the reader" (46).

Nel quarto capitolo Striuli analizza le ultime opere di Berto nelle quali l'alienazione è vissuta soprattutto come "alienation from others" (65) e i protagonisti "are unable to establish happy social relationships because of low self esteem and hypersensitivity" (*ibid.*). A questo gruppo appartengono, tra le altre *Oh, Serafina*, in cui, secondo Striuli, Berto presenta l'alienazione come forza positiva che vivifica l'anticonformismo del protagonista Augusto Secondo, permettendogli di lottare contro l'ipocrisia della società attuale e di riuscire vincitore. E soprattutto *La gloria*, i cui personaggi principali sono Gesù e Giuda. Giuda viene osservato senza pregiudizi, colto nella sua dolente umanità, con i dubbi e le incertezze dell'uomo finito che deve confrontarsi con la natura infinita di Cristo. La ricerca di Giuda si identifica allora con la non mai appagata ricerca religiosa dello scrittore.

Nella conclusione il critico ricapitola le caratteristiche tematiche della narrativa bertiana e si sofferma sulla dimensione europea della figura dello scrittore, avvicinandolo agli scrittori come Kierkegaard, Sartre e Camus, che hanno maggiormente approfondito il tema dell'alienazione. Berto sarebbe solo, tuttavia, nel porre le radici della sua alienazione nel "male universale". In più è operante in lui un umorismo di carattere filosofico, che serve all'uomo "to gain the control over the threatening forces of the world" (89). Infine, Berto, dopo le prime opere di carattere neorealistico, non si è lasciato ridurre dall'impegno esclusivamente politico, ed è stato capace di tentare la resa degli stati d'animo psicologici e soprattutto soggettivi propri dell'uomo che vive nella cultura occidentale.

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Rocco Capozzi. *Scrittori, critici e industria culturale dagli anni '60 ad oggi*. Lecce: Piero Manni, 1991. Pp. 173.

The book is in two parts: the first part is an essay on "La critica giornalistica e l'industria editoriale" (13-48); the second contains interviews with Almansi, Barilli, Bernari, Briosi, Corti, Eco, Fortini, Frabotta, Giuliani, Gramigna, Leonetti, Luperini, Malerba, Pazzi, Pignotti, Porta, Sanguineti, Spagnoletti, Volponi. It is a very useful book for many reasons. First of all, the book is unique since the topic of newspaper criticism and the publishing industry in Italy, a major aspect of Italian intellectual history, hardly ever finds its way into a study, especially one argued with knowledge and objectivity as this one is. Capozzi has a thorough knowledge of the material and presents both sides of an issue objectively. Moreover, a large part of the source material for this essay consists of newspapers and journals most of which are not available in North American libraries. The extensive references will certainly serve as a stimulus for further research in this seminal and interesting sector of Italian culture for which there is no real equivalent in North America. The same can be said for the second part where Capozzi goes to great lengths even to give references for some of the comments made by the writers he interviews, although sometimes these slip by him unnoticed, as in the case of the "Tesi di Lecce" (108), which one cannot take for granted would be understood by all readers.

Capozzi gives a good exposition of the issues and controversies dealt with in the lit-

erary and critical debates which take place in the daily papers, outside the hallowed halls of Academia. These debates usually concern the status of present-day literary studies in Italy, such as contemporary writing, emerging new writers, avant-garde fiction and so on, that academic critics seem to shun, or over which they are "undecided," if not completely "indifferent," when it comes to judging their worth (18). Capozzi also describes the polemics, the *querelles*, that all too readily arise out of this type of criticism and threaten its seriousness and validity. He examines the issue of literary prizes and whether they are still a useful means to encourage and promote new talent or whether they have become veritable media events orchestrated by publishing houses to promote the books they want to launch, as some critics seem to believe. He also takes up an issue which concerns me directly, the task of the reviewer and the role of the review. Should the reviewer lavish praise on a work for the sake of promoting it or should he mercilessly cut it down—the infamous "stroncatura"? Capozzi examines both sides of the issue and as usual brings to bear his own good common sense. A critic or a reviewer will be effective only if he works without the preconceived notion that his own approach is the correct one. For this reason, Capozzi believes, an interdisciplinary approach is probably the best. The last issue he takes up is the role of intellectuals and writers *vis à vis* the power of editors and publishing houses, and the relation between intellectuals and public. Have intellectuals and writers been confined to silence or do they still play a significant role in Italian culture today? Is the modern intellectual the creation of the mass media for a public more and more used to seeing everything in terms of "entertainment," "show", and "performance"? The writer and the intellectual seem to suffer a similar fate at the hands of the big publishers for whom they perform. Here Capozzi recalls Pasolini's saying that the relationship between publishers and writers is one between exploiter and exploited, the latter paid to "amuse" (41) the boss and his subjects. But even here Capozzi maintains a vein of optimism, as he does throughout the essay, refusing to attribute the apparent decline and degradation of the intellectual to the mass media and to the power of publishers. The essay concludes with the hope that intellectuals and writers may hark back to the "great" public at large and take into account the pivotal role that it has always played in literature. The public, after all, is the target of both the mass media and the publishers' marketing strategies and, what is more, it is the public which ultimately decides whether a work of art is condemned to being just a passing fancy or is everlasting. In the essay, Capozzi gives a dispassionate, if somewhat nostalgic account of the cultural and literary scene in Italy which appears plagued by dissension and in crisis but nonetheless is always very vital.

The second part is dedicated to the interviews. Capozzi lists first of all the fifteen questions he asked each author in addition to those on their individual work. The questions concern 1) the role of the intellectual; 2) the Gruppo '63; 3) the Frankfurt School; 4) the linguistic utopia of the 60s and 70s; 5) minimalism; 6) Eco's *Il nome della rosa*; 7) the role of the critic and the function of criticism; 8) the "critica militante"; 9) the question of "stroncatura"; 10) the new writers; 11) the role of literary journals; 12) postmodernism; 13) literature as *divertissement* and *engagement*; 14) the present and future of the novel; 15) differences between poetry and the novel. The questions cover ample ground and thus provide the reader with a general understanding of the views of scholars and critics not only on these issues but also on their own work. The interviews, involving some of the most distinguished critics, novelists, poets, and intellectuals in Italy today, provide Capozzi with an opportunity to take the pulse of present-day Italian culture and to assess the state of its relation with other cultures. For the North American reader it

constitutes a valuable spectrum of modern Italian intellectual history, with its past links with European culture and its recent overtures to North American culture.

In this regard, and since it would be impossible to summarize even briefly the wealth of information that can be gathered from the single interviews, I shall limit myself to a few observations that may be relevant to North American readers; namely, how the North American intellectual scene is viewed by some critics who have recently had the opportunity to visit our campuses. Besides Barilli who gives a fair account of the strengths and weaknesses of the two educational systems, the comments of Eco and Luperini are also relevant. From the questions asked by the interviewer it is clear that the Frankfurt School has had substantial importance for Italian intellectuals, whereas in North America it has long ceased to be of interest. The same can be said of structuralism—by which is meant mainly the work of Roland Barthes—which in the book is often mistakenly referred to as “deconstruction” (“decostruzione”, see esp. 75 ff. where the term is used to apply both to Barthes and Derrida). As for “deconstruction”, when the term is used properly, for instance by Eco and Luperini, the attitude is somewhat disconcerting. Eco dismisses “bad” deconstruction, as he calls it (94), as a joke, with a joke. He also makes the perplexing claim that the deconstructionist “non sa che cosa sia stato il New Criticism” (95). We have only to look at the early work of Paul de Man, among others, to see how erroneous this remark is. Eco wants to make the point that in North America theories spring up arbitrarily over night: “ogni nuova corrente nasce nell’oblio di quello che è venuto prima”. “Sono fatti così” (95), he says. A similarly perplexing remark, and an equally condescending one, is echoed by Luperini who speaks of the “carattere totalitario della vita accademica” in North America (130). This “Marxist” reading might come as a surprise to some readers. Luperini, in fact, believes that North American intellectuals live in a world of their own, an “arcadia”, completely divorced from the rest of the world. The throbbing voice of the real world outside hardly ever reaches them: “le voci del contesto o dell’esterno giungono estremamente soffocate, e a volte non giungono per nulla” (130). This unfortunate situation is responsible, Luperini believes, for much of the type of criticism being practiced. Since the closed world of the North American critic is the only one which exists for him and since he is also a merchant of words, Luperini concludes that, for the North American critic, “le parole sono il mondo” (130). This is Luperini’s indirect criticism of literary theory in North America (even though he is greatly indebted to it, and mainly to de Man, for the theory of allegory), which he views as the inevitable consequence of the North American intellectual’s isolation in the fateful Ivory Tower, away from any meaningful social context.

It is not necessary either to point out the faulty logic of Luperini’s argument or to set the record straight on either deconstruction or on the social role of the North American intellectual. These are statements made in passing in an interview and do not warrant closer scrutiny. Perhaps Capozzi can write a book enlightening the Italian reader on what is really going on in North America.

The above remarks, somewhat surprising in the case of Eco who by now is an *habitué* on our campuses, are symptomatic of an attitude which hopefully will disappear with time as the cultural ties of the Italian intellectual gradually shift from old alliances with European paradigms to North American ones. Perhaps giving birth to theories “nell’oblio” is precisely what is needed in Italian criticism today to revitalize it. As Luperini well observes, it is in North America that the great debates on literary theory are taking place. “Direi che la critica letteraria in Nordamerica ha una passione teorica superiore Dobbiamo venire negli Stati Uniti per appassionarci di nuovo alle grandi que-

stioni di teoria letteraria" (130). There may be exciting times ahead especially if one side succeeds in expelling its misplaced sense of superiority and the other side succeeds in banishing its misplaced sense of inferiority.

In the first part of *Scrittori, critici e industria culturale dagli anni '60 ad oggi*, the author provides us with a discussion of an important cultural phenomenon, newspaper criticism, which is unique to Italian intellectual life, and, in the second part, with interviews with the most influential writers and critics in Italy today, which provide the reader with the opportunity to become acquainted with their views not only on various aspects of Italian culture but also on their own work. This is a valuable study that will be useful to those who are just getting acquainted with Italian culture and also to the advanced student of literature. And since it could be of interest as well to readers interested in Italian culture who are not fluent in the language, someone would do well to translate this book.

MASSIMO VERDICCHIO

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Maddalena Kuitunen and/e Julius A. Molinaro. *A History of Italian Studies at the University of Toronto. (1840-1990). Lo Studio dell'Italiano all'Università di Toronto*. Toronto: Department of Italian Studies, University of Toronto, 1991. Pp. 281.

Anche se nelle sue pagine molti si imbattono in sé stessi o persone di conoscenza questo libro non è un mero "libro di ricordi". Sarà invece letto con interesse perché il volume offre molto di più di una cronaca dello studio dell'italiano all'Università di Toronto, anche se il filo conduttore è l'affermarsi della disciplina in seno alla più grande università canadese.

Delle molte manifestazioni con cui si è celebrato il centocinquantenario dell'insegnamento dell'italiano a Toronto il libro di Maddalena Kuitunen e di Julius Molinaro resterà tra le più durature e le più valide.

Che il lavoro sia stato preparato con serio impegno appare chiaro dalla abbondanza di informazioni che lo corredano: le note, le appendici, la lista di opere citate, l'indice ed un'ottima scelta di fotografie. Il testo è presentato in doppia versione: inglese ed italiana.

A lettura ultimata viene spontanea la considerazione che il programma di Studi Italiani nacque sotto una buona stella, la cui luce ha continuato a seguire il suo progressivo successo. Sarebbe ingenuo pensare che lungo il cammino non vi siano stati problemi ed ostacoli da superare che a volte saranno anche parsi insormontabili. Non si può fare a meno, però, di constatare che il programma d'italiano ha sempre potuto contare su un manipolo di docenti per i quali il mestiere dell'insegnare non è stato mezzo per arrivare alla fine del mese, ma quasi una missione. Individui di vedute ampie e progressive, a cominciare da James Forneri e fino ai colleghi di oggi, il cui apporto personale, in diverso modo e misura, ha contribuito a forgiare l'odierno dipartimento.

Ricordiamo le lotte di William Henry Fraser per portare le lingue moderne alla pari di altre discipline in seno all'amministrazione accademica mettendo in luce non solo l'importanza delle lingue moderne ma degli studi umanistici nella loro totalità. L'impulso dato da Milton A. Buchanan ad accrescere le collezioni di testi italiani della