again range from the iconic, like San Marco, to the rather delightfully (and undeservedly) obscure, such as Moretto da Brescia's *Saint Faustino* and *Saint Giovita* from Santa Maria in Valvendra, Lovere. While much of what is offered here is familiar to students of Venetian art, by virtue of its thematic organization and the expertise of its contributors the collection does offer some new perspectives from which to consider the remarkable range and complexity of Venetian art of the Renaissance.

SALLY HICKSON
University of Guelph

Dacia Maraini. *My Husband*, trans. Vera F. Golini. Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2004. 112 pp. ISBN 0-88920-432-2 \$22.95.

Dacia Maraini began her writing career in Italy during the economic boom, and she has been labelled both as a controversial and feminist author. While her works can oftentimes be seen as 'controversial' when compared to the subject matter with which her male counterparts are concerned, she does not consider herself a feminist. Maraini instead views herself as a woman fighting "on the side of women" (*dalla parte delle donne*). Just as Veronica Franco or Tullia d'Aragona gave a voice to women in the Renaissance through their writings, so too does Maraini through her novels, short stories, plays, films, and poetry. Therefore, it is via these mediums that she also seeks to give a voice to the voiceless and often repressed women.

Maraini's literary career began in 1962 with the publication of *The Holiday* (*La vacanza*) and has continued prolifically until the present day, and she has received many awards for her works. *Mio marito* (*My Husband*), published for the first time in 1968, was Maraini's first collection of short stories that, collectively, demonstrate her ever changing writing style in her attempt to explore a wide array of issues surrounding the female position in the 1960s. Vera F. Golini's desire to translate *My Husband* was twofold: she recognized the need for more collections of short stories by Italian women writers and, combined with translations of those works, hoped to increase the number of comprehensive studies on these Italian women and their literature. The addition of the first English translation of *My Husband*, in which Golini attempts to maintain the flavour of Maraini's language, to the slowly growing repertoire of Italian female writing will, with any luck, lead to this increased interest in the studies on these writers or on Dacia Maraini in particular.

My Husband is a collection of seventeen short stories that chronicles the experiences of Italian women throughout the Italian peninsula over a period of almost four decades. They are stories about women, each told from the perspective of a woman who lived through this period of upheaval in Italian history. They examine the trials and tribulations that these women face through various narrative voices. For example, "Dazed" is written as a first person narrative, "The Wolf and the Lamb" uses direct discourse to tell the story, and "Diary of a Married Couple" is written in the form of diary entries. While each story stands on its own, each is

ultimately part of the collective whole, that is, a project designed to provide insight into the female condition. The language is different in each story as well, something which Golini credits to the portrayal of different situational moods and characters' tempers. While the stories often begin on a light or ambiguous note ("Boiled potatoes and hard boiled eggs. It's mid-week and I have no money" from "These Hands"), the endings are sometimes disturbing or end in a negative exposé of a character (i.e. Mario coerces the man to cut off his hand in "My Husband," or neither George nor Charles realize their wife is leading a double life in "The Other Family"). Through the collection Maraini creates a history for the women of this generation who were seldom given a place in history—she propagates their story for everyone to remember.

As Golini asserts in her introduction, violence is the predominant theme throughout. It is not just physical violence, but mental and emotional as well. There is also the violence asserted by social institutions, as demonstrated by the working conditions in the story "Diary of a Telephone Operator" where the working conditions for women were near cruel. What unites all of these different facets of the central theme is the fact that they are, ultimately, forms of violence *against* women. These short stories allow the reader to learn about the position into which many middle-class women were forced and then recognize how far they progressed in overcoming the disparity between the sexes, in obtaining some semblance of independence, and increasing their rights in the Italian society.

Overall *My Husband* is a collection of Maraini's criticisms of the patriarchal social structure of the 1960s and its effects on women. She creates exaggerated caricatures that arouse sympathy and utilizes, at times, a grotesque humour that, as Golini notes, marks the borderline between the absurd and the comedic. Moreover, some characters are given names while others remain nameless, perhaps representative of 'every woman'. Nevertheless, these prominent female exemplars illustrate the treatment of women and the various 'feminist' issues of the time period, as recollected through their memory. She ultimately gives life, and voice, to these historically contextualized gendered experiences.

While Maraini has been excluded from the Italian literary canon, it does not mean her work is of less value. Her writing, in the support of women, has a deep and lasting effect on her audience. Maraini's subject matter is atypical compared to that of the male dominated literary canon, which has deprived her of the attention her counterparts have received and continue to receive. Despite the marginalization of her work, *My Husband*, written slightly before the feminist movement in Italy, is an original exploration of women's liberation and their experiences during a period of ongoing social change. It is with great hope that Golini's English translation of *Mio marito* will open the doors for Modernists interested in studying women writers or the works of Dacia Maraini.

ASHLEIGH BURNET
University of Toronto