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Nota di contenuto	Introduction: hearing voices -- ; ch. 1. The voices of narrative, lyric, and drama: The three characteristics of narrative -- Lyric -- Drama -- ; ch. 2. "Jogona's great treasure": narrative, lyric, and dramatic intelligibility: Intelligibility: Comprehensiveness and cohesion -- Conclusions -- ; ch. 3. "Intoxicated with intimacy": the lyric voice in John Donne's Holy sonnets: Unruly autobiography -- Donne's Holy sonnets -- Donne's lyric self -- The lyric voice -- ; ch. 4. "The circle of chalk": narrative voice in Primo Levi's The periodic table: The periodic table -- The aspiration to narrative -- Narrative instability -- "The rich and messy domain" -- ; ch. 5. "Survival and distance": the dramatic voice in Robert Wilson's Einstein on the beach: Einstein on the beach -- Dramatic voice in Einstein -- The dramatic voice and religion -- The dramatic self -- ; ch. 6. "Harmonized chaos": the mixed voice of Coleridge's Biographia literaria: The biographia literaria -- The form of the Biographia -- Dissociation, fragmentation, and incoherence -- Harmony and unity -- Ramifications: the "mixed" self -- ; ch. 7.

Conclusion: genre and instability.

Sommario/riassunto

In this book, Ruf tries to understand how the concepts of "voice" and "genre" function in texts, especially religious texts. To this end, he joins literary theorists in the discussion about "narrative." Ruf rejects the idea of genre as a fixed historical form that serves as a template for readers and writers; instead, he suggests that we imagine different genres, whether narrative, lyric, or dramatic, as the expression of different voices. Each voice, he asserts, possesses different key qualities: embodiment, sociality, contextuality, and opacity in the dramatic voice; intimacy, limitation, urgency in lyric; and a "magisterial" quality of comprehensiveness and cohesiveness in narrative. These voices are models for our selves, composing an unruly and unstable multiplicity of selves. Ruf applies his theory of "voice" and "genre" to five texts: Dineson's *Out of Africa*, Donne's *Holy Sonnets*, Primo Levi's *The Periodic Table*, Robert Wilson's *Einstein on the Beach*, and Coleridge's *Biographia Literaria*. Through these literary works, he discerns the detailed ways in which a text constructs a voice and, in the process, a self. More importantly, Ruf demonstrates that this process is a religious one, fulfilling the function that religions traditionally assume: that of defining the self and its world.