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if the volume succeeds in demonstrating the scope for publication of other more systematic accounts (written, perhaps, by some of its contributors), it will have rendered a valuable service.

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Gadda: interpreti a confronto. Ed. by FEDERICA G. PEDRIALI. (Quaderni della Rassegna, 178) Florence: Cesati. 2020. 257 pp. €30. ISBN 978-88-7667-868-4.

This volume is a collection of eleven essays by established Gadda scholars. Born from a sense of unease about issues that still arise in rereading Gadda today, the book addresses the following questions: now that the process of his canonization is complete, who is Gadda? And what does Gadda offer to us, in the face of his impressively large body of work, disarranged and rearranged within multiple contexts? In tackling these questions, the collection rejects the image of Gadda as an ‘unexportable’ classic of Italian literature, and this intention is evident in the decision to assemble contributions in four languages by scholars from all over Europe (two essays are in English, one is in German and one in French; the remainder are in Italian).

In the opening essay, Federica G. Pedriali points to a crucial paradox: although he is ‘notorious for having compromised the integrity of practically all his texts, thus also appearing to have sacrificed, or lost, or never really had [. . .] a clear authorial intention’ (p. 13), Gadda is ‘not at all vanishing in, or vanquished by his texts’ (ibid.). What we witness, Pedriali notes, ‘is, rather, an authorship with authority, and exploiting the gravity of thought to precipitate, literally, the ultimate continuity of the discontinuous book: the one maximising gaps, to stop all gaps’ (ibid.). These preliminary considerations are followed by two comparative studies. In the first, by Federico Bertoni (‘Il romanzo moltiplicato: Gadda nel Novecento’), Gadda’s work resonates with Svevo, Proust, Musil, Woolf, and Joyce, modernist writers sharing a notion of reality as irreducible to any explanatory attempt by literature. In the following essay (‘La lingua del sì e quelle del no’), Gabriele Frasca dwells on the affinity between Gadda, Nabokov, and Beckett, with particular regard to their search for a ‘post-traumatic language’ (p. 68), and lays emphasis on the continuity between their works and that of Joyce.

Taking into account several non-narrative writings where Gadda deals with the nature and meaning of art and literature, Giuseppe Stellardi (‘“In nome di quale poetica”? L’antipoetica di Gadda’) brings into focus the impossibility for Gadda of articulating a poetics, and understands this impossibility, along the lines that emerge in the essay by Bertoni, as a consequence of Gadda’s gradual realization of the irreducibility of reality to a literary rationalization. As Giuseppe Bonifacino explains in ‘Dalla polarità alla deformazione: il realismo “noumenico” di Gadda’, Gadda has a polar notion of reality, meaning that reality works, for him, as a polarity of *semblance* and *noumenon*. As the polar and secret reverse of the semblance,

as the *altera facies* of the phenomenon, the noumenon is yet one with it. Gadda's realism can therefore be defined as 'noumenal', inasmuch as it essentially disfigures and deforms reality as it appears to us. Literature can know things only in denying their form, and the only truth that it can access is *in* the representation itself: Gadda's noumenal realism does not look for 'una verità riposta *oltre* la forma: bensì giacente tutta e sola in quella relazione oppositiva che produce la rappresentazione *in quanto* conflitto deformatore' (p. 120); in other words, 'la conoscenza avviene *nella* rappresentazione' (ibid.).

Reflecting on what appears to be the end of the critical primacy of some interpretative paradigms provided by Gianfranco Contini, Cristina Savettieri ('Il senso di Gadda per il romanzo') calls for the necessity of resetting the image of Gadda that has long dominated the critical scenery by embracing a full understanding of Gadda as a narrator, a novelist in all respects. Moving along this path, Alberto Godioli ("Un romantico preso a calci dal destino": Gadda and the Nineteenth Century Novel) recognizes 'Gadda's debts' (p. 138) to the classics of nineteenth-century European realism, from Stendhal, Balzac, and Dickens, to Dostoevsky and Flaubert, 'with particular attention to how Gadda builds on such models in order to achieve his own, modernist take on both sides of the polarity—a ludicrous society on the one hand, the isolated individual on the other' (ibid.). Returning to the vexed question of the unfinished nature of *Quer pasticciaccio*, Manuela Bertone ('In margine al "Pasticciaccio"') reasserts that Gadda's rejection of a traditional finale is to be regarded as the result of a deliberate decision, also inspired by Nathaniel Hawthorne's *The Marble Faun*. After the attention given to *Quer pasticciaccio*, it is the turn of the short fiction, discussed by Giuliano Cenati through a carefully developed system of classification ('Per una tassonomia del racconto gaddiano'). The conclusion of the volume is provided by the two essays in German and French. Martha Kleinhans ("Provarsi alle cose, alle immagini": Bildlichkeit in Carlo Emilio Gaddas Essays über Literatur) penetratingly looks into the question of the relationship between word and image, literature and painting, by examining *Apologia manzoniana* and *Arte del Belli*. Jean-Paul Manganaro ('Petits drames de la connaissance') returns to the end of *Quer pasticciaccio* and makes some final observations on the nature of knowledge, questioning the structure of the novel as a detective story.

All in all, *Gadda: interpreti a confronto* succeeds in taking stock of the current situation in Gadda studies. Although they differ in the themes they discuss and the approaches they adopt, the essays collected by Pedriali converge on two points: the necessity, on the one hand, of supporting the acknowledgement of Gadda as a narrator; the urgency, on the other, of understanding Gadda against an international background, with a view to further exploring his debts to nineteenth-century realism, and also in search of new consonances with the most significant voices of the twentieth century.