quasi ci si vergogna, in una presentazione rapida come la presente, a citare ancora una volta: "io scrittore udii dire a Dante che mai rima nol trasse a dire altro che quello ch' avea in suo proponimento; ma ch' elli molte e spesse volte faceva li vocaboli dire nelle sue rime altro che quello ch' erano appo gli altri dicitori usati di sprimere"; "elli fu di Firenze, e però qui recita una falsa opinione, che ebbero gli antichi di quella cittade, la quale io scrittore domandandonelele, udii così raccontare". Insomma, l'identificazione del Lancia con l'Ottimo non è esplicita, ma neppure è da mettere in dubbio. Ed essa viene confermata indirettamente dalla circostanza rilevata a p. 39: che il ms. Cologny-Genève, Bodmer 132, appartenuto al Lancia, contiene tra l'altro anche le due epistole di Pier della Vigna utilizzate dall'Ottimo nel suo commento a Inf. XIII 64-72.

Occorrerebbe a questo punto accennare in modo non cursorio alla questione dei manoscritti della Commedia copiati in tutto o in parte dal Lancia (soprattutto pp. 36-38, con rinvii alla bibliografia precedente): ma l'argomento, per la sua tecnicità, esigerebbe altro spazio e soprattutto altre competenze da quelle dell'estensore di questa nota: il quale dunque volentieri rinvia il lettore alle pagine di Azzetta per un'informazione su una materia che presenta, anch'essa novità di rilievo e che consente di vedere all'opera, una volta ancora, notai come Andrea Lancia intorno al poema dantesco.

Dati i caratteri che qui si è cercato di delineare, e la piccola folla di personaggi grandi e piccoli e di manoscritti e documenti citati nell'introduzione, appare provvidenziale la decisione dell'autore di separare in modo netto i problemi trattati nella presentazione della figura del Lancia da quelli che emergono dal volgarizzamento; tale separazione è resa evidente dalla circostanza che gli indici dei nomi e dei manoscritti citati nell'introduzione si trovano alla fine dell'introduzione stessa. In questo modo si semplifica e si razionalizza la materia, tenendo ben distinti i personaggi che compaiono negli Ordinamenti, nelle Provvisioni e nelle Riformagioni da quelli, che al comune studioso di letteratura italiana interessano certo di più, che ci vengono presentati nella biografia.

Luca Azzetta annuncia, come si è accennato, ulteriori sviluppi delle indagini su temi particolari che nelle pagine introduttive a questo volume ha potuto solo accennare o che non sono ancora arrivate a un punto di maturazione sufficiente per un'esposizione in sede scientifica; l'auspicio è che anche i nuovi contributi si mantengano al livello di questo volume.

EDOARDO FUMAGALLI

Università di Friburgo (Svizzera)

Sturm-Maddox, Sara. *Ronsard, Petrarch and the "Amours"*. Gainesville, FL: University Press of Florida, 1999. 208 pp. \$49.95.

Just as Jacob struggled with his angel, so too Ronsard with the textual persona of Petrarch. Sara Sturm-Maddox describes this skirmish as an agonistic textual conflict between the two poets. Of the two, the interest lies above all in

Ronsard as he fashions himself upon his Italian master. The three lyric collections under consideration are Ronsard's *Amours* of 1552 to 1553, the *Sonets pour Hélène* of 1578 and his last short sequence *Sur la mort de Marie* published in the same year. Far from the first to pétrarchiser in the Petrarchan mode, following Clément Marot, Pontus de Tyard, Maurice Scève and Du Bellay, Ronsard nevertheless aimed at and achieved the title of the French Petrarch (Pétrarch Vandomois). A popular edition of Petrarch's *Rime* (1528), with its commentary by Vellutello, vita, and descriptions of Vaucluse teased its French audience into imagining a narrative context for the integral collection of poems (27-29). The interest of such printed editions, easily imported into France, was augmented by Maurice Scève's supposed discovery of Laura's tomb in an Avignon church in 1533. The main point of interest for Sturm-Maddox, however, is the amount of posture, imposture, affectation or hypocrisy which Ronsard adopts within what she calls a "strategy of assimilation" (33).

The thorough methodology applied to this analysis is convincing. Sturm-Maddox juxtaposes quotations from Petrarch's *Rime sparse* with Ronsard's three collections of love lyrics. Every quotation is followed by the author's own English translation which not only aids the uninitiated, but also titillates scholars of Italian and French who can test the accuracy of her translations. Most convincing of all, however, is the disclosure of Ronsard's unique individuality, set in relief against a background of indebtedness to Petrarch: a mosaic of borrowings, of both images and phrases, an echoing of conventions, of both love and suffering.

Taken together, the four chapters with Introduction and Afterward represent a kind of summa of all the scholarship which had been done upon both Ronsard and Petrarch up until 1999. Within such a morass, Sturm-Maddox navigates the field of opinion towards the harbour of her own conclusions. For her, *Les Amours* presents a fictional poetic strategy which rediscovers mythology through the mediation of Petrarch. Ronsard's erotic vein, which ignores Petrarch's vergogna and subverts his decorum, is likewise more poetic than sexual. The *Sonets pour Hélène*, she asserts, are not "antipetrarchan" (124), even if inspired by Ronsard's rivalry with the favoured neoplatonic poet at court, Philippe Desportes. Although Hélène's existence is probably a pretext for allusions to Helen of Troy, this name also permits the jeu de mots Helen/halène modelled upon Petrarch's Laura/Laura (105). Even the "bereaved poet-lover" of *Sur la mort de Marie* returns to Petrarchan strategies in no "superficial", "invasive" or "indiscrete" way (131). On the model of Petrarch's address to Laura, Sturm-Maddox analyses Ronsard's address to the country girl named Marie in vita in contrast to the Marie in morte who is less a fictional than a composite Marie of the once living, but prematurely dead (129). By appreciating the similarities between the Italian and the French poet, the essential differences, especially Ronsard's secularization of Petrarch, are brought into focus. Unlike the spiritually elevating love of Petrarch, Ronsard's eros is never transformed into caritas. Immortality, for the latter, is achieved only through poetic skill. A major caveat to Sturm-Maddox's methodology is the relatively limited attention she pays to the work of poets contemporary with Ronsard, especially those who had prior claims upon Petrarch. For example, the author

ignores the seemingly idiosyncratic substitution of Pasithea (Pasithee) for Hélène in the *Premier Livre des sonets pour Hélène* (13,1 identified as 14,1 on p.126). Pasithea is the pseudonym bestowed by Pontus de Tyard upon his first lover — in a relationship unlikely to have been consummated — who is generally considered to have been an active participant in the social circles of Lyon. Tyard's love for her is central to all his lyric and philosophical writings published between 1549 and 1555. Consequently, a more detailed synchronic study of Ronsard's contemporaries could seriously qualify Sturm-Maddox's view of both Ronsard's originality and his direct dependence upon Petrarch.

K. JANET RITCH
University of Toronto

Natalia Ginzburg: A Voice of the Twentieth Century. Eds. Angela M. Jeannet, Giuliana Sanguinetti Katz. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2000. Pp. xv, 250.

Natalia Ginzburg's rich literary corpus has for long enjoyed wide interest from appreciative reading audiences ranging from literary critics to translators, educators and readers for pleasure. Yet ironically, the marked popularity of the fiction and of the author have served not to dispel but rather to reinforce the aura of questioning and puzzled disbelief that have persisted in relation to Ginzburg's intellectual accessibility and the seeming contradictions often displayed in her works. This monograph consisting of an introduction by Rebecca West, ten essays, an interview with Ginzburg as well as translations of some brief fiction, seeks to provide fresh and widely encompassing interpretations of the writer, her novels, theatre, and critical writings. Each study moves away from early perspectives challenging as it does, the pre- or misconceptions that have often resulted from readers glossing over cultural considerations or too quickly formulating sexist stereotyping.

The essays range over diverse thematic fields and critical approaches. Through her extended interview, which opens the monograph, and her later analysis of the epistolary novels ("Writing the Self: The Epistolary Novels of Natalia Ginzburg"), Peg Boyers seeks to penetrate into the authenticity of the persona and the writer herself for whom writing was the most truthful creative act of existence. As well, Luigi Fontanella's essay pays a friendly homage to a writer whom he respected and admired especially for her *Voci della sera* and *Lessico familiare*, which Fontanella places among the "classics of the late twentieth century." (34) Fontanella is fascinated by the security of Ginzburg's style deliberately employing a diversity of syntactic systems coalescing to create an aura of mnemonic allure in the stories resting upon evergreen threads of memory and imagination. Boyers's contributions and Judith Lawrence Pastore's reading of Caro Michele bring to light a number of paradoxes in Ginzburg's life and work: her public commitments as an elected Representative in the Camera dei Deputati, yet her admission of not being a "political person" (20); her support of free