about 30,000 people at this time, some 18 % (5,732 boys, girls, men, and women) participated in the Schools of Christian Doctrine. The very high teacher-pupil ratio (one teacher to three or four students) may have made them effective conveyers of rudimentary literacy.

Carlsmith also chronicles the schools of the new religious orders. As public education declined in numbers and importance in the late sixteenth century, the schools of the new religious orders of the Catholic Reformation grew. The Somaschans (Clerks Regular of Somasca, who took their name from their mother-house at Somasca, a tiny hamlet near Bergamo) managed orphanages and schools in Bergamo. By contrast, the Jesuits did not succeed in establishing a school in Bergamo until 1711. Carlsmith emphasizes the importance of local connections as a key factor determining whether a religious order could gain a foothold. The Somaschans had local ties, the Jesuits did not. Carlsmith's research also points to the importance of bequests, especially in tiny hamlets. A clergyman or layman who wished to expand educational opportunities left money for a school or a scholarship.

After a detailed analysis of Bergamo, Carlsmith offers important and useful comparative data from nearby villages, other Veneto cities, and Venice. Their experiences were often similar. For example, Bergamo, Brescia, Verona, and Vicenza all embraced the humanistic curriculum for their public schools, but did not always provide steady financial support. Like Bergamo, they eventually turned to religious orders to teach the humanities. On the other hand, the major role of Bergamo's Misericordia Maggiore had no counterpart. A major conclusion from this book is that there was more educational opportunity than scholars previously thought existed in small cities and villages. The complete story must be ferreted out by diligent and persistent research in local archives and libraries, and sometimes from the neglected research of local antiquarian scholars. Carlsmith demonstrates how to do it.

The book is based on a great deal of archival and manuscript research in Bergamo, Padua, Venice, Rome and elsewhere. The reading in primary and secondary literature is comprehensive and perceptive. The book is written in a clear style. The publisher has produced an attractive book in a large enough font for easy reading. On the other hand, the notes are placed at the back of the book. No scholar of Renaissance and Catholic Reformation education can afford to miss this important work.

PAUL F. GRENDLER

University of Toronto Emeritus

Federica G. Pedriali. *Altre carceri d'invenzione. Studi gaddiani.* Ravenna: Longo, 2007. Pp. 304. ISBN 978-88-8063-563-5 (paper). Euro 20.

Federica Pedriali's *Altre carceri d'invenzione* is manifestly an essential addition to the field of Gadda studies. The text is comprised, for the most part, of articles pub-

lished between 2000 and 2007 in the *Edinburgh Journal of Gadda Studies* and, as such, establishes a dialogue amongst the various components of Pedriali's sustained engagement with Gadda. It is precisely by virtue of this dialogue that Pedriali's text reveals an array of quilting points that permeate and structure the author's literary universe. The assembled articles display a painstaking analysis that functions at both a micro and macro level, addressing not only the insistent conceptual concerns but also the stylistic and structural underpinnings of Gadda's writing. This, for example, is most obviously the case with Pedriali's identification of a Gaddian return to a stylistic, structural and conceptual mechanism of doubling, most evident in the menacing fraternal figure.

Pedriali divides her text into two parts. The first section, *Applicazioni*, constitutes the bulk of the text and is comprised of seven articles dealing with a broad spectrum of Gadda's novelistic and essayistic work. The second section, *Appendici*, consists of three brief interventions. While the first two appendices address Gadda's obsessive return to figures of exclusion (his Palinurus complex), the final appendix is a thoughtful tribute to the late Robert Dombroski, initially delivered by Pedriali in 2000. The text also and very helpfully presents an exhaustive index organized not only by name but also around conceptual categories and lexical components central to Gadda's writing.

The first two chapters of section one, "Il *Pasticciaccio* e il suo doppio" and "Doppi fondi di romanzo. Ancora sul *Pasticciaccio*, passando per *Notte di luna*," plot the veiled structure that anchors Gadda's apparently digressive giallo. Describing the opening pages as a "modello in scala" of the novel as a whole (20), Pedriali charts a "ponte tematico-narrativo" (21) of quilting points that permeate the entire work. She identifies thematic and, even, chromatic echoes emanating from Liliana Balducci's corpse and she maps a structural doubling as the novel abandons its Roman first half and expands outward into Zamira's hinterland. Both chapters also address Gadda's never filmed screenplay, *Il palazzo degli ori*, as it relates to the ectoplasmic presence of Virginia, the presumed murderer (33). The third essay, "Il cielo scritto di Gonzalo," revolves around Gadda's "ipersensibile alter ego" (51), the tormented Gonzalo of *La cognizione del dolore*. Identifying the figure of *geminatio* as the "vero e proprio stilema" of the novel (53), Pedriali insists that this "vizio stilistico di vecchia, vecchissima data" discloses an "intera archeologia della mente" (54). This doubling haunts the text in the form of a deceased brother who is afforded a greater measure of maternal love and, accordingly, threatens the illusory idyll of a "tempo primo, preconflittuale" (54). This draws us to the heart of what for Pedriali is Gadda's most important concern, namely, "l'Umanitaria, ossia l'uguaglianza di tutti i nati, ideologia *pre-edipica* e utopia *a-politica*" (57). Yet, the illusory nature of this ideal is revealed in Gadda's insistent return to "questioni di polarizzazione male amministrata" (58).

Focusing on *Le meraviglie d'Italia*, the fourth chapter, "Dell'equità. L'inviato speciale invia," elaborates the illusory ideal of equity in the "epoca dei trasporti meccanici" (68). Here Gadda plays the part of the *observer* "inviato in provincia a valorizzare conquiste tecniche, bellezze naturali" and, as such, celebrates, in line with Fascist rhetoric, "l'epoca, il suolo, le genti" (71). Yet, in this inherited vision

of industrious uniformity and perfect mechanical resolution of difference [a “linea di pioppi e di schiene al lavoro (74)], Pedriali discerns the ridiculous: “L’uomo lavabo e bidet. La lubrificazione perfetta” (75). It is this ridicule that marks Gadda as “figlio maschio malriuscito, di primogenito da scherno” (75). Fraternal struggle also animates the subsequent chapter, “Fame a Longone. Meditazione e rito di Carlo Emilio Gadda primogenito.” Opening her chapter with reference to Esau and Jacob, Pedriali connects this biblical tale of fraternal discord and maternal preference with Gadda’s own delirium “di parte lesa ed offesa” (87). While the hungry Esau, first born of the twins, sells his birthright to Jacob for a plate of stew, Gadda’s “temibile fame di giustizia” (86) becomes literal as consumption comes to constitute a “strumento di retribuzione” (87). We return here, of course, to the violent ingestion of the sea-creature on the part of Gonzalo who becomes a Lucifer “privo di pertugio inguinale: sé chiuso in sé, sé attossicato dal sé e dal pasto” or a Cronus, prisoner of the “neonato umano inghiottito intero” (91).

The sixth chapter, “Fistola in succhio: Chiamate idrauliche per *L’Adalgisa*,” opens on an I that participates in a “promiscua fluidità esterna” but is “paradossalmente garantito, protetto, confermato entro i confini magici del corpo e della mente” (105). Gadda’s bodies, whether engaged in the violent struggle of germination or deprived of life, are, Pedriali writes, always “corpi-persona, materia scritta e individuata” (107). These and similar concerns structure the final *Applicazione*, “Il vettore, la cartolina, lo stemma. Magliature riorientative a chiudere, ripartendo dalla *Meditazione*.” Beginning with the central problematic of method broached in the *Meditazione*, Pedriali unpacks a Gaddian suffering that can be equated with the “cognizione del non poter divenire” (170). Pedriali’s Gadda is, then, not a Deleuze “avanlettera” (176), but rather a vectorial subject of contradictions who “dichiara di volere fare sparire gli eroi, e di nuovo si atteggia da eroe” (179).

Pedriali’s text, both in its critical rigour and its demanding stylistic elegance, remains consistently faithful to the full and even contradictory complexity of Gadda’s thought and style. It is unfortunate that these articles are not available in English translation, a comment that is, sadly, equally applicable to much of Gadda’s own writing.

DEBORAH AMBERSON
University of Florida

Albert N. Mancini and Glenn Palen Pierce, eds. *Dictionary of Literary Biography. Volume 339: Seventeenth-Century Italian Poets and Dramatists*. Detroit: Gale, 2008. Pp. 410. ISBN 978-0-7876-8157-9. n.p.

This timely volume of Gale’s *Dictionary of Literary Biography* series focuses on the poetic and theatrical achievements of the Seicento or Baroque period in Italian literature, which prevailed from approximately 1580 to 1680. As Albert Mancini observes in his informative Introduction to the literary developments of the peri-