valido ha: l'esigenza di fare discorsi in funzione di testi, da cui l'onere delle citazioni.

Il libro di Mignone è un valido contributo alla critica di Buzzati ed è un punto obbligatorio per chi voglia aggiornarsi; ha anche il valore di non presupporre eccessive conoscenze critiche da parte di chi lo legge, per cui può anche servire come testo di introduzione ai discenti meno provveduti.

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ROMANO PERTICARINI. *Quelli della fionda / The Sling-shot Kids*. Vancouver: Azzi Publishing, 1981. Pp. 205.

In the past ten years Italian-Canadian literature has flourished in both the quality and quantity of works being published in English, French and Italian. Romano Peticarini's impressive bilingual collection of poems is the most recent contribution to this growing body of Italian immigrant literature. These works include: Filippo Salvatore's *Suns of Darkness*, Pier Giorgio Di Cicco's *Roman Candles* and *The Tough Romance*, Mary Di Michele's *Mimosa and Other Poems* and F.G. Paci's novels, *The Italians* and *Black Madonna*.

Reading Peticarini's verse in the context of these writers adds to our understanding of the poems and to our pleasure and shock of self-recognition. Peticarini, like Paci and Salvatore, is speaking for the hundreds of thousands of Italian immigrants who came to Canada and who experienced and are experiencing the vicissitudes of North American Society — language, culture, climate and relations. The Italian perspective in these poems is enhanced by the fact that each is written in Italian by Peticarini and is accompanied by an English translation by Robert Testa Redy. The original Italian is striking for its use of phrases and idioms that carry a wealth of meaning and centuries of association for the Italian immigrant that can never be captured in English. Immigrant myths have become part of Italian culture in ways that are foreign to English or French expression. Even the word, *emigrante*, has a meaning peculiar to the Italian experience as suggested by a dramatic poem called "Emigrante,"

Trascinati d'antichi pesi
nel baratro dell'ingiustizia, stiamo sulle bocche
delle piste pronti allo scatto,
e sulle bocche dei "ramarri"
pronti all'agonia.

Figli d'antica madre
che nelle doglie più sofferte
ha voluto partorire
migliori uomini, e ladri:
e noi con i primi esuli,
stanchi d'un pane nero,
stanchi di correre, di cercare,
e nelle piatte città d'acciaio
ci lasciammo vincere, esiliare. (p. 90)

Nostalgia is the dominant theme of the poems in this volume. For the Italian immigrant nostalgia is a whole complex of feelings and associations: the past is childhood, the past is parents, family and friends, the past is Italy and the past is also poverty. These inner conflicts are reflected in Perticarini's sensitive poems: "Quelli della fionda," "Immenso dolore," "L'altra spiaggia," and "Misere carogne."

The younger generation of Italian-Canadian writers, C.D. Minni, Mary Di Michele, De Iulii, Di Cicco, Salvatore and Paci, all deal with parent-child relationships. Perticarini who was born in 1934 and is thus senior to these writers, is literally haunted by the memories and regrets of childhood. Parents are a central concern for Italian-Canadian writers, much more so than for writers who did not have to leave Italy. For Perticarini, childhood and parents come to represent Italy and vice versa.

Like the work of other Italian-Canadian poets, Perticarini's verse constantly returns to the elegiac elements of memory, regrets, loss and death. To accompany the elegies of Salvatore for his *nonno* and Di Cicco for his father, Perticarini has several elegies for his mother in addition to those for a deceased friend and for a girl who died at age eleven. Whether these writers use English or Italian the dominant values of Italian society emerge: a sense of self, a sense of family and a sense of community. For all these writers the search is one of personal identity, but their voice speaks for many other Italians in Canada,

Sono schiavo delle voci
che ricordano mio padre,
mia madre, i fratelli,
il sussurro della fonte,
il pianto mio fanciullo. (p. 62)

As a child things appeared simple. The language was familiar as was the environment. In Canada these references are gone. In his poems, Perticarini is constantly looking back. As a result of the comparison between life in Italy and in Canada, the Italian childhood becomes a central myth in the book:

Eravamo quelli della carruba,
delle palle di pezza,
quelli della fionda,
quelli dell'innocenza.
Nella polvere la scuola
del sincero amore,
svincolati da ogni ipocrisia.
Oggi più d'allora,
ci rimane la tempra
dell'unità, dell'amore.
Amici credetemi!
Tornerei indietro. . . (p. 4)

The book is full of images of childhood in the Italian sun, the longing to return is palpable in "Tornare bambino." The yearning for the idyllic Italy of the immigrant it to pursue the Italy of childhood: sunshine, flowers and the rooster's call.

In contrast to the innocence of village life, the immigrant experience in "Fragmented man" is harsh, and destructive to body and spirit. Perticarini, like the other authors, is not ungrateful to Canada for the opportunity offered us, nevertheless, the hardships are no less real and no less painful. The immigrant's lot is often one of unfulfilled dreams expectations that are not met despite the sacrifices.

Ieri;
 che ogni passo ricordo,
 nei giorni di sole,
 di neve o di primavera,
 l'immacolata ventola
 delle piume d'oca,
 mai che avesse azzardato
 vento sui carboni,
 nuova la stagnata,
 vecchia la mia fame,
 appena cheta la sete. (p. 34)

Romano Perticarini has a simple powerful style that captures and communicates familiar emotions. It is not surprising that his poetry has won awards in Italy: The Giuseppe Ungaretti prize 1975, *Silarus* 1975, Archimede 1976, Città di Pompei 1977 and others. The plain style of stark emotion is also one that is difficult to translate. Robert Testa Redy makes very valiant efforts to transform the Italian into English, at times however, he fails and the subtleties of the Italian words are lost. In this bilingual edition a reader has the opportunity to read the Italian and compare it to the English. This is a valuable book in immigrant literature, a revealing book on the Canadian experience and an enjoyable book for all readers.

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