History has often relegated to silence because they were women, and also because they were women of the Resistance, a movement that carries within its iconography a distinctly masculine tenor. These protagonists represent not only the grand events of their participation in a world at war, but also the more mundane everyday stuff: inevitable, messy, and completely unavoidable. Carla Capponi’s motto “I remember, therefore I am” (p.35), speaks for all the memorialists and reveals how deeply their choice to be partigiane shaped their lives then and afterwards. What they remember also embraces the domesticity and femininity that still remain despite the horrors that each day of their anti-war activities brought. These aspects instill in their narration of the Resistance movement a unique sense of poignancy and self-awareness, the exasperating abnormality of the situation they experienced notwithstanding. Zangrandi tells of a mother who “rushes around, huffing and puffing, ill tempered and foulmouthed...she trembles with fear but keeps under control, does not say a word, and prepares chicory coffee...” (94). Gobetti recounts her coded and therefore incoherent telephone calls in which stray dogs and ailing horses are the apparent focus of the conversation (68). Fenoglio Oppedisano remembers that, involved as she was with resistance activities, “I never touched a pot, never washed a dish, nor did I wash clothes. My dinner plate was served to me. But I also worked like a dog, more than anyone else” (108).

The female body working in partnership with her male counterpart reacted to the same stresses that affected all the Resistance fighters. But the details (bursting into desperate tears (p.5), a handbag containing a gun (p.62), lipstick, blush and 6 inch high-heels (p.87)) make of these female bodies of resistance a highly readable and profoundly engaging memoir that remains as a valuable marker of human endurance and experience.

ANNE URBANCIĆ
Victoria College, University of Toronto


There are many anthologies of modern Italian poetry, most of which are in the original language, while some are in English translation, and a few in a bilingual Italian-English version. The fundamental issue is always one of selection of representative poets and poems, with the unavoidable exclusion of important writers and works. In the original language category, for example, Edoardo Sanguineti’s Poesia nel Novecento (1971) is an important anthology that features 43 poets, none of whom are women, however. The same is true for Elio Gioanola’s Poesia italiana del Novecento: testi e commenti (1986), which contains poetry from 46 male authors, from Corrado Govoni to Raffaello Baldini. Twentieth-Century Italian Poetry: an Anthology, edited by Lawrence Smith and John Picchione (1993), pro-
vides a good sampling of writing from the *Neovanguardia* and verbal-visual poetry, together with contributions from five women writers, for a total of 50 authors, and includes an Introduction and Notes in English. A similarly conceived work is *Twentieth-century Italian Poetry: a Critical Anthology (1900 to the Neo-Avantgarde)*, edited by Éanna Ó Céallachán. The English translation only category includes such publications as *The Faber Book of Twentieth-Century Italian Poems* by (2004), edited by Jamie McKendrick, while in the bilingual category, excellent anthologies have appeared recently, including Roberta L. Payne’s *A Selection of Modern Italian Poetry in Translation* (2004). It is in this last context, that is to say, the Italian-English anthology, that Ned Condini’s book is to be situated and appreciated.

While acknowledging the impossibility of achieving comprehensiveness, Condini strives to embrace all of the more significant schools or typologies of Italian poetry, from the Fin de siècle writings of Giovanni Pascoli and Gabriele D’Annunzio (an almost obligatory starting point for all such anthologies), through the Twilight Poets, the writers of *La Voce*, the exponents of Hermeticism and the Realists to the Neo-avantgarde and Contemporary Poets. In the process, he finds space for seven women poets among the 38 authors represented: Maria Luisa Spaziani, Antonia Pozzi, Cristina Campo, Sibilla Aleramo, Amalia Guglielminetti, Amelia Rosselli, and Anna Malfiera. Each of the poets is presented in a well-written and essential one-page Introduction that focuses on key biographical information, lists the major collections published, and offers concise but incisive contextualizations of each poet within the movements or schools of poetry identified above. The author normally includes two or three poems from each writer, deviating from this pattern only with Giuseppe Ungaretti, Eugenio Montale, and Mario Luzi, who are represented with between five and seven samples. In some cases, the two poems translated are quite long; for example, Guido Gozzano’s two entries, “Totò Merumeni” and “Signorina Felicita ovvero la Felicità” occupy 43 pages, whereas Corrado Govoni’s three poems, “Cavallo,” “Siepe,” and “Il palazzo dell’anima” take up only four pages. An excellent 29-page Introduction by Dana Renga provides a clear, coherent, and elegant survey of the principal forms of the Italian lyric of the last century. Omissions include F.T. Marinetti and Luciano Folgore from the section titled “Between Art Deco and the Twilight Poets,” Antonio Porta and Nanni Balestrini from the Neo-avantgarde, such women poets as Margherita Guidacci and the recently deceased Alda Merini, and dialect poetry, which would have posed particular linguistic problems in a project of this kind.

In terms of the selection criteria, the author himself explains that he wished to focus, more than other bilingual anthologies do, on the post-Unification culture of Italy as conveyed in the poems chosen for inclusion. He writes: “Reflected in [the] poems are many of the philosophical, ethical, political and social concerns that characterize the last hundred and thirty years” (p. xvi). The connections between the stated objectives and the choice of lyrics are more discernible in some cases than in others. For instance, Condini includes Eugenio Montale’s “Meriggiare pallido e assorto” while he omits what would seem to be the more historically resonant “La primavera hitleriana,” by the same writer.

— 170 —
Although the translations are, on the whole, precise and of high quality, and although, as translation theorists tell us, there are many equally valid solutions for the rendering of any given line of poetry, there are a few passages that may seem problematic or that may not be as elegant as those provided by other translators. To illustrate, Giuseppe Ungaretti’s “Di queste case / non è rimasto / che qualche / brandello di muro” is rendered as “Nothing has remained / of these houses / but some chunks / of plaster” (p. 203), which strikes the present reader as somewhat awkward, especially when the sentence is juxtaposed with Diego Bastianutti’s offering, “Of these houses / nothing is left / but a few scraps of walls.” Condini’s “plaster” seems unnecessarily particularizing with respect to the noun “walls,” and the term “brandelli” needs to apply to the humans mentioned in the next line, that is the “tanti che mi corrispondevano.” Perhaps “fragments” might have been more appropriate. An example of unnecessary translation gain can be found in the rendering of Salvatore Quasimodo’s “lamento / della madre” as “funereal howl / of mother.” Elsewhere Condini translates Dino Campana’s “Musica fanciulla esangue” with “Musical bloodless girl,” which appears to be less accurate than Roberta Payne’s “Music bloodless girl.”

Given the scope and the technical demands of the task undertaken by Condini, which is to select from an enormous quantity of poetry produced over a span of more than 100 years and to provide accurate, elegant English translations that convey the variety of forms, rhythms, and structures of the original texts, An Anthology of Modern Italian Poetry succeeds admirably and constitutes one more important contribution to the process of opening up Italy’s formidable lyrical tradition to English-speaking readers.

CORRADO FEDERICI

Brock University


Vittorio Sereni is an important modern Italian poet whose work is very well known and discussed in Italian literary circles, and less well known in the non-Italian speaking world. This situation is, in part, the result of what has been until now the absence of a comprehensive bilingual edition of his poetry. There are several anthologies containing English translations of some of Sereni’s poems, including The Disease of the Elm and Other Poems (1983) and Selected Poems of Vittorio Sereni (1990), by the authors of the present volume, as well as Sixteen Poems, translated by Paul Vangelisti (1971), and The Great Friend and Other Translated Poems (2002), by Peter Robinson. Luigi Bonaffini’s Variable Star (1999) is a translation of Sereni’s Stella variabile. There are, in addition, translations of individual poems published in a variety of journals, such as Poetry Ireland Review, London Magazine,