ated for herself. David anticipates that when confronted with a child-protagonist, her reader might be prejudiced by their age and fail to see that even children are capable of possessing a flawed and unique personality (a trademark of the author’s adult protagonists), which cannot be simply attributed to an adolescent fixation. In an effort to prevent this prejudice, David presents an explicit warning to the reader: “I could tell you her [Nat’s] story, insist on those times when she gets along fine with her mother, I could point out her bad points too, but it would be unfair and only confirm our preconceived ideas about adolescence” (15-16).

This uniqueness of character is fully appreciated in one of the most compelling narratives, namely “An Unholy Story”. The manifestations of Corinne Gilbert’s religious fervour, (self-mutilation, anorexia and eventual drug use), force the reader to speculate on the type of adult this protagonist will become. In the final narrative of this collection, we are given a glimpse, in the sad and disturbing tale of Ariane, Corinne Gilbert’s daughter in the story of the same name. Told by her companion, we learn that not only is Ariane a junkie, but that she most likely followed in her mother’s footsteps.

The biological connection between these two stories is certainly unique in this collection, the intimacy between them, however, is not. Undoubtedly the fundamental theme of the bond between mother and child (where the child is often a daughter) which permeates the collection however, cannot be overlooked, it is not only on this basis that these characters are inextricably linked. They all appear to be navigating the same troubled world, carrying with them the wounds of their past trying to stumble forward into their future. What Carole David has also allowed them to carry, is the reader’s undivided attention. As each story ends, we are effortlessly guided to the next by the unseen hand of the author. While each story can be considered a compelling, autonomous narrative, as a whole, the plurality of the voices resonates at the same frequency creating a cohesive unit which does not fail to impress.

ADRIANA GRIMALDI
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This is the eleventh novel by Frank Paci, yet he remains the invisible writer. His first novel, The Italians, was a best-seller in 1978-79 while his Black Madonna was one of the first feminist novels to deal with ethnic minority women and it is still studied in university and college courses. He has a series of realist novels set in Toronto, but nobody in that city has heard of him. Even writing under the name, F.G. Paci, has helped to maintain his anonymity. Is this the shyness of the immigrant boy who feels awkward in the new country and has a sense of difference that will never allow him to fit into the new society? Or is it the negative capability of the artist who thinks of his vocation with religious austerity? Mark Trecroci, the main character in his latest novel, Hard Edge, explores some of these questions in
ways that may remind us of Paci himself. An aspiring writer living in the Soo, Mark is involved with Lisa James, a painter who is dedicated to her art and is willing to make personal sacrifices to achieve her aesthetic goals. He admires her devotion to her craft, but has trouble living up to her expectations. He reads Kierkegaard as his spiritual guide while Lisa follows Emily Carr as her mentor. Can these two artists also be soul-mates or will they break apart?

They also have the problem of Canadian geography and climate. Because Lisa lives in Toronto and Mark teaches in his home town of Sault S.\textsuperscript{e} Marie, they are only able to be together during summers and Christmas holidays. They spend these times travelling. The novel opens in the mid-seventies with them in New York visiting art museums and ends with them spending a summer in Paris. The awe inspiring art in these cities is in contrast to Mark's lonely winters in Northern Ontario.

*Hard Edge* is the sixth novel in the series that started in 1991 with *Black Blood*. This part of the story began in the previous volume, *Italian Shoes*, where Mark is on his trip to Italy. There he first meets Lisa in the darkness of St. Mark's Basilica in Venice. She first appears to him like an apparition of a dark Madonna. Mark had gone to Italy as a kind of pilgrimage in search of his family roots and his own identity. He visits the great centres of art and culture as a young writer looking for an authentic sense of the Italian spirit. With Lisa he also works on his aunt's farm to experience the difficult life his parents left behind to go to Canada. This novel is highlighted by great moments of inspiration for the young Italian-Canadian writer. The six volumes in the *Black Blood* series constitute a unique *Bildungsroman* for Italian-Canadians of the post-war generation, but the series is also a *Kunstlerroman*, a narrative about the development of the artist, and so speaks to the more than two hundred artists, musicians, actors and writers of Italian background who work in Canada.

In *Hard Edge* Mark's life takes a more troubling phase. It is difficult to maintain a relationship while living apart. On occasion Mark is unable to remain faithful to Lisa. His first novel is accepted for publication and he is happy for a few days. He has written about his community of Italian-Canadians in Sault S.\textsuperscript{e} Marie and is worried that he will be misunderstood by both his English readers and his Italian family. This is a rather sombre novel with the many references and quotations from Kierkegaard, the death of Socrates, and other famous men. Mark often carries on internal dialogues with Kierkegaard about his life and moral behaviour. In contrast to this articulate self-examination, Mark is still unable to communicate with his Italian parents.

Frank Paci writes in a clear realistic style that is accessible to any reader. There are many references to philosophical ideas and works of art that flow from this story about the strong physical attractions between Mark and Lisa. Since *Italian Shoes* we find that Paci is not afraid to use many Italian words and phrases, more so than in his earlier novels. This use of Italian in an English-language work has become a marker of Italian-Canadian literature. Works like those of Frank Paci, Antonio D'Alfonso, Mary di Michele and Pier Giorgio Di Cicco raise questions about the relationship of this writing to Italian culture and literature. Can Italian
culture exist in a language other than Italian?

Frank Paci has been called one of the fathers of Italian-Canadian writing. His book, *The Italians*, was the first English novel to deal with the experience of Italian immigrants in Canada. Since 1978 Paci has chronicled this experience in powerful realistic narratives that have inspired many other writers. There are now about 100 active Italian-Canadian writers publishing in English, Italian or French. Many have been published by Guernica Editions. In Quebec Marco Micone produced the play, *Gens du silence* (1979) 'voiceless people' which could have served as the symbol and title of Paci's early novels. This is no longer the case with Mark Trecroci, Paci's alter ego, who tries to articulate the many varied aspects of the Italian experience and identity in Canada. Will there be a seventh novel in this series?

JOSEPH PIVATO
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“*Son of Italy* remains an important text to us because it reveals the complex, polyvocal discourse that Italian American narratives continue to engage in with American culture in the twenty-first century.” Con queste parole Kenneth Scambray conclude la postazione alla ristampa del breve romanzo autobiografico di Pascal D’Angelo, edito per la prima volta nel lontano 1924 a New York per i tipi della Macmillan Company. E se quanto affermato dallo Scambray può sembrare francamente insufficiente per ciò che riguarda le virtù o le pecche, diciamo così, linguistiche letterarie narrative del romanzo, esso è tuttavia illuminante e al contempo provocatorio se riletto nell’ottica degli inattendibili criteri critici enunciati dai contemporanei del D’Angelo ai quali era gradito opinare bonariamente (chissà poi quanto) sulla convenzionalità quasi parodistica di una “pick and shovel narrative”, o addirittura di una subalterna scrittura da razza mediterranea, escludendo con fermezza ogni tentativo da parte di questo tipo di produzione letteraria, così come del suo fautore emigrante, di variare le inemendabili soglie canonicamente imposte.

Se tali sbrigativi ostracismi alimentavano buona parte della letteratura etnicamente radicata negli States, plasmando in tal modo il convenzionale perbenismo critico americano degli anni venti, ciò che si vorrebbe oggi constatare, magari da una postazione rettamente postmoderna, è che una rilettura attenta, approfondita, del testo di Pascal D’Angelo evidenzi una autocoscienza e una maturazione interiore dell’io narrante tali da stimolare una rinnovata riflessione sul recupero della sacralità del vivere migrante (con tutte le sue ramificazioni metalinguistiche e metaletterarie) come viscerale bisogno di affabulazione. Emerge da questo pensiero, mi è dato immaginare, la saggia scelta da parte della Guernica di volere riproporre il romanzo, con tutta la sua rilevanza, nel contesto della produzione letteraria italocanadese. Dicevo della vitale esigenza del narrarsi. È il caso del protag-