with such a well-known man of letters. Beside their historical value, these letters attest to the major role that male literati were thought to play in promoting the budding poets.

This collection of English-translated primary material is easily accessible to scholars and students who try to get to grips with this subject. That said, the book’s main strength is that it provides rich and wide-ranging analyses of works and studies on women by closely examining a select number of primary sources and their place within the wider context of scholarly work on sixteenth-century women.

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In this book Alice Crosta expands on a topic explored by famous critics like Giuseppe Prezzolini, Emilio Cecchi, Carlo Dionisotti, Fredi Chiappelli and Ezio Raimondi: the fortune of Alessandro Manzoni in Britain and in the United States in the nineteenth century. Mainstream opinion is that Manzoni had neither a significant impact nor a good reputation in the English-speaking world. Alice Crosta brings new evidence to the contrary and embarks on a detailed and exhaustive search for new documents that prove how Manzoni was appreciated by critics and writers, more so for his poetry and tragedies than for *I promessi sposi*.

This monograph is divided in two parts: the first studies Manzoni’s reception in Great Britain and the second in the United States. Crosta surveys reviews of Manzoni’s work (1820–1890), translations of *I Promessi Sposi*, and *Morale cattolica*, anthologies of Italian poetry that include Manzoni’s verses, and even travel books on Italy, where visits to Manzoni are reported. It is intriguing to see that the poem *Cinque Maggio*, about Napoleon’s death, is more admired than Manzoni’s prose and historical novel.

Crosa examines Romantic-era literati who contributed to the fame of Manzoni, like Stendhal and Foscolo (then exiled in London). She definitely excludes that Walter Scott ever met Manzoni, even during Scott’s Italian trip in
1831. Scott never mentioned Manzoni, but it is certain that he read the 1827 edition of the Italian historical novel.

Risorgimento exiles like Mazzini, Gallenga and the Ruffini brothers, who settled in Britain, contributed to Manzoni’s international fortune with their reviews and literary articles. During the Victorian era Manzoni’s work was the subject of study, review and translation. The Promessi sposi were read by the likes of Charles Dickens, Samuel Rogers, Elizabeth Barrett Browning and Thomas Macaulay. Dickens took Italian lessons in Genoa in 1844 and among his tasks were reading and translating excerpts from I promessi sposi. Samuel Rogers, who travelled to Italy and published a book about his journey (Italy, 1839), preferred the Promessi sposi to Scott’s novels. Barrett Browning read Manzoni’s historical novel in Italian in 1832. George Eliot and Elizabeth Gaskell knew Manzoni’s work, the former read the Morale cattolica, and the latter I promessi sposi. So much was the interest for Manzoni that some British authors set their stories in the Lake Como region, for example William Gilbert, who entitled one of his Gothic stories Innominato. The Wizard of the Mountains (1867).

In Oxford in the mid-nineteenth century the interest for Catholicism was growing, after the conversion to Catholicism of John Henry Newman in 1845 (later cardinal in 1879). Newman read the Promessi sposi and held Manzoni in high esteem; he even wrote him a letter in Italian. Newman admired the noble image of Catholicism that emerged from Manzoni’s novel. Manzoni had a strong impact on all members of the Oxford Movement and the English translation of I Promessi Sposi (The Betrothed, Anonymous Translator. London: Burns, 1844) was particularly influential on them. In Oxford the most enthusiastic admirer of Manzoni was novelist Charlotte Yonge, who could read his historical novel in Italian. In her book The Heir of Redclyffe (1853), the main character reads Manzoni’s novel. Yonge’s novel contains many textual references to the Promessi Sposi but her characters do not belong to the lower social classes. The Promessi Sposi perfectly reflects the ideals of the Oxford Movement in terms of artistic values and ethical engagement.

Manzoni was known in Britain also thanks to translations of his lyrics that appeared between 1868–69 in the Monthly Packet of Evening Readings for Members of the English Church. Translations include the sacred hymns and the Cinque Maggio. In an article published in this journal in 1871, Manzoni is called “the best sacred poet Italy has produced” (143). Manzoni was famous enough to receive numerous visits from English travellers between 1834–47. Literate Abraham
Hayward, Anglicans influenced by the Oxford Movement, and the important politician William Gladstone all paid visits to Manzoni while in Italy. Gladstone, who knew Italian language and literature, visited Manzoni in 1838. As already noted by Dionisotti, Gladstone had a positive opinion of the *Promessi Sposi* and had even translated the *Cinque Maggio.*

The second part of Crosta’s monograph deals with Manzoni’s fortune in the United States. Manzoni’s works were reviewed in the United States between 1830 and 1841. Unlike English reviews, American ones do not focus on the religious or political debate. Some reviews accompanied the two translations of the *Promessi Sposi* that were published in 1834. Manzoni’s tragedies were particularly appreciated and the anthology *Specimens of Italian Tragedies* (1833–34) included excerpts from *Carmagnola* and *Adelchi* in translation. Manzoni was also highly esteemed as lyric poet and in the journal *Italian Lyric Poets* we find translations of *Cinque Maggio* and of the choir of *Carmagnola.* In *American Monthly Magazine* (1834) Manzoni, as author of the *Promessi Sposi* was called “the Walter Scott of Italian Peasantry”. In 1845 Appleton in New York published a second edition of the English translation of *The Betrothed,* where in the introductory notes, Manzoni is considered inferior to Scott.

As in Great Britain, in the United States Manzoni’s lyrics were very popular and appeared in translation in anthologies like Longfellow’s *Poets and Poetry of Europe* (1845). In the Italian section we find Manzoni’s two most popular texts in the English-speaking world: *Il cinque maggio* (translated by Francis Gray) and the choir of *Carmagnola* (translated by Felicia Hemans). Like in Britain, *I promessi sposi* is the preferred text used for teaching Italian language.

For many years the anonymous review of the translation *The Betrothed Lovers* (1835) published in the *Southern Literary Messenger* was believed to be by E.A. Poe; but from the 1930s American critics debunk this myth, by attributing it to Beverly Tucker.

Ralph Waldo Emerson, who knew Italian language and literature, pays tribute to Manzoni in his lectures and in his diaries, which chronicle his travel to Italy. Writer and journalist Margaret Fuller (a student of Emerson), who met Manzoni in Milan, also had a strong interest in his tragedies and poetry and expressed her enthusiasm for the *Promessi Sposi.* In Fuller’s volume *At Home and Abroad* (1856) we find the most extensive treatment of Manzoni. Fuller considered Manzoni one of the most representative authors of his time.
Crosta’s volume ends with an Appendix, which includes a bibliography of Manzoni’s works published in Great Britain and in the United States in the Ottocento, translations and anthologies, along with other sources (travel books, diaries etc.) that mention Manzoni and review his books.

_Alessandro Manzoni nei paesi anglosassoni_ is painstakingly researched and succeeds in its task of showing the scope of Manzoni’s fortune in Britain and the United States. While making a valid contribution to the study of the reception of Manzoni in nineteenth-century Britain and United States, the book also reveals the interconnectedness between Italian and English-speaking culture.

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Il progetto, finanziato da un numero impressionante di istituzioni, pubbliche e private, oltre che da singoli benefattori, si presenta come una nuova “edizione” dell’opera leopardiana, non come una semplice traduzione. Lo conferma, anzitutto, l’indice del volume: esso comprende, dopo i ringraziamenti, una ricca