general term ‘Germans’ over the more polite, because narrower, “Nazis” (157).

2 Typical of this unflagging sense of responsibility to the dead are the works of Yiddish poet, and Vilna Ghetto survivor, Abraham Sutzkever. In his poem “Under the Earth,” he imagines that the dead are still alive, under the earth: “Are there birds twittering under the earth, / choking back / their holy tears in their thin necks, / or is that throbbing under the earth once-used words that seem invisible birds / .... / And I dig with my hands—bony spades, / down to where the black / palaces burst, / where words thrab / hidden in violins” (in Ruth Whitman, ed. An Anthology of Modern Yiddish Poetry. Detroit: Wayne State UP, 1995).

3 There is a voluminous amount of survivor testimony. A central element of many of these works is an obligation to remember. In his Memoirs (New York: Knopf, 1994), Holocaust survivor and Nobel laureate Elie Wiesel states: “I thought about it with apprehension day and night: the duty to testify, to offer depositions for history, to serve memory. What would man be without his capacity to remember? Memory is a passion no less powerful or pervasive than love. What does it mean to remember? It is to live in more than one world, to prevent the past from fading and to call upon the future to illuminate it. It is to revive fragments of existence, to rescue lost beings, to cast harsh light on faces and events, to drive back the sands that cover the surface of things, to combat oblivion and to reject death” (150).

4 The question of forgetting with regard to the Holocaust is discussed by Vladimir Jankélévitch in his little-known essay “Pardonner,” which appears in L’impresscriptible (Paris: Seuil, 1986. 17-63). Jankélévitch discusses the impossibility of forgiveness with respect to those who perpetrated the Holocaust. He writes of the timelessness of crimes against humanity “les crimes contre l’humanité sont imprescriptibles, c’est-à-dire ne peuvent pas être prescrits; le temps n’a pas de prise sur eux” (26). He adds, “oublier ce crime gigantesque contre l’humanité serait un nouveau crime contre le genre humain” (25). With reference to forgetting, he states: “Il n’y a rien de nouveau à dire sur Auschwitz. Si ce n’est que l’on se sent tenu de temoigner” (28).

5 See “Toaff: Primo Levi mi annunciò il suicidio” (Corriere della Sera, April 12, 1997: 14). This is an article in which the Chief Rabbi of Rome, Elio Toaff, announces that ten minutes prior to his fall Levi had telephoned the rabbi in Rome to communicate that he could no longer tolerate living (“io non sopporto più questa vita”) and that he felt crushed by immense suffering (“immane sofferenza”). Perhaps this will be the final word on this matter.


Umberto Eco has not only been a prolific writer, he has also generated countless monographs, articles, commentaries, and reviews of his theoretical works and of his fiction. In 1985, Renato Giovannoli edited a volume of essays on Eco’s first novel (Saggi sul Nome della rosa. Milano, Bompiani). Rocco Capozzi’s exceptional anthology follows suit, but surpasses the Giovannoli text in scope, in coherence and in the general quality of the essays. The cohesiveness of Reading Eco derives from the editor’s clearly stated objective which is: “to examine some of Eco’s writings together with secondary sources (with his critics) in order to arrive at a more comprehensive critique of his literary theories and of his notions of general semiotics as a cognitive social/cultural practice” (xviii). As Capozzi himself informs us, the essays are original compositions or revised versions of papers presented and of articles previously published. They are divided into three parts: “Reading Eco” comprises 5 essays by the semiotician himself; “Readings on Eco” consists of 12 articles on the theoretical writings; and in “Reading Eco’s Possible Worlds” we find 10 studies of the novels. A
fourth section of the volume contains ample notes to the articles, an integrated bibliography and essential notes on the contributors.

Eco’s own contributions comprise his reflections on a wide variety of topics related to what interests him – virtually everything. In more specific terms, his intellectual curiosity ranges freely and effortlessly over such questions as the distinction between general semiotics and philosophy of language, notions such as aesthetic repetition in mass media, authorial and textual intentionality, narrative isotopy, and semiotic theories of culture. Although in many instances Eco is either re-presenting or commenting on the theories of other semioticians, linguists or critics such as Greimas, Lotman, Goldman, and Calabrese, and although the views have already appeared either directly or in similar form in works such as The Role of the Reader (1979), Semiotics and the Philosophy of Language (1986), The Open Work (1989), and Interpretation and Overinterpretation (1992), the section serves as an excellent introduction to the primary issues addressed in Eco’s research as well as those addressed by his readers – model or otherwise.

The dozen essays that make up the volume’s second part, entitled “Readings on Eco. A Pretext to Literary Semiotics and Interpretation,” serve as a critical introduction to the essential concerns of Eco and cover virtually all of the author’s principal theoretical pronouncements. David Seed examines the unfolding of Eco’s theories concerning the position of the reader with respect to the text, from the 1959 essay, “The Poetics of the Open Work” to Role of the Reader and Open Work. Seed indeed takes a critical approach, appreciating the contributions made while pointing out limitations. For instance, he writes: “it is surprising that Eco has not paid more attention to the fiction of Thomas Pynchon” (75). Of particular interest is Seed’s illustration of Eco’s theories with references to the Name of the Rose – written, of course, after Opera aperta and Lector in fabula. This anticipates and demonstrates the leitmotiv of the anthology: the correlation between theory and fiction in the work of Umberto Eco.

John Deely revisits A Theory of Semiotics, having reviewed the book in 1976. After twenty years, Eco’s text still retains its validity and value: “Although more limited than the author imagined, A Theory of Semiotics is not only a classic of the period but makes as well vital and permanent contributions, especially with its notion of ‘codes’” (83). Deely emphasizes the importance of Eco’s distinction between semiology and semiotics and proceeds to show that developments in both of these areas over the last two decades have invariably brought to light the insufficiencies in Eco’s system. Principally, Deely identifies some shortcomings in the concept of sign-function at the centre of Eco’s model of communication.

Lubomir Dolezel’s paper echoes David Seed’s in its dealing with the opposition of open and closed work in the writings of Eco. However, Dolezel focuses largely on the essays contained in Limits of Interpretation and succeeds very well in conveying Eco’s inquiry into the “problem of literature – the contrast between innovation and stereot ype, originality and repetetiveness” (111). In conducting this line of analysis, he situates Eco within the “framework of French structuralist narratology” (112). Particularly sophisticated is Dolezel’s handling of the apparent paradox: Eco’s theorizing the open work while also theorizing the mechanisms that prevent “semiotic drift” or limitless opportunity to interpret – a point which will be reiterated later by Capozzi.

Susan Petrilli’s remarks relate to those of Deely in its critique of Eco’s semiotics as articulated in A Theory of Semiotics and Semiotics and the Philosophy of Language. She focuses on the differences between a Saussurean “decodification semiotics” and a
Peircean "interpretation semiotics" – essentially the *semiology/semiotics* dichotomy spoken of by Deely. Petrilli argues convincingly in favour of the contribution made by the two volumes cited above in moving Italian semiotic studies, "in the direction of interpretation semiotics" (123) with its chief theoretician being Augusto Perron. Petrilli sees the fundamental component of this type of investigation in the Bakhtinian notion of "dialogism." She also correlates precisely this notion with Peirce's *symbolicity, indexicality* and *iconicity* and positions Perrin's research in this context.

The notion of textual openness is taken up once more by Irmengard Rauch who takes the discussion into the area of the Analogist versus Anomalist opposition; that is, to the question: "Whether to understand the nature of language as natural [her tautology] or conventional, rule driven or usage bound" (137). Her discourse leads invariably into the familiar "non-territory" of Derridean indeterminacy and into the prototype theory of the cognitive sciences. She contends that there exist, "similarities, to which deconstruction, prototype theory and semiotics are mutually open" (142). Rauch concludes that "Eco subverts the millennia-old Analogy versus Anomaly controversy" (145).

Victoriano Tejera examines closely the relationship between Eco's views on interpretation and those of Peirce and tends to find fault with or incompleteness in the model formulated by Eco in *The Limits of Interpretation*. According to Tejera, the main problem is that, "[Eco] persistently (though not always) talks in terms of interpreters rather than interpretants" (150). Tejera argues that the limits in the interpretation of the text are embedded in the Peircean interpretant and not in the interpreter, as Eco contends. However, it appears to this reviewer that the notions, though not identical, are not as mutually exclusive as the author would have us believe.

The connection between semiotics and deconstruction is the subject of Hanna Buczkynska-Garewic's essay which relates intertextually with several other pieces in the present anthology, especially Rauch's. For Buczkynska-Garewic the two disciplines are antithetical to each other with semiotics being defined as a science of meaning, whereas Derrida's *grammatologie* is considered a non-science of non-meaning. She states: "Semiotics is a general theory of signs which intends to clarify signs or to 'make our ideas clear' while deconstruction stresses the notion of 'indecidability' of meaning" and intends to refute logocentrism (163). The main stimulus for the author is what she feels is Derrida's misguided contention that Peircean semiotics was a precursor to his own deconstructive method. She does an admirable job of deconstructing Derrida, although Eco's role in this exercise appears to be marginalized.

The complexities of "interpreting the interpretant," particularly in the context of the literary text, concerns Michael Riffaterre. Applying his method of "retroactive reading" – formulated in his *Semiotics of Poetry* (1976) – to two short literary passages (one from modern novelist Kurt Vonnegut Jr. and the other form Baroque poet Achillini), Riffaterre argues the relevance of *catachresis* and *monumentality* as "two basic features of literariness" (175). He applies Peirce's theory of sign in the formulation of a *subtext, intertext* and *second intertext* to the passages cited above. Although the analysis is sophisticated and intriguing, as is the case in the preceding essay, the content deals with Eco only tangentially – by virtue of the fact that Eco too is interested in the semiotic properties of the literary text.

Paul Perron and Patrick Debbecche discuss the point of contact between Eco and Greimas by studying Eco's article, "Strategies of Lying," (1985). It contains an analysis of Richard Nixon's 1973 speech which Eco decides to "overwrite [...] from a Grei-
massian perspective" (188). The authors explain the procedure in terms of the manipulation of the enunciator and of the enunciatee in a narrative entitled, "Cardinal Mazzarin Tells How to Simulate a Self."

Roberta Kevelson chooses to treat a topic not often dealt with either by Eco or his critics, namely, the dramatic text. By utilizing Eco's infrequent references to Brecht's *Galileo*, Kevelson, in a sense, advances her own theory that semiotics is essentially a dramatistic process. She states: "Eco veers close to affirming the characteristic structure of all semiotic processes as dramatistic" (197). The foundation of her thesis is her assertion that Eco distinguishes between Aristotelian monologic argumentation and Peircean dialogic abduction. What she aims to do is, as she herself says: "gain insight into [...] concurrence between Eco and Peirce with respect to the dynamical indeterminacy and openness of semiosis by using the drama as a many-faceted lens [...] for observing how signs grow" (200).

Anna Longoni deals more directly with Eco's perspective as regards the "role of the reader" in the interpretive loop. She takes as her starting point the apparent shift in Eco's position from the one articulated in *Opera aperta* to the one presented in *Limits of Interpretation*. For Longoni, the shift can be explained in terms of Eco's response to the prevailing critical rigidity in the two periods in which the above works were composed. She uses the essays contained in *L'idea deforme* to argue that Eco's determination is: "to balance the interaction between *intento auctoris*, *intento operis* and *intento lectoris*" (211). In this, her thought is complementary to Seed's and Dolezel's, as well as to Capozzi's - which follows.

Perhaps more than any of the other authors cited to this point, Rocco Capozzi integrates interpretation of Eco's theoretical works and interpretation of the novels (although his remarks pertain mainly to *The Name of the Rose* and *Foucault's Pendulum*) and, as such, his analysis actually straddles Parts I and II of the volume since it could reside quite comfortably in either domain. Capozzi synthesizes views interspersed throughout the anthology and brings into clear focus his own contention that Eco has always balanced the rights of the reader against those of the text: "the author's intentions are inherent in the linguistic and textual strategies that a reader must keep in mind when interpreting a text" (221). By taking "inferential walks" through most of Eco's writings on the author, text and reader, and by consistently wending his way back to the influence exerted on Eco by Payerson, Capozzi "reads" the novels as perfect illustrations of the semiotic theories.

As indicated, the Capozzi piece leads nicely into the third section of the anthology, which contains essays by de Lauretis, Richter and Sebeok on various aspects of the *Name of the Rose*. Teresa de Lauretis, much along the lines of Capozzi, interprets Eco's first narrative as intrinsically connected to the author's theories and as "a 'summation' of his particular vision of history and culture, cognition and creativity, the world and the text" (241). In a unique and intriguing fashion, de Lauretis ties together Juliet, Eve, the only female character (paradoxically unnamed) in the novel, Conan Doyle and Dorothy Sayers in constructing a double parallelism - between *The Name of the Rose* and *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, and between the *Name of the Rose* and *Gaudy Night* - by means of which she deconstructs Eco's novel. De Lauretis is very convincing in her assertion that *The Name of the Rose* "may well be the updated version of the patriarchal grand récit of all times" (252).

David H. Richter unlocks the novel with the keys supplied in *Role of the Reader* and *Open Work*, starting out with the general premise that, "the world is a vast text [...]

[...]
and [...] our task on earth is learning the rules for reading it" (257), and proposing to read the novel as a text which constructs mirror images of the medieval and modern ages. Richter, in fact, follows a double line; in addition to the above analogy, he interprets the narrative in the context of the detective genre; “the reader is set uneasily adrift between the radical rationalism of the detective story and the radical deconstruction of that rationalism” (275). Thomas A. Sebeok closes this section with a short piece that returns to the Sherlock Holmes locus established and then undermined by Richter.

The three articles on Foucault’s Pendulum discuss Eco’s notion of overinterpretation, the representation of women and irony. Peter Bondanella is extremely effective in his decoding of the novel as a paradigm of “paranoid interpretation” – set down in The Limits of Interpretation and Interpretation and Overinterpretation. In presenting the text in this way, Bondanella picks up some of the threads contained in the Capozzi work, essentially arguing that Eco wrote the novel in response to a perceived tendency in critical theory whereby “the rights of the interpreter have been overstressed” (285). The critic here illustrates how Eco illustrates the dangers of “hermetic interpretation” – according to which tout se tient.

Theresa Coletti takes issue with the view of historian Jacques Le Goff who notes that Foucault’s Pendulum is as rooted in the Middle Ages as is The Name of the Rose, especially in its representation of women. Coletti investigates the validity of the Le Goff contention that, in both novels, female characters “bring disorder into the masculine world [of the texts]” (300). Using this statement as a springboard, Coletti intends to redress the lack of attention paid by Eco critics to gender by analyzing the roles of Lorenza, Amparo and Lia. In expressing puzzlement over the novel’s “reinscription of the dominant gender binaries of western thought” (311) and over the question of whether the novel perpetuates or subverts these binaries, Coletti’s work points in the direction of the Hutcheon study.

Linda Hutcheon masterfully teases out of the novel the many Foucaultian intertexts, despite Eco’s published (in the anthology) disclaimer that he did not intend to inscribe the thought of Michel Foucault in his narrative. Hutcheon brilliantly argues the point that the narrative structure of the novel enacts Foucault’s ‘pre-epistemic break’ paradigm of thinking “in terms of relations of sympathy and resemblance” (313) and undercuts it by showing that the ‘post-epistemic break’ civilization still relies on the same schemas and by revealing the inherent ‘disorder’ of such interpretive (or rather overinterpretive) processes. For Hutcheon, “fictionalizing is in the Foucaultian ‘order of things’” (315)

Lois Parkinson Zamora closes the present section with an article which reprises her comparative study of Eco’s first two novels and adds a critique of The Island of the Day Before. Parkinson Zamora juxtaposes what she considers to be the modernism of The Name of the Rose and the postmodernism of Foucault’s Pendulum contrasting “Adso’s Neoplatonic faith in a level of meaning beyond the objects and events he perceives” (329) with Causabon’s nominalism. In interesting fashion, she utilizes Joyce’s Ulysses and Finnegain’s Wake as well as Eco’s writings on these to argue her case. For the critic, Eco’s third novel occupies an intermediate position “between transcendental connected-ness and nominalist fragmentation” (343).

The anthology’s final three essays discuss the last novel of Eco’s “trilogy” – all effectively approaching the nature of intertextuality from different points of view. Norma Bouchard characterizes The Island of the Day Before as an “ambivalent text, a
novel which voices Eco’s latest theoretical stance against aberrant, Hermetic models of semiotic activity while coming perhaps dangerously close to reproducing [...] that ‘excess of wonder’ that it set out to critique” (351) – which is to an extent, the point Hutcheon makes with respect to Foucault’s Pendulum. As it follows the fabula of Roberto de La Griva’s adventures, interpreted as “Adam’s apprenticeship novel into the breakdown of familiar models of classification” (353), Bouchard’s study resonates with de Lauretis’ comments on The Name of the Rose – both structured on the foundations laid down in L’idea deforme.

In the anthology’s longest essay, Claudia Miranda conducts an illuminating and sweeping synthesis of several crucial Eco tenets causing them to converge on the significance, or rather the multiple significances, of the Orange Dove described to the shipwrecked Roberto. Through this elaborate emblem and the analysis of its position in the narrative, Miranda deftly works her way among Derrideans, Peirceans and Rortyans to locate Eco’s own particular semiotics. The author differentiates Eco’s textualism from that of the deconstructionists by pointing out Eco’s search for “a self-regulating mechanism [in the text] that can keep in check the number of ‘uncontrolled’ interpretations” (368). In this, the Miranda contribution speaks to several other articles of the collection.

The volume closes its selection of articles on openness with a second essay by Rocco Capozzi who presents a veritably exhaustive catalogue of intertexts – from medieval to modern culture – in The Island of the Day Before. Unlike some of the other authors who find a radical novelty or difference in Eco’s third novel, Capozzi prefers to interpret the narrative as yet another impressive display of “Eco’s familiar exploitations of palimp-sests and intertextuality” (389). Of particular interest to the author, however, is the selection of the Baroque age and its aesthetics as proper vehicles for Umberto Eco’s “unlimited” imagination.

Although the copy editing could have been better, nonetheless one can conclude that, if, according to John Deely, A Theory of Semiotics “is a book for every semiotician’s shelf” (83), Reading Eco. An Anthology should be on the shelf of everyone who reads Eco.

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In Five One-Act Plays, Renzo Ricchi tries to guide us, the readers, towards a deeper awareness of our lives and existence. What we find throughout these plays are various depictions of characters who, due to some extraordinary occurrence, begin to question life, death, time, the possibility of life after death, and everything they have been taught to believe with regard to these subjects. This basic existential conflict, with which we all contend at some point, is portrayed with a heightened sense of tension through the constant juxtaposition of contrasting views. In some cases, although the views are expressed by different characters, the fluidity of the discourse is such that it