Rocco Capozzi e Massimo Ciavolella, eds. *Scrittori, tendenze letterarie e conflitto delle poetiche in Italia (1960-1990)*. Ravenna: Longo Editore, 1993 (Il Portico. Biblioteca di Lettere e Arti 100). Pp. 222.

This volume is the latest in the series edited by Longo that presents valuable critical studies on the literary and critical scene in Italy. The volume boasts authors from both Italy and North America and touches upon the major events in Italian literature and culture whether in the field of critical theory or in that of the novel and poetry. The volume would have benefitted from an introduction as well as a brief note on the participants, or simply a line indicating where they teach, the sort of apparatus that we have come to expect from any respectable collection of essays, at least in North America. The editors of the volume probably decided to omit the introduction since the first essay, Romano Luperini's, "Bilancio di un trentennio letterario (1960-1990) e ipotesi sul presente" seems to fill that lacuna, at least in part. Luperini's thirty-year survey of literary production and labour in Italy is informative as it reports on the major literary trends of the period as well as on the demise of the "scrittore-intellettuale" (10-12). But the account, inevitably general (as he says himself, "semplificando brutalmente," 11), suffers from the author's choice of an historical (Marxist sociological?) rather than critical ("metaphorical") approach to the subject. This critical positioning misleads Luperini into making questionable statements such as the one regarding postmodernity's having begun in Italy in the Fifties. "La fase della cosiddetta postmodernità si aprì allora e dura tutt'oggi," he states (7). Or the approach taken limits the scope of his analysis of Italian contemporary culture which he says is in the hands of a small group of industrialists who control the means of literary production and the literary market in Italy and are responsible for radically transforming not just the book market and the attitude of the readership but also literary production. This is certainly interesting but it leads to great simplifications when he states that Calvino's *Se una notte d'inverno un viaggiatore* and Eco's *Il nome della rosa* are the last two best-sellers in Italy. The reasons why these two books were best-sellers not only have nothing to do with Luperini's initial materialist premise but also, as Luperini knows full well, are different in each case "(ma fra questi due autori occorrerebbe poi fare le debite distinzioni in sede di giudizio estetico)" (10). The fact that Calvino's novel was a best-seller is incidental; the reasons for its success are aesthetic, but not so for Eco. Luperini's privileging of the historical over the aesthetic or the critical, becomes clear in the conclusions where the critic attempts to define the future of literature after postmodernism. Although postmodernism is now all the rage in North America, if not all over the world, for Luperini postmodernism in Italy is an old phenomenon, since it began in the Fifties, and is on its way out and ready to be replaced by other more "post post-modern" currents. It does not come as a surprise that for Luperini the future lies in allegory, the "nuova *koinè poetica*," (14) exemplified by the *Baldus* poets in their search for a "pluralità reale concreta, materiale di voci" (15). By "allegory," is meant the articulation of a plurality where "le vecchie voci," while retaining their first, literal and historical meaning, also speak with a second sense, "altro e diverso" (15): "i giovani di 'Baldus' le fanno entrare in attrito e reagire l'una contro l'altra e perciò possono aspirare a porsi, simultaneamente, al di là sia del loro reciproco riscatto, sia della logica postmodernistica che la contamina solo per annullarne lineamenti e confini" (15). Luperini's gamble on the *Baldus* group is related to his desire to mark the end of thirty years of postmodernism at the year 1989 (16) and to begin a new literary era with allegory. The claim, however,

is only historical. One would have to re-examine it in a more critical or "metaphorical" light in order to determine whether the desire of the historical to return to the literary has any foundation in the aesthetic.

William Anselmi's "Da 'Vogliamo tutto' a 'L'editore': Balestrini, la quasi-totalità, il 'blackout' storico" provides an interesting and detailed analysis of Balestrini's novels which are problematised from the viewpoint of history as "recupero di quel segmento sociale rimosso dalla storia e apparso in Italia durante gli anni Settanta" (18). Anselmi's aim is to show, through an analysis of Balestrini's novels, "la voce degli esiliati dalla scena moderna, di coloro ormai divenuti invisibili alla Storia" (19). Renato Barilli's essay "La narrativa italiana sperimentale del secondo Novecento" attempts to establish criteria to characterize those narratives that do not fit in the standard mould and which exhibit particular linguistic innovations. Chronologically, he takes into account the neo-realism "d'impegno" of the Fifties, the "neoavanguardia" of *Il Verri* and of Gruppo 63, and finally the group of the new novelists, Busi, Tondelli, De Carlo, Del Giudice. Barilli's method of assessing these experimental narratives follows the old rhetorical distinction of the three levels of style: high, medium and low. Barilli eventually wants to show that "lo sperimentalismo narrativo italiano si sia valso soprattutto dello stile basso, avendo tutt'al più una variante riportabile alla presenza di uno stile di grado zero" (36). In the end, however, Barilli has to admit that the best novelists do not really fit in his categories, "Fatto sta che nei migliori tra i nostri 'nuovi romanzieri' ritornano fuori le linee dipanate fin qui" (44).

Sandro Briosi discusses "Il doppio movimento della poesia. Sul dibattito intorno alla letteratura in Italia negli anni '70 e '80." He proposes to classify poetic forms according to whether they exhibit a progressive or a regressive mode. In the latter mode are included those poetic forms that claim to be distinct from their linguistic given, namely, all surrealist poetics, automatic writing, psychoanalytical claims of autonomy of the signifier and so on. On the progressive side, instead, there are all those forms that relate to or are against language and which see in language an epistemological autonomy distinct from the psychological or existential dimensions of the poet. Here are placed all futurists as well as all avantgarde movements which were inspired by it (49). Briosi's excursus on contemporary poetics focuses, however, more on the work done by theorists than by the poets themselves with emphasis placed mainly on the allegory/symbol dichotomy. Briosi's stance is clear from his conclusions which express his wish for a return to the symbol, "nel suo senso più ampio, di significazione indiretta, innovativa, facente appello alla libertà ed alla capacità di 'interpretare' del lettore" (61). In the last instance, Briosi is nostalgic for the old and uncomplicated style of metaphorical poetry, "la vecchia e gloriosa figura della metafora" (61).

Robert S. Dombroski's "Travestimenti gaddiani: verso il compimento del dolore" provides an in-depth analysis of Gadda's *La cognizione del dolore* and of the central focal point of his narrative, "il groviglio," that is, "il nodo psicologico e metafisico che più si cerca di sciogliere più diventa intricato" (63). Dombrovski provides an analysis of the philosophical presuppositions of the novel that underlie the major choices made by Gadda, such as the employment of the structure of the detective novel and the use of dialects. His essay is an important addition to the critical corpus of Gadda's scholarship. Corrado Federici's "The Technological Poetry of Lamberto Pignotti" is also a valuable contribution to the work of a not very well-known poet who was active both in Gruppo 63 and was the founder of the verbal-visual Gruppo 70. Biancamaria Frabotta's short piece is a meditation on "La viandanza," on metaphorical poetic journeys, on poetry as

"viandanza" "ferma e in cammino nello stesso tempo, [che] guarda avanti e pensa indietro" (89). Francesco Guardiani repropose in "Luigi Malerba e la 'Grande Transizione'" a study of *Il protagonista* and of *Le pietre volanti* "come un inventario di effetti di una grande transizione in atto, da un mondo modellato da *media* meccanici ad un altro fondato su *media* elettrici" (99). These works, while apocalyptic, usher in, in the corpus of Malerba's works, a new literary era with the exploration of the new culture of the next millennium.

Linda Hutcheon repropose a reading of Eco's *Il pendolo di Foucault* in "Umberto Eco's Holistic Detective Agency (with apologies to Dirk Gentry)" as an ironic novel or, at least, as a text displaying "many allegories of ironic hermeneutics" (115). Irony is not meant here in a deconstructive sense; rather it is indicative of "an attitude of suspicion" and of the fact that ambiguity lords over this novel "until the end" (115). Wladimir Kryszewski's "Appunti sul discorso poetico di Franco Fortini," focuses on the polyphonic character of Fortini's poetry, "una polifonizzazione dei discorsi di vari impegni politici, estetici etici" (117). Fortini's poetry, says the critic, is realized "tra l'accoglienza del presente e l'esaltazione del futuro." "Vale a dire," he concludes, "nella misura in cui la poesia sorge dalla vita, Fortini ci mostra con molta raffinatezza come vivere nella speranza e come sperare nella poesia" (125).

Maddalena Kuitunen focuses on "Alcuni aspetti nell'opera del primo Sciascia." She examines Sciascia's early narrative in the light of the epigraphs that precede and are a constitutive part of each work defining the theme of the work or its central inspiration. Francesco Leonetti has a brief note on "Tradizionale e sperimentale nel 1991" which stresses the importance of revitalizing and remotivizing "la sperimentality" (141). Grazia Menechella in "La distanza ironica in Giorgio Manganelli" examines the author-reader relationship that characterizes much of Manganelli's irony and his polemical attitude toward his own culture. John Picchione's "Antonio Porta: dalla semantica in frantumi al progetto di comunicazione poetica" is an excursus on Porta's poetic production from an early negative poetics aimed at subverting the dominant structures of signification to a poetics of communication that moves Porta's poetry toward a "poesia-teatro, poesia in forma di diario o epistolare, e poesia in forma di fiaba" (159). Lamberto Pignotti in "Scrittura verbo-visiva e sinestetica" proposes the idea of an "arte sinestetica" in opposition to traditional aesthetics as one which tends "invece ad associare le arti e le espressioni alla totalità dell'esperienza sensoriale" (163) — a proposal that would de-emphasize the written in favor of a more visual and/or more total conception of art. Silvio Ramat in "Andrea Zanzotto in 'avvicinamento.' Poetica della faglia e altro" discusses Zanzotto's poetry in terms of a "strategy" of "avvicinamento," "fantasie di avvicinamento" (173), namely, the way in which poetic speculations are associated or "oscuramente collegate" through memories or phantasies.

Franco Ricci's "Roberto Pazzi e il Vangelo di Giuda" discusses Pazzi's work and how his novels, differently from those of his contemporaries, are engaged "alla riscoperta di un tempo perduto, da cui dovrebbe scaturire una nuova visione del presente" (182). In "Ideas vs. Odors of India: Third Worlds in Moravia and Pasolini with a Post-script on Manganelli," Patrick Rumble takes up a discussion of the similarities and differences between Moravia's and Pasolini's accounts of their travels to India, differences that separate along the lines, as the title emphasizes, of ideas and odors. As a postscript, Rumble adds that Manganelli's own views of India, which differ from those of his predecessors, nonetheless constitute a radical change in perspective, "a shattering of the 'same' and of the 'here,' and an implosion of the imperialist perspective" (204).

The last essay, "Apocalittici e integrati nell'industria culturale postmoderna," is authored by one of the editors of the volume, Rocco Capozzi, who concludes the volume with a survey of postmodernism that in many ways counters Luperini's introductory essay. Capozzi's long essay is essentially cautionary and aims at striking a proper balance when dealing with issues of industry, culture and postmodernism. "La critica all'industria culturale postmoderna è indubbiamente utile e necessaria, specialmente se si dimostra costruttiva. Ma se questa critica vuol sperare di essere più credibile ed efficace essa deve ritornare a valutare le singole opere — moderne, postmoderne o quel che siano — in base a nozioni che non si rivelino falsamente umanistiche, connotate ideologicamente (politicamente) e assolutamente elitarie" (221). Capozzi's final plea is for a return to more aesthetic considerations of our postmodern culture, away from facile dismissals of present-day industrial culture as the origin of all evils. He states: "oggi bisogna organizzare l'industria del postmoderno all'interno della società consumistica e massmediale e ed è ancora un compito della cultura . . . e degli intellettuali . . . sfidare/contestare ciò che si ritiene falso, superficiale, artificiale, meccanico, kitsch, o mero *pastiche*, in nome di quei valori che tradizionalmente si definiscono umani o umanistici" (222). This is a very valuable collection of essays that should be part of any bibliography on modern literary theory and literary criticism in Italy.

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Nicholas De Maria Harney, ed. *From the Shores of Hardship: Italians in Canada. Essays by Robert F. Harney*. Toronto: Centro Canadese Scuola e Cultura: 1993. Pp. xii, 216.

At the time of his death in 1989, Robert Harney had already laid the groundwork for *From the Shores of Hunger: Italians in Canada*, a volume to be dedicated to posing appropriate questions and suggesting adequate frameworks with which to explore the multifaceted Italian experience in Canada. The present volume pieces together the project Harney began and attempts to realize a portion of it. Consequently it differs from other works that have been published in honor of Harney, including Pierre Anctil and Bruno Ramirez's commemorative work *If One Were to Write a History . . . Selected Writings by Robert F. Harney* (Toronto: Multicultural History Society of Ontario, 1991), George E. Pozzetta and Bruno Ramirez's collection of various authors' essays, *The Italian Diaspora: Migration Across the Globe: Essays in Honor of Robert F. Harney (1939-1989)* (Toronto: Multicultural History Society of Ontario, 1992), and volume 7 of *Italian Canadiana* dedicated to Harney's memory.

Because the manuscript for Harney's *Italians in Canada* was left incomplete, choices had to be made about what ought to be published. In the introduction, the editor, Harney's son Nicholas, describes the coming to be of the volume and explains the direction of his editorial decisions. Perhaps the greatest departure from the original manuscript is the change of the last word in the title from "hunger" to "hardship." Whereas the original title was meant to carry an echo from Pasolini's poem "Profezia," the substitution reflects the editor's apprehension that the word "hunger" might be taken too literally. Beyond that amendment, the editor remains true to the original outline of the work by as-