Roberto Salsano. *Pirandello in chiave esistenzialista*. Roma: Bulzoni Editore, 2015. Pp. 116. ISBN 978-88-6897011-6.

Roberto Salsano's latest study, *Pirandello in chiave esistenzialista*, is in keeping with the scholarly acumen of his fruitful critical production spanning eight centuries of Italian literary studies, from the Duecento to contemporary Italian authors. This volume consists of six chapters, preceded by a *Nota al testo* and followed by a useful *Indice dei nomi*. As the author explicitly points out (7), three of these six chapters are painstakingly revised, expanded, and updated versions of his previous Pirandello studies included in *Pirandello. Scrittura e alterità* (Cesati, 2005), *Michelstaedter tra D'Annunzio, Pirandello e il mondo della vita* (Bulzoni, 2012), and in the specialized journal *Pirandelliana* (2011).

In this study, Salsano examines all of Pirandello's creative and critical production from his early poetry collections to the theatrical works, from his voluminous *novelle* to the novels. Salsano clearly demonstrates an insightful familiarity with all of the Agrigentino's primary writings, but he also exhibits an up-to-date and well-informed command of the extensive and varied Pirandello scholarship. Furthermore, the critic is able to contextualize Pirandello's works within the Italian and European philosophical, historical, and literary milieu of the *fin-de-siècle* and the Novecento.

In all his writings, whether poetry or plays, short stories or novels, Pirandello probes into the profound consequences that modernity has inflicted on our daily lives; he does so by determining and shaping the inner and psychological temperament of his characters, who are constantly dealing with the negative effects resulting from the mechanical processes imposed upon the individual. Salsano examines Pirandello's writings within the referential context of significant European philosophers and authors such as Martin Heidegger, Karl Jaspers, Søren Kierkegaard, Gabriel Honoré Marcel, Friedrich Nietzsche, Alfred Binet, Henri Bergson, and Jean-Paul Sartre, among others. Salsano explicates Pirandello's characters through these thinkers as he discourses with these philosophical writings to offer a more accurate reading and understanding of the Nobel winner's body of writings. The author frames Pirandello's oeuvre within the context of the European literary tenet of a Dostoevsky, Ibsen, Lessing, Proust, Shaw, and Musil, as well as within the Italian literary ethos of Leopardi, Tommaseo, Verga, Svevo, Rosso di San Secondo, Moravia, Betti, and Sciascia, among others.

In the introductory chapter, “Approcci di una lettura ‘esistenzialista,’” the author delineates his existentialist reading within the context of the philosophical writings of Heidegger’s *Sein und Zeit*. Salsano weaves Heidegger’s philosophical concepts, coupled with Jaspers’ existential writings, as a definitive source for Pirandello’s philosophical and intellectual basis evidenced in his *opera omnia*. The critic supports his argument with numerous specific references to a wide range of Pirandello characters from the *novelle* to the novels, from the poetry collections to the theatrical works. Pirandello’s existentialism is not a novel view, but Salsano’s analysis is insightful and well defined and offers innumerable examples from Pirandello’s writings to support Salsano’s argument. In the longest and most detailed chapter, “Incunabili di ‘esistenzialismo,’” Salsano justly documents Pirandello’s self-identification as belonging to the formation of “scrittori filosofici” (17), which informs Pirandello’s creative process leading to his search for the “senso della vita” as defined by Heidegger’s *Essere e tempo* (18). In this chapter, Salsano discusses Jaspers’ philosophical existentialism leading to Pirandello’s depiction of characters with an intellectual and existential *Weltanschauung*. Salsano moves freely across genres in analyzing Pirandello’s characters in terms of their existential existence.

In the third chapter, “Essere, mistero, ‘oltre,’” Salsano analyzes the critical discussion on these three key concepts as applied to Pirandello’s writings. The critic expounds upon and takes issue with Pirandello studies while scrutinizing the Agrigentino’s writings in support of his critical analysis. Salsano demonstrates a rich and fertile command of Pirandello’s prolific body of writings as the critic easily identifies characters and themes to substantiate his critical viewpoint. Of noteworthy importance are the critic’s comments and observations on the similarities between Pirandello and Leopardi.

In chapter four, the author reads Pirandello’s literary production within the context of Marcel. Salsano’s comparative study of Pirandello-Marcel focuses on the existential phenomenology and the perception of the ‘Other’ as depicted by both authors. This chapter offers novel and fertile research for Pirandello studies.

In his penultimate and shortest chapter, Salsano analyzes Madama Pace’s apparition in *Sei personaggi in cerca d’autore*; he discusses the problematic polarity between image and reality, being and knowing. Salsano concludes his study with “Insularità, esistenza, letteratura,” in which he defines insularità as transcending the physical boundaries of an island and attributes anthropological, political, and cultural meanings to it, leading to what Sciascia described as a “modo di essere”

(95). Salsano concludes by making interesting comments and observations on the role and function of *insularità* in Pirandello's literary production.

Although this study is structurally sound, Salsano conceived each chapter as a singular entity, which he later revised and unified into a book-length study. For this reason, there are, at times, a few repetitions from chapter to chapter, such as the constant reference to Pirandello's preface to *Sei personaggi in cerca d'autore*. The strength of Salsano's prudently researched and comprehensive Pirandello study is evident in his ability to utilize secondary critical sources to illuminate the impressive number of primary textual citations; the ease with which the critic succeeds in reading the author's creative texts with a scholarly critical acumen is notable. The critic's thorough knowledge of the subject matter, coupled with his critical and linguistic erudition, make this study a highly informative and enriching reading of Pirandello's oeuvre, which the critic persuasively places within the broader literary, philosophical, and cultural contexts and perspectives of the Italian and European milieu.

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Ernest Ialongo. *Filippo Tommaso Marinetti. The Artist and His Politics*. Madison and Teaneck: Farleigh Dickinson University Press, 2015. Pp. xii + 330. ISBN 978-1-61147-756-6 (cloth); 978-1-61147-757-3 (electronic).

While a growing body of scholarship has secured F. T. Marinetti's place in the canon of the European avant-garde and modernism, we still do not have a comprehensive biography, in English, of the founder and leader of the Futurist movement. While clearly more concerned with the second aspect of Marinetti's activity identified in the subtitle, Ernest Ialongo's *Filippo Tommaso Marinetti. The Artist and His Politics* goes a long way towards filling that gap, and is one of the most important monographs on the author published in the last decade. Ialongo's thesis, clearly articulated in the book's Introduction, is that Marinetti's politics were oriented by "two fundamentally contradictory" (3), and ultimately irreconcilable, sets of goals. On the one hand, Ialongo writes, Marinetti "sought to advocate individual liberties in modern society"; on the other, "he also desired national greatness for Italy, which entailed a certain level of collective order and