troppo succinti, cosicché l'analisi cede il posto alla sintesi e alla descrizione; pur con questi limiti, ha il pregio della completezza, nella trattazione degli argomenti, e dunque è un libro indispensabile, da avere a portata di mano, per chi si occupa di Segneri e di letteratura religiosa del Seicento. Estese e puntuali, ricchissime di citazioni ben scelte sono le note a piè di pagina (due note però contengono il medesimo testo: 31 n. 95 e 43 n. 29); i luoghi segneriani citati nel testo e in nota sono tratti da un'edizione popolare ottocentesca, *Opere del P. Paolo Segneri della Compagnia di Gesù* (8 voll., Milano: Borroni e Scotti 1853-55), piuttosto che dalle edizioni pubblicate vivente l'autore o da raccolte postume più accreditate (come quelle settecentesche di Monti a Parma e di Baglioni a Venezia). È decisamente convincente la tesi di fondo del libro, che la teologia segneriana ha una natura eminentemente "pratica"; su questo insiste giustamente anche la Prefazione di Angelo Bertuletti. E lo svolgimento di tale tesi è sufficiente a giustificare e motivare la lettura del libro anche da parte di quanti si occupano di letteratura e di cultura del Seicento, piuttosto che di teologia o di pastorale. Per quanto Bolis si sia mantenuto entro i confini stabiliti dallo scopo e dalla funzione di questo lavoro, non è difficile ricavarne spunti di rilievo per estendere l'indagine sul fronte della visione storico-politica di Segneri, intrecciata alla pluriennale collaborazione del gesuita con il governo del Granducato toscano: del resto già molti anni fa Mario Scotti aveva parlato della qualità pervasiva e dominante dell'"impegno ideologico" di Segneri, nella sua opera di scrittore, predicatore e missionario (Daniello Bartoli e Paolo Segneri, *Prose scelte*, a cura di Mario Scotti, Torino, UTET, 1967: 453, 455). Sicuramente un denominatore comune lega le strategie politiche e quelle religiose, nel caso di Segneri: la formula adottata da Bolis dell'"approccio pratico-morale" rispecchia alla perfezione il grado di osmosi che in tanta parte del Seicento unisce i campi della politica e della teologia. Come scriveva Cesare Ripa alla fine del paragrafo sulla "Theologia": "Il lembo della veste sostenuto dalla mano che sta distesa verso terra, dimostra che una parte di Theologia si stende alle cose basse, ma necessarie, che sono il formare debitamente le attioni nostre, regolarsi nelle virtù, fuggire li vitij, honorar Dio esteriormente, e altre cose simile, le quali sono, come una veste, sotto alla quale non penetrano, se non le menti illuminate da Dio" (*Iconologia, ovvero Descrizione d'Imagini delle Virtù, Vitij, Affetti, Passioni humane, Corpi celesti, Mondo e sue parti*, In Padova per Pietro Paolo Tozzi, MDCXI, Nella Stamparia del Pasquati: 513).

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Carlo Goldoni. *La Locandiera*. Edited and introduced by Deirdre O'Grady. Dublin: University College, Dublin, Foundation for Italian Studies, 1997. Pp. 174.

Teachers of Italian in Anglophone countries have undoubtedly experienced the challenges of teaching major works of Italian literature to students who are still developing competence in the language. For the student trying to fully comprehend the language and meaning of the text, the experience of reading these works is also chal-

lenging and, at times, frustrating. Occasionally we come across an edition specifically designed for the Anglophone student which makes the reading experience much less frustrating and more fruitful. For this reason, Deirdre O'Grady's edition of *La locandiera*, which is "intended for second- and third-year university students of Italian literature" (7), is certainly a welcome publication.

Deirdre O'Grady's edition of Goldoni's celebrated play features a short preface, a twenty-six-page *Introduction*, and two very brief sections titled *A Word About Goldoni's Language* and *Suggested Ancillary Readings*. The bibliographical references in this latter section are a bit scant and perhaps could have included other well known critics such as Ettore Caccia, Luigi Ferrante and Mario Petrini who have made noteworthy contributions to this and other works by Goldoni. O'Grady's edition also contains Goldoni's foreword, *L'autore a chi legge*, written after *La locandiera* and not included in some Italian editions. The actual text of the play is taken from the 14 volume Mondadori edition (1935-1956) of Goldoni's works, *Tutte le opere*, edited by Giuseppe Ortolani, and is accompanied by abundant footnotes which provide both a commentary on certain passages and an English translation of some of the more difficult or peculiar words, expressions and structures. The last section of the book contains a 14-page vocabulary which undoubtedly will serve as a useful tool for students.

O'Grady's lengthy *Introduction* focuses on four main areas: the *commedia dell'arte*, the cultural context of the Settecento, Goldoni's life and works and, lastly, the play in question, *La locandiera*. A good part of the *Introduction* is dedicated to the *commedia dell'arte*: the sources (the Roman comedies of Terrence and Plautus), the salient features of the genre, the principal masks (particularly the servants) and the influence of Italian improvised comedy on theater outside of Italy and on the world of opera. O'Grady rightly underlines the impact that the *commedia dell'arte* had in France where a reform of the genre was already underway before Goldoni's time. Several of Molière's themes and works, for example, are "literary reflections of the world of improvisation, which were later refined and developed by Regnard and Marivaux" (17). These three French playwrights appropriated and restructured many of the situations and stereotypes of improvised Italian comedy. In particular, Regnard and Marivaux added a new social vision to the already astute servant class and raised the status of such characters as Harlequin from a mere mask to main protagonist of divers literary works. The same themes and character types made their way into the operatic world where they were remolded and enjoyed new life in operas like *Le nozze di Figaro*, *Il barbiere di Siviglia* and *Don Pasquale*, to mention a few.

O'Grady goes on to examine the cultural milieu of the eighteenth century and its two major influences: the Accademia dell'Arcadia and the Enlightenment. She summarizes the principles, development and achievements of the Arcadia and mentions some of the contributions of the Enlightenment philosophers. "In Goldoni's able hands – she notes – both the Arcadian miniature and rationalist thought take their place in the reformed comic genre, in an act of reconciliation between the light and the serious. The playwright's adaptation of the *bel mondo* of Arcadia to his own needs involved presenting eighteenth-century society...in such a manner as to cut across social divisions, depicting both the aristocracy and the common people and ridiculing the former by attributing their gestures and mannerisms to the latter" (21).

In the subsequent section of the *Introduction*, O'Grady provides a very well written summary of Goldoni's life which spanned almost the entire century (1707-1793). She chronicles the young Goldoni's various moves from one city to another, his first

encounters and fascination with the theater, his often interrupted legal studies in Venice, Pavia, Modena and Padova (where he graduated in 1731), and his work in the 1730s and 1740s as a lawyer and diplomat, as well as a writer of *Intermezzi* and comedies. Goldoni's collaboration with the actor Cesare D'Arbes helped him develop a "comedy of character" which supplanted the stock characters and *scenari* of the *commedia dell'arte*. O'Grady points out how the fourteen years following his abandonment of the legal profession, in 1748, proved to be the most enjoyable and prolific period of Goldoni's life. She recalls the famous four-year contract which Goldoni signed in 1749 with the impresario Girolamo Medebach to write eight comedies (in actual fact Goldoni produced considerably more; in 1750 alone he produced 16 comedies). *La locandiera*, perhaps his best comic work, was performed on December 26, 1752, before he left the Sant'Angelo for the San Luca theater where he worked from 1753 to 1762. O'Grady goes on to show that, although these were productive years, Goldoni found it difficult to endure the criticism and accusations of rival writers like Pietro Chiari and Carlo Gozzi. These conflicts eventually forced him to leave Venice in 1762 for France where he took the position as superintendent of the Comédie Italienne. Unfortunately, the last phase of Goldoni's life was anything but glorious. While he wrote some significant works during this period, like *Le Bourru bienfaisant* (1771) and his *Mémoires* (1787), and also taught Italian at the courts of Louis XV and XVI, the final years until his death in 1793 were spent in extreme poverty.

The last part of the *Introduction* is dedicated to an analysis of *La locandiera*, "a clear example of reformed Italian comic theater" (27). In her discussion of the play, O'Grady integrates the topics previously covered in the *Introduction* (socio-cultural milieu, *commedia dell'arte* influences, etc.). With reference to the socio-cultural aspects of the work, she writes: "By means of mock heroic devices and satire of eighteenth-century manners and mannerisms (*La locandiera*) points to a re-establishment of social order. In this play Goldoni depicts the miniature Arcadian *bel mondo* or high society in all its frivolity, highlighting the business and social relationship between servants and masters. A practical interpretation of Enlightenment doctrines is seen in his support for honest industry. Reason is expressed in terms of common sense, and philosophy emanates from the mouths of astute servants, who point to a new social structure in which economic ventures and practical judgements will call the tune" (27). As for the influences of the *commedia dell'arte* on the play, O'Grady states that Goldoni's characters "bear close resemblance to *commedia dell'arte* masks: they owe their origin to stock types such as the miser Pantalone, the bragging Captain Spavento (note the author's misspelling of Spaventa), the innkeeper Brighella and the servant girl Colombina. Yet they are fully-fledged characters capable of developing in the course of the action: it is in the creation of character that Goldoni is at his most original" (28).

While O'Grady does well to underscore the influences of the *commedia dell'arte* types on *La locandiera* and certainly makes some valid observations, her analysis of the play seems to focus largely on the links between the masks of improvised comedy and the characters of Goldoni's play. The result is that other critical perspectives and significant aspects of the play are overlooked. One such aspect is the question of intentionality and the relation between the play and Goldoni's foreward, *L'autore a chi legge*. Another key issue is the battle of the sexes (Mirandolina's emancipation or proto-feminism versus the aristocratic misogyny and cowardice of the Cavaliere). In addition, although she makes some interesting points vis-à-vis Goldoni's "fusion of

masks", O'Grady's treatment of the play's characters does not go beyond this perspective and, ultimately, remains a bit limited for an edition of this type. With regard to the play's central character, for example, O'Grady's main thesis is that "Mirandolina is a combination of Colombina, Brighella and Franceschina" (32). To be sure, we can find common traits or a combination of traits in many literary characters (Gianfranco Folena considered Mirandolina a descendant of Rosaura and Smeraldina, and Luigi Ferrante saw her as a female version of Don Juan). However, to reduce Mirandolina to the role of *la servetta*, no matter how astute, or to a combination of *commedia dell'arte* masks, does not, in my view, do justice to Goldoni or to the extraordinary character of Mirandolina. In fact, it is precisely Mirandolina's complexity and unpredictability that make her such a unique character and one who defies categorization. In my experience, what students admire most in Mirandolina are the qualities which she herself professes to possess (freedom, independence, determination, etc.): the same qualities which make this eighteenth-century character a very modern figure and a model of female emancipation. Unfortunately, these traits are never discussed. Although she states, as we have already noted above, that "it is in the creation of character that Goldoni is at his most original," O'Grady does not elaborate on the matter of the playwright's originality and innovativeness.

In other instances, O'Grady makes some claims which are certainly questionable. For example, she states: "The work concludes with the marriage of the two *zanni*, arguably descendants of Harlequin and Colombina" and "Mirandolina, the *grande dame* who elevates her inn to the level of a salon, reverts to the role of Colombina. The servant Fabrizio assumes the role of master" (31-32). Once again, O'Grady is viewing Goldoni's characters only from the perspective of the *commedia dell'arte* types and does not allow these characters to stand on their own. As for the notion that, in the end, Mirandolina allows herself to be dominated by Fabrizio, the last scene of the play clearly reveals the contrary. Fabrizio is not, nor will he never be, the master of Mirandolina:

Mirandolina: [...] Questi è mio marito...

Fabrizio: Ma piano, signora...

Mirandolina: Che piano! Che cosa c'è? Che difficoltà ci sono? Andiamo. Datemi quella mano.

Fabrizio: Vorrei che facessimo prima i nostri patti.

Mirandolina: Che patti? Il patto è questo: o dammi la mano, o vattene al tuo paese.

Fabrizio: Vi darò la mano...

An edition such as this, designed for second- or third-year university students, should attempt to include – or at least indicate – different critical approaches to the text. While O'Grady provides some valuable insights into the links between the *commedia dell'arte* and Goldoni's work, her examination of Goldoni's text and characters, especially the character of Mirandolina, remains a bit narrow in focus. It must be pointed out, however, that these minor shortcomings in the *Introduction* do not in any way lessen the overall merit of this finely presented volume. On the whole, Deirdre O'Grady's has put together a most valid, readable and carefully annotated edition. The *Introduction* is well structured and clearly written and provides the student with important background information and references for the reading of the play. The footnotes to the text are also well prepared and documented. The explanations of

the literary, linguistic and structural elements in the play will prove to be a valuable aid for the Anglophone reader, whose understanding of *La locandiera* will be enriched as a result of O'Grady's work. In conclusion, not only do I recommend this edition of Goldoni's delightful comedy, but it is my hope that more editions of this type will make their way into our classrooms.

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Umberto Mariani. *Per un Manzoni più vero*. Torino: Società Editrice Internazionale, 1996. Pp. vi, 149.

Si tratta di un libro che, secondo l'autore, "radicalmente muta una visione critica" (v). Nel capitolo introduttivo ("L'evoluzione dello storicismo manzoniano") si esprime la tesi fondamentale dello studio: già all'altezza della prima edizione dei *Promessi sposi* (1827), Manzoni avrebbe finito per abbracciare uno storicismo integrale, anti-metafisico – concezione questa che sarebbe in netta opposizione a quella della critica tradizionale, la quale ha sostenuto che lo scrittore si era prefisso di dimostrare "la presenza di un disegno provvidenziale nella Storia, della mano di Dio negli affari degli uomini" non solo negli *Inni sacri* e nelle tragedie ma anche nel romanzo, "soprattutto nel romanzo" (1).

Gli altri nove capitoli hanno il compito precipuo di illustrare questo assunto. Secondo Mariani, l'inclinazione alla storia è fatto connaturato all'animo manzoniano, rafforzato soprattutto dal suo sodalizio con gli ideologi francesi, per cui neppure negli *Inni sacri* si ha l'abbandono della "vocazione consciamente storicistica" (23) che, sì, esalta la fede ma prevalentemente perché l'autore vede nei riti liturgici l'attivazione del bene derivante dai principi e "misteri del Cristianesimo nel seno della storia" (20). Sebbene informate alla visione provvidenziale le tragedie si dicono ancorate ad uno storicismo più maturo che, coadiuvato dalla formazione illuministica di Manzoni richiedente che ogni verità di fede venisse sottoposta al vaglio della ragione, di lì a poco porterà alla crisi. Questa si verificherà al completamento del *Fermo e Lucia* (sett. 1823) che sarà profondamente rielaborato e privato della dimensione provvidenzialistica nella versione che uscirà a stampa quattro anni dopo – punto che va sottolineato in quanto elemento centrale della posizione di Mariani. Ma se per l'evoluzione del pensiero manzoniano fino alla conclusione del *Fermo* c'è un'abbondanza di documenti extra-narrativi – lettere, scritti religiosi e critici, in particolare la *Lettre à M. C[hauvet]* (1823) – il contrario è vero per *I promessi sposi*. Nel periodo della riscrittura infatti non si dà nessuna opera parallela e mancano testimonianze esterne sulla questione del provvidenzialismo. Senonché le prove a sostegno della sua tesi Mariani le trova nelle modifiche apportate al *Fermo* che, come detto, comportano l'eliminazione di quelle parti tendenti ad affermare una visione provvidenzialistica, e in strabondanza nello stesso romanzo, però solo quando questo venisse letto secondo la corretta prospettiva. A detta di Mariani i critici non hanno tenuto conto di un fatto determinante, che cioè Manzoni nei *Promessi sposi* "mira sempre a farci osservare la realtà attraverso gli occhi e i sentimenti dei suoi personaggi" (61). Perfino la descri-