texture of magic realism and the thought-provoking sociology of neorealism.[2] This essay argues that *Nuovomondo*'s significance lies in its powerful rendition of the *in-betweenness* that defines migration as an existential condition, suspended between the real and the surreal or "hyperreal." *Nuovomondo* radicalizes the fluidity and suspension of the migrant experience by offering a compelling cinematic rendition of Jean Baudrillard's concept of "simulacrum," that is, the "substitution of signs of the real for the real itself" (Baudrillard 4).

The film depicts the story of the Mancuso family that leaves its rural Sicilian roots in search of a better life in America at the turn of the twentieth century. Through a tripartite structure,[3] we follow widower Salvatore, his sons Angelo and the speech-and-hearing impaired Pietro, his reluctant mother "Fortunata," and two girls from the same village along a Dantesque journey between worlds, in which they will be "illuminated" by a mysterious British traveler, Lucy, or "Luce" as Salvatore translates her foreign name.

In turn Lucy, according to the meaning of Salvatore's name (the Savior), is "saved" by the trustworthy protagonist of this collective pilgrimage. After a descent into hell, the abyss of the steerage on a steamship whose allusive name is "Dante," the protagonists experience a gradual ascent to a purgatory of pseudo-scientific purification

during the internment at Ellis Island. Finally, these Dantesque pilgrims of modernity reach a surreal paradise in the open-ended closing sequence, in which they tentatively swim in a milky ocean.[4]

The inextricable interlacement of the Italian and the American worlds that characterizes this journey is clearly underlined by Martin Scorsese, who briefly introduces the feature presentation on the DVD version. According to Scorsese, Crialese's "economy of expression" deepens the "moving experience of hearing the Sicilian dialect and seeing the practices of an ancient culture [. . .] and the bewilderment of the older people when confronted with the modern world." The film, Scorsese argues, poignantly represents personal memories of his grandparents and their generation: "The connection to the old world was being broken, but here Crialese sparks that connection back to life." In Pellegrino D'Acierno's words, the chafing between the old that has been lost and the new that has been gained, which both Scorsese and Crialese address, engenders an expressive tension between "Being Italian [or any ethnic American] by descent and Becoming Italian by consent [. . .] by constructing a cultural persona that maintains the cultural creativity of Italian Americanness" (xxxiii). This creative, dynamic duality is a thread throughout Scorsese's work. In particular, I would like to refer here to his early documentary production, *Italianamerican* (1974). I argue that, with *Nuovomondo*, Italian born Crialese, who graduated from the Film Studies School at the New York University in 1995[5] as Scorsese did in 1966, offers a cinematic expansion of a key passage in *Italianamerican*.

Situated between *Mean Streets* (1972) and *Taxi Driver* (1976), *Italianamerican* consists of an interview with Scorsese's parents in the *cinéma vérité* style, conducted with a hand-held camera that captures the everyday gestures of Charles and Catherine Scorsese in their living room in New York's Little Italy. The short is interspersed with documentary footage of the great migration and with freeze-frames that hammer the viewer with the emotional tension of memory.

At the end of the interview, and with the grace of an ancient storyteller, Catherine Scorsese evokes how a fig tree that her mother used to hate stopped producing figs when she died. Catherine Scorsese's emotional reaction to these memories stresses her painful awareness that something has been lost with the successful integration into the new world. "That's enough for today," Catherine abruptly concludes, and a black-and-white freeze-frame captures her in close-up. The sudden switch from the pastel color of Catherine's reminiscence to the black and white of the freeze-frame encapsulates the unspeakable loss of value and identity that appears to be inextricably related to upward mobility.

If migration can be seen as a bridge, or a "hyphen" between worlds for example, in the ethnic qualifier "Italian-American,"[6] Scorsese has attempted to integrate what has been lost into what has been gained

in this process throughout his work. This endeavor may explain, for instance, why he chose to fuse "Italian" and "American" in one word, *Italianamerican*, thus constructing a hybrid, complex cinematic profile and a cultural identity, a quest that is still unended as Scorsese's *The Departed* (2006) confirms. With the title *Nuovomondo*, seemingly inspired by Scorsese's *Italianamerican*, Crialese subsumes his film of migration in a compound neologism that integrates the old and the new, creating a truly different dimension of the migratory condition.[7]

The theme of migration is ingrained in the history of Italian American cinema—from the silent movie era, with Reginald Barker's *The Italian* (1915), to Stanley Tucci's *Big Night* (1998)—and of Italian cinema—from Febo Mari's *L'emigrante* (1915)[8] to Paolo Virzì's *My Name is Tanino* (2006), just to name a few examples. *Nuovomondo* expands the creative potential of this theme by capitalizing on the tension between the historical and the fictional, the real and the surreal. In his film review, Guido Bonsaver points out that Crialese began to work on a documentary piece set on Ellis Island in 1999 (54).[9] Yet the project never came to fruition, and the director added to the original script the initial and central sections in Sicily and on the ship to the original script. The final product is "a film delicately balanced between the chronicle of a mass diaspora and the personal fate of a small family" (Bonsaver 54).

With the "economy of expression" that Scorsese praises in his introduction, Crialese recounts the history of the great wave of migration from Southern Italy to the United States.[10] Four million five hundred thousand people, mostly with a rural background, left their home in the aftermath of the Italian unification between 1870 and 1924.[11] While 1870 immediately evokes the problematic proclamation of Rome as the third capital of the unified Italian Kingdom, the year 1924 requires further attention. Passed in 1924, the National Origins Quota Laws aimed at curbing the immigration to the United States from Southern Europe, Asia, and Africa. The infamous "One-Drop Rule," which inspired the anti-immigration legislation, mirrored the principles of eugenics that Madison Grant had advocated in his influential book, *The Passing of the Great Race* (1916). In addition to the new policy of the fascist regime in Italy, which strongly discouraged emigration to strengthen the demographics of a rising *Impero*, the principles of eugenics gave a theoretical justification to racism against allegedly inferior races. The overarching goal was to preserve the genetic purity and economic strength of white America, the "great race," endangered by miscegenation and the looming depression.[12]

Crialese's representation of the great diaspora follows the journey of the Mancuso family in the years prior to the passing of the National Origins Quota Laws. In 1917, although Italian Americans represented 12% of the United States Army, restrictionists capitalized on the sharp-

ening of isolationist and anti-immigration sentiments through the First World War, and the United States Congress passed a Literacy Act despite President Woodrow Wilson's veto. As Stanislao Pugliese points out, the literacy test "becomes part of the immigration law in an attempt to stem the flow of immigrants from southern and eastern Europe" (697). According to informational materials on display at the Ellis Island Museum of Immigration, "[w]hen the act failed to curtail immigration significantly, Congress passed the quota acts, two major laws that ended the open door policy."[13]

The third part of *Nuovomondo*, depicting the migrants' "rite of passage" at Ellis Island, foregrounds the historical and psychological weight of the medical and mental investigations to which the immigrants are subject. In particular, Salvatore Mancuso's mental fitness test points out the inherent intolerance of the pseudo-scientific approach of eugenics towards a different logic. For instance, the officials who examine Salvatore confront him with a problem that he cannot solve according to his vision of the world plagued by hunger and misery.[14] When Lucy wittingly challenges the examining immigration official, the latter recites the eugenics credo: "It has been proven that lack of intelligence is genetically inherited, is contagious in a way . . . We are trying to prevent below average people from mixing with our citizens [. . .]." "What a modern vision . . ." replies Lucy, the epitome of modernity.[15]

Interestingly, while this historically grounded part of the narrative occurs on Ellis Island, these scenes were shot in a former immigration hotel and train station in Buenos Aires (Godard in Oppenheimer 26, Genovese 38). Thus, the realistic, on-location feeling of these sequences is, in hindsight, suspended through the choice of the setting. The realism of this section is more dependent on the light of the shooting than on the location itself. In a revealing interview, Agnès Godard, *Nuovomondo*'s director of photography,[16] has emphasized the literal and metaphorical significance of darkness in the film: "My main concern on the film was the darkness, especially aboard the ship [. . .]. The dormitories—one for men and one for women—were crowded like a sardine can. I wanted real darkness, a darkness made for rats, not human beings. That's why we never used lamps to justify light" (Godard in Oppenheimer 28).

Moreover, the realistic imprint of the film is tightly related to the photographic documentation at the Ellis Island Museum of Immigration, which mesmerized Crialese during his archival research. When the director approached Godard about shooting *Nuovomondo*, he shared with her a collection of turn-of-the-century photographs. Godard noticed that, in every single image, at least one individual was staring directly into the camera. In each photograph, the human gaze was meeting the camera and, by extension, the viewer, thus creating a visual relationship of gripping intensity.

This first impression was reinforced when Godard met the Sicilian actors who would impersonate the main characters. I would like to mention here only Sicilian born Aurora Quattrocchi, who plays the role of Fortunata and was an unforgettable mafia widow in Marco Tullio Giordana's *I cento passi* [*One Hundred Steps* (2000)], and Vincenzo Amato, who offers a compelling interpretation of Salvatore, even more convincing than his father's role in Crialese's *Respiro* [*Grazia's Island* (2002)]. An actor and a sculptor in New York, Amato infuses his interpretation of Salvatore with the powerful expression of his sculpture. Referring to the forcefulness of the actors' facial expressions, the director of photography notes that "it spoke to the deepest richest idea of the film: the immigrant's desire to retain his singularity while becoming part of a new whole" (Godard in Oppenheimer 24). To capture this intensity, Godard, who does her own shooting, uses a handheld camera: "That way I am in the middle of the people. I am an observer, a witness" (Godard in Oppenheimer 24).

In addition, Godard acknowledges the visual influence of the photography of Alfred Stieglitz, of Peter Watkins's 1974 film devoted to the Norwegian expressionist painter, *Edward Munch*, and the impact that a book of autochromes had on her *Nuovomondo* cinematography. Autochromes are "early color photographs made with a process invented by the Lumière brothers that involved glass plates and microscopic grains of dyed potato starch. The resulting images had the look of pointillist paintings" (Oppenheimer 24). The texture of the pointillist image is perfect for the visual atmosphere of *Nuovomondo*, which should also "suggest an entire world by just showing fragments of it" (Godard in Oppenheimer 24).

In other words, Godard points out the synecdochic significance of this film from her own cinematographer's perspective. *Nuovomondo* represents the part for the whole while it establishes a relationship of contiguity between a mass diaspora, a historical event of gigantic proportions such as the great migration at the turn of the last century, and one specific story, a minuscule point of a large, pointillist image. Thus, the journey of the Mancuso family is a private story, which, like millions of other stories, molds public history by means of intertwining the real and the "hyperreal" in the style of a cinematic pointilliste image.

Despite the remarkable result of their collaboration, Crialese recalls the difficulties of his interaction with Godard in an interview for the German journal *EPD-Film. Das Kino-Magazin*. While the French cinematographer would perfectly render the "claustrophobic" atmosphere of the trip on the ship, she would be more hesitant in the long shots that characterize the first part of the film in Sicily or the scenes on the ship deck.

In this regard, Crialese explains the significance of the recurring long shots in the first part of the narrative. The protagonists of the

magical rituals that we see in the beginning can follow and enact these ancient traditions because they are so inherently related to their land: "These people are a part of the land and soil on which they live" (Crialese in Midding 35).[17] In the second and third parts, on the contrary, the sky is hardly visible. As Crialese underlines,

> Their journey has at the same time a literal and a metaphorical meaning. On their trip the characters change into subjects of modernity. At the end of the 19th century this is a drastic development. In an extremely short period of time, they move from a rural to an industrial society. Whereas they used to work on the fields with their entire body, in the new world they become a mere link in the chain of production" (Crialese in Midding 35).[18]

To illustrate this point, I would like to recall a scene of the first part. After pleading with his mother for his right to leave behind his ancestors' plight of misery, Salvatore buries himself in dark, rich soil. Unexpectedly, his face, captured in extreme close-up and almost submerged by dirt, is inundated by a rain of gold coins, which mysteriously pour from nowhere, producing metallic, crystal clear, festive bells' sounds. This scene offers one of those "moments of pure cinema [. . .] in which sound and image combine to create a lyricism that transcends the story" (Antani 61). The significance of this sequence, which intertwines through sound and image the symbols of the two worlds, the brown soil and the golden coins, derives from the interconnected presence of the real and the surreal.

This stylistic tension between Crialese and Godard is amplified in the coexistence of the apparently contradictory dimensions of the "real" migrant experience and the "hyperreal" cinematic style, which is precisely what several critics regret in this film.[19] Fantasy sequences are layered in the gritty realism of the location shots in the rocky Sicilian landscape or in the dark womb of the ship. For instance, while Salvatore and his sons, Angelo and Pietro, hike through the rough countryside to pick up Fortunata before sailing off, Salvatore sees children carrying disproportionately huge carrots and apples over the fields. As for the rain of gold coins in another disconcerting scene, Salvatore's imagination has been forever marked by the pictures that Pietro showed him at the summit of his pilgrimage to the Christus figure: an image of a tree bearing gigantic gold coins as biblically tempting fruits, and a girl and a man standing next to an overwhelmingly tall chicken.

What might first appear as a disturbing stylistic incongruence derives from Crialese's (and Godard's) foremost intention of telling a story and refiguring history from the point of view of *inbetween-ness*—between reality and dream, voice and silence—that defines the film's protagonists. At the very centre of their perspective is not only the unspeakable fear of the unknown,[20] but also "the story of a deception" (Crialese in Midding 35).[21] As Crialese points out, the postcards of

gigantic edible animals, fruits, and vegetables, of trees bearing disproportionate gold coins are historical documents in the archives of the Ellis Island Museum of Immigration. They were the first images of the new world with which the Southern peasants, mostly illiterate, associated their longing for freedom from poverty. "I think my film mirrors the power of images of a fictional world on a different world" (Crialese in Midding 35).[22] This power of images of a fictional world has constructed "the dream of America as the promised Land" (Crialese in Midding 35)[23] throughout the history of cinema. According to Crialese, we are today still under this influence, which he defines as "the hypnotizing power" ("die hypnotische Macht") of the American dream. The postcards are not photographs, based on the principles of imitation or reduplication of reality. They are rather what Jean Baudrillard defined as "simulacra," simulations that replace the real or the referent with an image or a sign.[24] Thus, the journey into modernity that *Nuovomondo*'s protagonists undertake alludes to the disappearance of the referent that characterizes postmodernism. Simulation erases the referent, for "it is the generation by models of a real without origin or reality: a hyperreal" (Baudrillard 2). It is, indeed, this "hyperreal"—suspended between the magic and the factual—that defines Crialese's postmodern tale of migration.

Precisely this "hyperreal" dimension characterizes one of the most powerful sequences of the narrative, the departure of the ship from the dock. In a startling crane shot, the camera, placed on the highest deck of the ship, looks down from a first-class point of view at passengers traveling steerage. The frame composition graphically renders a speechless, anonymous mass of dark heads, hats, and cloaks. Slowly, "a schism on the diagonal appears on the right side" (Morrison 42), and the crowd and the shot gradually split, a cell duplicating itself, with unseen gazes uniting for the last time those who embrace the unknown and those who cling to the known. Crialese declares that

> this image, this metaphor was my point of departure when I began to write my script. This moment should look as if the earth were dividing. The distance between ship and harbor is like a wound that opens up. A part of culture and tradition goes away, another part remains behind (Crialese in Midding 35).[25]

In the eerie silence of the opening wound, the abrupt sound of a ship horn breaks the metaphor, and the travelers turn in unison toward the off screen source of the sound and, at the same time, toward the camera. What has been criticized as an excess of "theatricality"[26] rather underlines a moment that subsumes Crialese's own "manieristic"[27] interpretation of "magic realism." In other words, I would define Crialese's cinematic style as an eloquent, albeit silent, expression of that "Magic

Realism in Film" that Frederic Jameson has characterized "as a metamorphosis in perception and in things perceived [. . .] a visual spell, an enthrallment to the image in its present of time" (301, 303). This visual spell, according to Jameson's analysis, has to do first and foremost with a certain historical dimension of magical realism in film: "A history with holes, perforated history, which includes gaps not immediately visible to us, so close is our gaze to its objects of perceptions" (303).

Thus, Jameson's definition of "magic realism" in film clarifies *Nuovomondo*'s floating cinematic dimension, between the gritty realism of image and language in Visconti's *La terra trema* (1948), inspired by the veristic novel *I Malavoglia* [*The House by the Medlar Tree* (1881)], and the dreamlike reinvention of "the" historical event of modernity, the conflagration of the First World War, in Fellini's *E la nave va* (1986). Although both films are significant intertextual presences in *Nuovomondo*, I will omit to analyze the former and more obvious one for space reasons,[28] and rather linger over the latter, for the reference to Fellini's film contributes to understand Crialese's own hybrid interpretation of "Magic Realism in Film."

Defined by Peter Bondanella as Fellini's "homage to silent cinema" (387), *E la nave va* recounts the unlikely cruise of a ship, the *Gloria N.*, departing from an unspecified Italian harbor in July 1914. The wealthy first-class voyagers, including the Austro-Hungarian Grand-Duke and his Prime Minister, are for different reasons related to Edmea Tetua, a late opera singer, whose ashes will be scattered to the wind on her native island of Erimo in the Aegean Sea. In the middle of the trip, the aristocratic society of the *belle époque* is joined by a suspicious group of Serbian refugees. They are seeking shelter from reprisals following the assassination of the Austrian Archduke Ferdinand at Sarajevo.

The inevitable outbreak of the First World War is sketched at the end of the film with the sudden appearance of an Austrian battle ship. In retaliation for a hand-bomb tossed by the Serbian refugees against the Austrian vessel, the battle ship attacks the cruiser and the *Gloria N.* sinks into the ocean or, more exactly, the *simulacrum* of the ocean. Near the end of the film, Fellini reveals the sophisticated set machinery of the gigantic Teatro 5 of Cinecittà behind the deck of the *Gloria N.* and the stormy ocean (made of plastic) in which the ship cruised. Then the narrative goes back to the discolored sepia tones of the opening, and we see Orlando, the puzzled journalist behind the camera during the cruise, who stands for Fellini himself. While rowing on a lifeboat, he announces that he managed to survive the shipwreck with a female rhinoceros that, on the ship, had overwhelmed the passengers with her stench. More importantly, Orlando leaves his audience with a puzzling remark: "Per quanto mi riguarda, ho un'ottima notizia da darvi. Lo sapevate che il rinoceronte dà un ottimo latte?"

In the end sequence of *E la nave va*, Orlando continues to row on the grayish, smoky waters that come back to life—and color—in *Nuovomondo*. The porthole that frames the long shot of the lifeboat with Orlando and the rhinoceros places in the foreground the fluid dimension of the ocean, or better the *simulacrum* of a fluid dimension that will leave the first-time viewer of *Nuovomondo* as bewildered as Fellini's spectator.

It is in this fluid dimension that Crialese's "magic realism" literally "emerges" to suggest an unstable arrival through the end scene of *Nuovomondo*, in which the protagonists tentatively swim in an unlikely milky ocean. This "arrival" is, indeed, a "departure" toward an unknown "new world," made of reality and dream, real and "hyperreal." *Nuovomondo*'s conclusion mirrors in high-angle the same coincidence of arrival and departure toward an unknown "new world" of human tolerance that ended Crialese's previous film, *Respiro* [*Grazia's Island* (2002)], through the final underwater sequence in low-angle.

Similarly to *Nuovomondo*, *Respiro* seems to follow a neorealist aesthetic, with on-location shooting, extensive presence of long shots and deep focus, the casting of non-professional actors in supporting roles, and the heavy use of the dialect of Lampedusa, a small, rocky island south of Sicily, on which the film is set. *Respiro*'s narrative, though, does not concentrates on the collective plight of the fishermen that toil on the island but on the individual destiny of isolation to which Grazia, the female protagonist, is doomed. Because of her erratic behavior in the community and at home, Grazia is ostracized to the point that her fellow citizens and her husband decide to send her to a psychiatric clinic in Milan, in which conventional medicine should heal her existential uneasiness. A consequence of this verdict, Grazia's disappearance is an extreme act of resistance against the rigid, moralistic boundaries of her provincial world.

At the end of *Respiro*, Crialese's aesthetic signature, which defines his cinema of *in-betweenness*, takes centre stage. While the community is gathered on the beach around ritual bonfires that celebrate the island's patron, Grazia suddenly resurfaces offshore. First Grazia's husband, then their sons, and finally the celebrants on the shore dive silently underwater. The camera plunges into the clear fluidity of the Mediterranean Sea and films their legs in slow motion. Underwater, the community moves in an undetermined direction but in the spirit of a new tolerance and openness to the Other and the Unknown, which can be best evoked through the "hyperreal," as Crialese suggests in *Respiro* and, even more forcefully, in *Nuovomondo*.

Asked about the allusive and delusive meaning of *Nuovomondo*'s conclusion, in which "the arrival in NY takes place in fog, and America remains unseizable" (Midding 35),[29] Crialese replies:

> I had to fight bitterly on this point with all the producers. They wanted me to show at least once Manhattan's skyline. Yet, in my film America remains a fantasy—a *simulacrum*, we could add—. My characters are trapped in this dream of plenty [. . .]. [In the last shot] they have arrived to their land of dream, but they are completely helpless about what to do. It takes them a while to figure out that they should swim (Crialese in Midding 35).[30]

Because of their ontological and ethical uncertainty, *Nuovomondo*'s protagonists are, indeed, ironic *simulacra* of the "sinner-(wo)men" that Nina Simone's non-diegetic voice accompanies in the final, uncertain swim with her interpretation of a traditional spiritual, *Sinnerman*.[31] As they epitomize migration as an existential condition suspended between worlds, identities and, in this specific case, cinematic styles, *Nuovomondo*'s sinners/swimmers become creatures of the *inbetweenness*, floating between the real and the "hyperreal," the referent and "simulacrum."

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NOTES

[1] See, for example, *Oltremare, ma non è l'America*, dir. Nello Correale, 1998, *Tornando a casa*, dir. Vincenzo Marra, and *Quando sei nato non puoi più nasconderti*, dir. Marco Tullio Giordana, 2005. For an intriguing analysis of this theme, see Fiore.

[2] *Nuovomondo* received prestigious recognitions, such as the Silver Lion at the 2006 Venice Film Festival, the 2006 Critic's Award at the Cannes Film Festival, and Italy's Academy Award nomination for the best foreign language film.

[3] The Italian film critic Adriano De Grandis aptly comments on this three-part structure as follows: "E [Crialese] usa tre grandi blocchi narrativi (la Sicilia, la traversata, l'America) per raccontare un unico, immenso, disagio esistenziale: la terra natia sempre più incapace di garantire una sopravvivenza decorosa; la terra di mezzo, instabile e minacciosa, tra speranza e terrore; la terra promessa (invisibile) così ostile e incomprensibile" (35).

[4] According to the German film critic Heike-Melba Fendel, *Golden Door* "is perhaps the most anti-American film that one could think of. [. . .] Whereas the US-American myth of a melting pot downplays the origin of its immigrants in favor of assimilation, *Golden Door* takes plenty of time to recount farewell and separation" (34; my translation).

[5] Crialese's first feature film at the New York University Film School, presented at the 1998 Sundance Film Festival, was entitled *Once We Were Strangers*. On this see Genovese 38.

[6] For the controversy surrounding the meaning of the hyphen in "Italian-American," I refer to Casillo 39–40 and n170–2.

[7] De Grandis interprets *Nuovomondo*'s "economy of expression" as follows: "Crialese toglie tutto quello che non c'entra e potrebbe fuorviare. Elimina anche lo spazio fra le parole: così quel *Nuovomondo* è come *Lamerica* di Amelio, lessico sgrammaticato di chi ha soltanto a disposizione, per farsi capire, la 'propria' lingua e non quella di tutti, codice di un'ulteriore distanza [. . .]" (34).

[8] See also Charlie Chaplin's *The Immigrant* (1917) and Pasquale Festa Campanile's *L'emigrante* (1973).

[9] Crialese worked on this documentary project in collaboration with Robert Chartoff, the producer of the Rocky Balboa series (Bonsaver 54).

[10] For a broader perspective on "Dati e date dei viaggi migratori da e verso l'Italia," I refer to Fiore 90–2, and its bibliography.

[11] At the very root of this mass phenomenon was the profound disillusion suffered by the generation that had fought with Giuseppe Garibaldi for the integration of the South into the newly born Italian Kingdom between the 1840s and 1860s. The great wave of migration was the most visible result of the economic and ethic failure of the Italian unification. The central government did not invest in the South as promised in the desperately needed modernization of agriculture, industrialization, and education. Furthermore, the unification meant the introduction of mandatory military service and increased tax burden on the lower rural class. The first consequence was a violent reaction of the rural masses against the state and its institutions, the widespread insurgence of *Brigantaggio* (banditism), and the subsequent brutal repression of the rebellious peasants carried on by the national army. The crushed hopes for more humane living conditions and a more democratic society at home set in motion a mass diaspora toward the mythical land of opportunity that ended in 1924. For a thorough discussion of the mass migratory wave, see Gabaccia 35–128, and Mangione and Morreale 67–125.

[12] See Cogdell and also Verdicchio 77.

[13] "The first Quota Act of 1921 sharply reduced immigration to 350,000 admissions per year. Immigration from southern and eastern Europe was especially hard hit. The annual quota for these regions would be 155,000 admissions, far below the previous annual average of 783,000. The even more restrictive Immigration Act of 1924, which set an annual ceiling of 150,000 admissions, further reduced the number of southern and eastern European immigrants to below 25,000. The new act introduced a 'national origins' system of allocating quotas to maintain the nation's ethnic composition as it was in 1920. In addition, the law denied entry to 'aliens ineligible to citizenship,' reaffirming Chinese exclusion and effectively barring Japanese without mentioning them by name" (my transcription of an explanatory poster on display at the Ellis Island Museum of Immigration, New York, May 8, 2009).

[14] "You are on a boat with two sacks. One full with bread, the other with gold. There is a storm: Which one do you throw away?" asks the immigration officer. Salvatore is confused: "Gold . . . I can't throw it away. Bread . . . I eat the bread. . . . So, I don't throw anything. Right? . . . Right?" When Lucy's turn comes, she solves the puzzle with ease, and then she challenges the officer

with subtle irony: "I thought you were looking for illnesses and contagious diseases here."

[15] "Lucy è la diversità e il mistero e così rimarrà fino alla fine; mistero incomprensibile per quel mondo arcaico che muove verso la modernità e il progresso, mistero di cui diffidare ma da cui restare inevitabilmente stregati: Lucy, che diviene fin troppo esplicitamente Luce per tutti i viaggiatori, è la modernità stessa" (Borroni 45).

[16] Godard is particularly well known for her superb work with Claire Dénis, including *L'Intrus*, 2004, and *Beau Travail,* 1999.

[17] "Diese Menschen sind ein Teil der Erde, auf der sie leben." From now on all the translations from the German original version of Crialese's interview are mine.

[18] "Ihre Reise hat eine gleichermassen konkrete wie eine metaphorische Bedeutung. Auf ihr verwandeln sich die Figuren in Menschen der Moderne. Das ist am Ende des 19. Jahrhunderts eine drastische Entwicklung. In ganz kurzer Zeit – in vier, fünf Wochen – unternehmen sie den Schritt von der Agrar- zur Industriegesellschaft. Zuvor haben sie bei der Landarbeit ihren ganzen Körper eingestezt, in der Neuen Welt werden sie nur noch ein Glied in der Produktionskette sein."

[19] For example, see Antani 62, Bonsaver 54, and Brooke 102.

[20] This is expressed by Pietro's muteness, which reminds the viewer of the young Vito Corleone's muteness when he arrives to Ellis Island in the beginning of Coppola's *The Godfather, Part 2.*

[21] "[D]ie Geschichte einer Täuschung."

[22] "Ich denke, mein Film reflektiert, welche Macht die Bilder einer fiktiven Welt auf eine andere Kultur ausüben."

[23] "[. . .] den Traum von Amerika als dem gelobten Land."

[24] According to Baudrillard, simulation addresses "the question of substituting signs of the real for the real itself" (4).

[25] "Dieses Bild, diese Metapher war mein Ausgangspunkt beim Schreiben des Drehbuchs. In diesem Moment soll es aussehen, als ob sich die Erde teilt. Der Abstand zwischen Schiff und Hafen ist wie eine Wunde, die klafft. Ein Teil der Tradition und Kultur geht fort, ein anderer bleibt zurück."

[26] "There is a sense that Crialese's gift for mise en scène needs a firm hand to avoid self-defeating acts of virtuosity. A brilliant example is the impressive sequence of the ship pulling out of the dock. Shot from above, the masses of passengers and onlookers cramming the scene are symbolically parted by the slow movement of the ship. But a couple of seconds later the visual poetry is ruined by the theatricality of having all the passengers turn in unison to listen to the ship's thundering horn" (Bonsaver 55).

[27] "Ebbene sì, Crialese è un manierista, uno che si compiace dell'immagine per il piacere dell'invenzione; uno che si compiace dell'indefinitezza dei tempi e degli spazi del racconto, si compiace del non detto sui suoi personaggi, si compiace degli sguardi, delle musiche, di quelle inquadrature dall'alto, dal basso, poi ancora dall'alto, poi ancora dal basso, si compiace dei suoi quadretti

surreali, si compiace di quei corpi che s'intrecciano e si accalcano e si muovono come danzando, tutto così artefatto, così studiato, perfino retorico (nel senso di ampolloso e ridondante). Oh, Crialese è un uomo di maniera!" (Borroni 44).

[28] Bonsaver also refers to the Taviani's *Kaos* (1984) (54).

[29] "Die Ankunft in NY findet im Nebel statt, [und] Amerika bleibt unfassbar."

[30] "In diesem Punkt hatte ich mit allen Produzenten erbitterte Kämpfe auszutragen. Sie wollten, dass ich mindestens einmal die Skyline von Manhattan zeige. Aber Amerika bleibt im Film eine Fantasie. Meine Figuren sind gefangen in diesem Traum vom Überfluss [. . .]. Sie sind im Traum angekommen, aber völlig ratlos, was sie tun sollen. Es dauert eine Weile, bis sie auf die Idee kommen, zu schwimmen."

[31] Nina Simone sings the two most intriguing non-diegetic songs of *Nuovomondo*'s soundtrack, "Sinnerman," in the end sequence, and "Feeling Good," in the Ellis Island staircase sequence. The lyrics of both pieces include forceful images the fluid, dynamic, suspended dimension of migration. They can be found at http://boscarol.com/nina/html/where/sinnerman.html and http://www.seeklyrics.com.

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