

## Notes on Contributions

MARIO MATERASSI has the Chair of North American Literature at the University of Florence. He was the editor of *RSA Journal* from 1991 to 1995.

CLARA BARTOCCI teaches American Literature and the History of North American Culture at the University of Perugia. She is the author of articles on Twain, Fitzgerald, Toomer, Faulkner and has published extensively on John Barth. Her work includes several essays on the relationship between the English and the Indians during the colonial period and a book entitled *Gli Inglesi e l'Indiano. racconto di un'invenzione (1580-1660)*.

GIGLIOLA NOCERA teaches English and American Literature at the University of Catania. Besides several essays on both nineteenth century and twentieth century American literature (Emerson, Thoreau, Ford, Leavitt), she has published extensively on John Cage and avantgarde music. She edited Louisa May Alcott's *Transcendental Wild Oats*, and is the author of a book on Henry David Thoreau (*Il teorema di Thoreau*, forthcoming). As a journalist, she contributes to several magazines and is currently on the editorial board of *La questione romantica*.

ELLEN GINZBURG MIGLIORINO teaches American History at the University of Trieste. She is the author of two books (*L'emancipazione degli afroamericani. Il dibattito negli Stati Uniti prima della guerra civile*, 1989; *La marcia immobile. Storia dei neri americani dal 1770 al 1970*, 1994), and has co-edited three volumes on the history of African Americans from 1770 to 1969 (*Gli Afroamericani*, 1985). Her articles focus mostly on abolitionism and minorities.

PATRIZIA PASTORE graduated in 1995 at the University of Turin with full marks and honours. She has been awarded the prize for the best dissertation in Modern Languages at the faculty of Magistero, University of Turin. She is now *cultore della materia* of American Literature at the same faculty. She is working on a full-length study of Edgar Allan Poe.

## Abstracts

MARIO MATERASSI, "From *Light in August* to *Luce d'agosto*. Elio Vittorini's Literary Offences"

*Luce d'agosto*, Elio Vittorini's translation of *Light in August*, published in 1939 and still the only translation available to date, has had a profound and long-lasting influence on the reception of Faulkner's work in Italy. This paper focuses on the highly questionable quality of that translation, analyzing in particular some of the many changes, excisions, and additions that Vittorini forced upon the original text, all of which helped to create a considerably distorted image of Faulkner's art among the Italian public.

Ultimately, the paper discusses the cultural context within which Vittorini operated, and the reasons - both literary and political - that may have prompted his heavy-handed editorial stance.

CLARA BARTOCCI, "John Barth's *Once Upon a Time*: Fiction or Autobiography?"

John Barth's innovative aesthetics is based mainly on the premise that literary conventions are likely to be transcended or subverted "to generate new and lively work". Little wonder, then, that writing the story of his life he has chosen to disguise it in the form of a novel. *Once Upon a Time* (and no title could better indicate this intention), structured as it is on a double voyage through space and time, blatantly interweaves fact and fiction in the conviction that the meaning of one's life, like that of history in general, can better be attained only if reality is interspersed with imagination. Given the affinities between Barth's poetics and postmodern modalities of consciousness, this essay

comes to the conclusion that *Once Upon a Time*, more than a fiction, is in fact a perfect example of what can be defined as a typical "postmodern autobiography".

GIGLIOLA NOCERA, "Henry David Thoreau's De-genera Description"

This essay focuses on the relationship between "description" and "narration" in the works of Henry David Thoreau. Through his intertextual universe - that of such Natural History writers as Charles Darwin, Gilbert White or John Muir - Thoreau adopts in his writing a model that is, on a reduced scale, the same model of operation as the universe. According to this model, "description" equals *diegesis* while "narration" equals Roland Barthes' "fluctuating sequence of stasis".

ELLEN GINZBURG MIGLIORINO, "The Image of the Revolution in Abolitionist Patriotism"

The subject of patriotism has divided black, as well as white abolitionists. Throughout their writings there are references to the American Revolution and the ideals of the Founding Fathers. Many emphasize the inconsistencies between belief in republican principles and the existence of slavery. This article shows how important these issues were for individuals and groups who were committed to putting an end to slavery.

PATRIZIA PASTORE, "Power and Submissions: Gender Roles in William Byrd's *Secret Diary*"

This paper focuses both on the patterns of domination and inequality (authority and protection against obedience and gratitude) and the standards of gender roles in the eighteenth-century Virginia patriarchal regime. Sex-role identification in connection with sex-typed educational plans, domestic predicament, and sexual politics in marital life are all taken into critical consideration through a careful reading of William Byrd's *Secret Diary*.