

native and foreign literary traditions, the thirst for the forbidden, and the uprootedness—both physical and spiritual.

Ewa Thompson gives us an insight into Gombrowicz's art and life in a concise but thorough way. Her analysis of a very difficult work is invariably helpful, and therefore to be welcomed and recommended.

Peter Petro

MANUEL SCORZA  
*La tumba del relámpago*  
Mexico City: Siglo XXI Editores,  
1979. Pp. 280.

Manuel Scorza, a Peruvian self-exiled in Mexico, has seen his works translated into no less than 22 different languages (see *IFR*, 5, No. 2 [1978], 169). The importance of *La tumba del relámpago*, his latest work, lies in the fact that it is one of the few *indigenista* novels written lately in Latin America. At the same time, it is the closing part of a cycle of five novels in which Scorza purported to describe the struggle of the Indians of Central Peru to defend or to regain from the oligarchy their ancestral lands. The title, "The Tomb of the Lightning," betrays the pessimistic outlook that characterizes this work. The "lightning" is a great but fugacious Indian triumph, soon to be suppressed by the right-wing dictatorship. The story—set during the Prado administration in the late fifties—follows the same pattern as most Spanish American novels of social protest; an exposition of grievances, an uprising, and the final imprisonment or massacre of the revolutionaries. But the book also exposes new views: the ever-present influence of the Cuban Revolution on the Latin American mind, the theory that at least in Peru the farmers, and not the factory workers, are the revolutionary vanguard, and the view of the proletariat as the only vital force in the subcontinent. Artistic resources from the writer's pen are varied: interior monologues, translation of Indian metaphors into Spanish, a wealth of Indian sayings

and folklore, and the introduction of living persons—including the author himself—as characters. The end of the novel reinforces the hopelessness of the Indian cause. But through the entire cycle of five novels a progression can be detected: in each, every uprising has grown bigger, to reach in the fifth and last part an almost national scale.

Evelio Echevarría

LES MURRAY  
*The Peasant Mandarin: Prose Pieces*  
Queensland: University of  
Queensland Press, 1978. Pp. 269.

Many of the farcical peculiarities of common Australian speech have become known around the world thanks to Digger troop movements in various wars, to a tourist exodus from Australia by both culturally-cringing and cheerfully philistine Strines, and most recently to the authentic sound-tracks of our movies released for overseas distribution. Less well known to the world at large, however, is that in the sixties and seventies Australian poets, novelists, and dramatists have added vital new dimensions to our native speech as Australian literature moves with increasing confidence towards international recognition. Les Murray, poet and essayist, fights in the vanguard of this movement. In Europe he would be termed an "enfant terrible." In Australia he is a "sabre-toothed wombat" who was wont to emerge unpredictably from his lonely Boeotian lair in the northern mountain ranges of New South Wales to amble down to our cultural metropolises and there cheerfully savage the Establishment, the academic literati and the conservative booboisie. He writes aggressive, witty prose that matches his forthright, eccentric ideas. His satiric anger against both the wilful and the unwitting corruption of language by his lesser contemporaries in Australia is as devastating as that of Karl Kraus for German-speaking central Europe and H. L. Mencken for the U.S.A. earlier in this century. Murray deplores the "ugly jargon words of modern educated speech, snaggy plywood terms like periodicity and refractory" and lam-