

In the following three chapters, Brunetta explores how cinema narrated times of war and conflict outside Italy. In Chapter 8, he illustrates the rich filmography of the Italian colonial expansionism in Africa featuring the new heroes of Italy's military campaigns; in Chapter 9, he addresses films covering the period of the Spanish Civil War, foreshadowing the Second World War; and in Chapter 10, he investigates cinema about the Second World War.

Chapter 11 discusses the lure and influence of Italian neorealism on world cinema, and Chapter 12 concentrates on how postwar cinema portrayed the rebuilding of the nation, the restoration of a national identity and dignity, the founding of democracy, and the cultural Americanisation of the country. Chapter 13 is about the relationship between cinema and life in autobiographical films and how the movie theatre becomes the place hosting the world. Chapter 14 is a homage to a select number of filmmakers of the *cinema dell'impegno* (that is, cinema of civic, cultural, historical, political, social, and artistic engagement), like Francesco Rosi, Bernardo Bertolucci, Ermanno Olmi, Paolo and Vittorio Taviani, Pupi Avati, Marco Tullio Giordana, and Nanni Moretti.

L'Italia sullo schermo covers over 100 years of cinematic representations of Italian history, and the author navigates through international political and military crises, analyses socio-economic changes and cultural transitions, and moves from broader historical considerations to close readings of geographic areas. Brunetta discusses wars, colonisation and emigration, with the 'lenses' of cinema, documenting events, memorialising the building of the Italian nation and historicising the struggles and resilience of its people. The author's uniquely informed and informative approach situates each film within a precise artistic and cultural context while attending to a superbly detailed historical analysis. Brunetta's book is multi-disciplinary, as it encompasses multiple interconnected fields of study including politics and religion, art and science, sociology and anthropology, and economy and geography, thus offering the reader a kaleidoscopic and nuanced visual interpretation and understanding of history. *L'Italia sullo schermo* is a valuable resource for students and scholars of Italian and world history, film, and cultural studies.

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Donne e scienza nella Roma dell'Ottocento,

by FEDERICA FAVINO, Rome, Viella, 2020, 268 pp., €29.00 (paperback), ISBN 9788833132358

Federica Favino's book on science and society in nineteenth-century Rome opens with commentary on two iconographic representations. The first is a photograph of Elisabetta Fiorini Mazzanti (1799–1879) which, as Favino notes, was taken as if the botanist were posing in a diorama. Mazzanti is the only woman among the 99 subjects in a collection of photographs put together by the botanist Giuseppe De Notaris (1805–77). The second image depicts astronomer Caterina Scarpellini (1808–73), apparently the only woman in Italy at that time to have had a public (funerary) monument dedicated to her. In a country eager to erect a statue – preferably equestrian – for practically anyone (*monumentomania* is discussed in Chapter 4), Italy's lack of iconographic images of (non-saintly) women points to a selective omission that historians can turn around and use – as Favino does – as a powerful historiographical tool. Reconstructing the lives and work of Fiorini Mazzanti and Scarpellini in context, Favino offers an unprecedented cultural,

social, and institutional cross-section of Rome between the end of the papal state and the early Liberal Age. Her book is brimming with information, food for thought and historiographical theses of which this brief review can offer only partial snapshots.

Fiorini Mazzanti and Scarpellini have previously been addressed in the biographical papers of the late Gabriella Berti Logan (1947–2009), a scholar who dug deeply into sources on women and science in Italy between the Renaissance and the Liberal Age. Favino's book investigates the lives of Scarpellini (Chapter 2) and Fiorini Mazzanti (Chapter 3) in depth, examining the familial and friendship-based, institutional and scientific, political and religious networks in which the two women acted and managed to cultivate their passion for science and desire for self-affirmation. These networks unfolded throughout Italy, and at times internationally, but in particular in Rome, a provincial capital where education (schooling for women in particular, Chapter 1) and industrial markets lagged far behind those of northern European capitals.

The professionalisation of the figure of the scientist that was happening in other parts of Europe in those decades was based in part on socially shared values of masculinity. Modern scientists, first and foremost male, excluded women from the universities, academies, and professional societies of Britain, Germany, and France, even resorting to legal measures to do so. South of the Alps women were never legally barred from universities, and this book sheds light on their presence in science in the decades between the professional accomplishments of 'exceptions' such as Laura Bassi (1711–78) or Anna Morandi Manzolini (1714–74), and the point at the end of the nineteenth century when the first generations of female graduates began entering scientific professions. In these central decades of the nineteenth century, the category of 'exception' was still pertinent for Fiorini Mazzanti and Scarpellini, but in what we might consider a more evolved form. This exceptionality allowed Fiorini Mazzanti, a widow and devout Catholic from a noble family, to be appointed a member of the Accademia dei Lincei – the only woman to hold this honour until the late twentieth century. Scarpellini, who was also devoutly Catholic and married but who hailed from the artisan and craftsman class, was likewise able to earn a living working at the Vatican astronomical observatory on a regular basis by operating through an intermediary. Between popes and priests, scientists and cheating husbands, the aristocratic Fiorini Mazzanti and petit-bourgeois Scarpellini managed, albeit in different ways, to build a solid scientific reputation, relative intellectual autonomy, and, in the case of Scarpellini, economic independence.

Through the lives and works of Fiorini Mazzanti and Scarpellini, Federica Favino thus provides us with insights into the political and institutional strategies employed by numerous male experts of the time, such as Caterina's uncle, the priest Feliciano Scarpellini (1762–1840). Professor of sacred physics at Sapienza University, 'perpetual' secretary of the Accademia dei Lincei, and director of the astronomical observatory used by the university, Feliciano was Caterina's first teacher of astronomy and calculus. It was thanks to his intercession that she was able to attend the same university courses as male students. Favino also uses the experiences of Caterina and her family to reconstruct the history of Roman craftsmanship in scientific instruments: the part of the collection that Feliciano bequeathed to Caterina was quite extensive. When Feliciano died, leaving his position at the Vatican Observatory vacant, Caterina's husband, Erasmo Fabri, added his wife's surname to his own so that he could officially become the custodian of the Observatory. However, it was Caterina who carried forward the Observatory's scientific activities, as she had done in the past. These compromises were typical of an emerging class with pressing economic needs that had no qualms about adopting the nepotistic strategies of the nobility. Scarpellini and Fabri represent one more type of 'creative couple in the sciences', to use the expression made classic by Pycior, Slack and Abir-Am. Indeed, this category of 'couples in the sciences' has helped us to understand the non-linear dynamics of the presence/absence of

women in science and scientific institutions. And, as in this book, it also helps us to understand the lives of women *and* men in science.

It is worth mentioning that, in her discussion of the botanist Fiorini Mazzanti, Favino reveals hitherto unknown aspects of internationally renowned figures such as Giovanni Battista Brocchi (1772–1826). We discover that Brocchi, a friend of Fiorini Mazzanti's father, was a teacher/mentor to the young botanist. In the correspondence between the two, he sometimes engages in an exchange between peers; according to Favino, however, their relationship was perhaps more often characterised by the usual 'paternalistic and didactic' (p. 49) dynamics that seem to have permeated relationships between women and men in the academy, often afflicted by the Pygmalion complex.

Studies on gender and science and the history of women in science, technology, and medicine have taken hold globally since the 1980s, offering innovative points of view on historiography and sociology, ethnography, and philosophy, as well as science. In this context, the work of modernists such as Marta Cavazza, Paula Findlen, Massimo Mazzotti, Rebecca Messbarger, Katharine Park, Gianna Pomata, and Londa Schiebinger have contributed to rewriting entire chapters of Italy's cultural, social, and institutional modern history. This is the research context with which Federica Favino's work engages, offering us a book with a view: a new view on the making of the professional – male – scientist in mid-nineteenth-century Italy as seen from Rome, before the well-known era of Carlo Matteucci (1811–68) and Quintino Sella (1827–84). A view that gives back their voice to remarkable women scientists such as Elisabetta Fiorini Mazzanti and Caterina Scarpellini.

As is customary, I close by noting some details of the book. It is both a pleasure to read and accompanied by a rich iconographic apparatus that dialogues with the text, adding thought-provoking insights into science communication of the time. Taking full advantage of footnotes as a parallel channel of dialogue with the reader, Federica Favino offers a generous wealth of information on sources that will be useful for future research. The index of names is precious by virtue of its thoroughness and precision.

Reference

Pycior, H.M., N.G. Slack and P.G. Abir-Am, eds. 1996. *Creative Couples in the Sciences. (Lives of Women in Science.)* New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press.

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Food and Women in Italian Literature, Culture and Society: Eve's Sinful Bite, edited by CLAUDIA BERNARDI, FRANCESCA CALAMITA, AND DANIELE DE FEO, London and New York, Bloomsbury, 2020, x + 271 pp., \$115.00 (hardback), ISBN 978-1-3501-3778-3

This book presents a varied and complex study of the deep relationship between food and its highly symbolic value, through a variety of topics including history, anthropology, human relations and