portantissimo nodo storico ch'è stato ed è tuttora il Risorgimento.

ANGELO PRINCIPE

New Approaches to Teaching Italian Language and Culture: Case Studies from an International Perspective, ed. Emanuele Occhipinti. Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Press, 2008. Pp. 600. ISBN 1-84718-638-6.

While we can debate the editor's claim that "there has never been a systematic collection of essays on this topic with such a variety of contributions in a single volume" (Introduction, 1), we must nonetheless admire and congratulate Emanuele Occhipinti for this most valuable and welcome addition to the field of Italian language and culture pedagogy. This collection complements and supplies a much needed update to similar past anthologies such as *A Handbook for Teachers of Italian* (1976), *Studies in Italian Applied Linguistics* (1984), *Problem Solving in Second Language Teaching* (1992), *I Ferri del mestiere. (Auto)formazione per l'insegnante di lingue* (2003) and *Linguistica e glottodidattica. Studi in onore di Katerin Katerinov* (2008), to name the most well known. The anthology, directed at IFL (Italian as a foreign language) teachers in Anglophone environments, acknowledges the rapidly changing world of Italian language and culture pedagogy. No longer can we assume a traditional spatially delimited classroom environment for our lessons. Nor traditional curricula. And, far more fascinating, although fraught with almost unimaginable challenges, is the rapidly evolving nature of our subject area. Italy (its language, people and culture) has undergone crucial alterations and modifications in these first years of the new millennium. The teaching environment, where homogeneity (in both students and target content) may be presumed, has disappeared. Herein lies the strength of the new anthology: its case studies acknowledge the heterogeneous classroom, the multifaceted contents to be taught, reviewed, tested, as well as the numerous bureaucratic exigencies of today's classroom environment (including adherence to various professional standards and guidelines). This volume recognizes that technological innovations have irrevocably affected how and what students learn and we teach. Less overtly, it also assumes that the teaching of language and culture is no serendipitous legerdemain, but is carried out in a professional community of coactive practitioners who advocate for further cooperation in order to enhance the discipline. To underscore the nature of this collaborative effort is the noteworthy group of experts from the United States, Canada, Great Britain and Australia who have contributed to this work.

The volume is divided into six sections: Curricular Innovations, Teaching Italian with Technology, Teaching Italian Translation, Teaching Italian Culture, Teaching Italian Culture Through Film and Teaching Italian Culture Through Songs. The chapters (on average four per section) reveal first and foremost the serious attitude that informs IFL pedagogy today.

Each certainly does provide practical teaching tips, techniques, and templates; the chapters also take into careful consideration the thorough research that characterizes foreign language pedagogy in general, and Italian in particular. The gen-

erosity with which the anthology contributors share their classroom tested materials is truly remarkable and appreciated. There is ample evidence here of how classroom practice and reflection move into wider-reaching, theoretical perspectives, with the result that while many of the chapters limit themselves to a specific technique or a specific lesson, the holistic observations and conclusions provided by the authors can apply to numerous new examples and situations, each relevant far beyond the example described. Most chapters also offer extensive appendices of student worksheets, lesson plans, syllabi, marking rubrics and test/exam templates. Both new instructors of IFL and their more experienced colleagues will find materials that will readily integrate into lesson plans and that will facilitate classroom interaction. Nor has the student of IFL been overlooked. In preparing their articles, the authors of this volume have taken care to include student feedback on the lessons and approaches described in their article.

Teachers of Italian language have especially lamented the dearth of pedagogical resources for teaching culture. Because the language/culture binomial is almost a cliché, we often ignore the fact that the teaching of culture is more than what Vicki Galloway (in her 1985 proposal to the American Council for the Teaching of Languages) has called the Frankenstein Approach (“A taco from here, a flamenco dancer from there, a gaucho from here, a bullfight from there”), or the 4-F Approach (“Folk dances, festivals, fairs, and food”). The chapters of this volume that deal with teaching culture in the IFL classroom are therefore particularly strong. Their approach is socio-cultural and cross-cultural. They make explicit the need and desire to encourage in our students acceptable levels of cultural proficiency which complement proficiencies in reading, writing, listening to and speaking Italian. They give credit to elements of both capital C culture and popular culture, recognizing that divisions between them are often blurred.

Nonetheless, the book does not propose easy “one size fits all” solutions to pedagogical inquiries and problems relevant to IFL. The authors admit that there are numerous and continuing challenges to be confronted and overcome. New perspectives, including on-line teaching and team teaching are considered here; similarly, the contributors see a need for formative evaluation to be given to students throughout a language course together with the summative evaluation that results in a final grade at the end of the course.

This anthology is directed specifically at IFL teachers at the post-secondary level. As do their colleagues primarily focused on research, here too the professionals who have contributed provide a truly impressive and extensive list of footnoted sources and references. Unfortunately, a comprehensive index, indeed any index at all, is conspicuous by its absence, and is, in truth, the major drawback to this otherwise excellent book.

If there still remains a gap between practical and theoretical aspects of ISL, this anthology will serve to fill it. It is a worthy addition to the personal libraries of all who teach Italian language and culture.