Contents

List of Illustrations and Tables vi
Glossary vii
Acknowledgements viii

Introduction 1
1 Italian Women at the Dawn of the Twentieth Century 4
2 The ‘Tower of Babel’: First-Wave Feminism 24
3 On the ‘Home Front’: World War One and its Aftermath, 1915–20 43
4 ‘Exemplary Wives and Mothers’: Under Fascist Dictatorship 61
5 Doing their Duty for Nation (or Church): Mass Mobilisation during the Fascist Ventennio 79
6 War Comes to Women, 1940–45 96
8 Women’s Politics in the Shadow of the Cold War, 1945–67 129
10 The ‘Dual Presence’: More Work and Fewer Children in the Age of Materialism 168

Conclusion 186

Notes 190
Select Bibliography 218
Index 220
The lives of Italian women were transformed over the course of the twentieth century. Gender disparities in both the public and private spheres diminished, family size grew smaller and female education improved dramatically. Feminist movements of various kinds were active, women voted for the first time and there were important legislative reforms. Women’s dreams and aspirations were increasingly fuelled by the printed word and the spread of radio, film and television. Modes of dress and housework were transformed. All such trends, of course, were similarly evident in other European countries in this period but, in Italy, the pattern, timing and speed of gender change were also marked by aspects that were peculiarly Italian. Here, economic growth came later than in northern Europe and, when it did, its dramatic pace produced, in many ways, a society that was a particular mix of modernity and tradition. Moreover, this period of Italian history included two decades of Fascist rule that marked the nation deeply, creating a legacy that was hard to cast aside. The influence of the Catholic Church was matched in few other European countries. Another trend specific to Italy (albeit shared with other southern European nations) is the fact that, despite plummeting birth rates and the introduction of divorce, the institutions of both marriage and the family continued to be cornerstones of society right up to the very end of the century.

Gender and women’s history are now well established in the English-speaking world. This process is taking a little longer in Italy. Only a few years ago it would have been possible to fairly quickly read the entire corpus of secondary work published on anything to do with Italian women’s history of the last century. Today, however, this is no longer true and the wealth of scholarly works which appear in my endnotes demonstrates that this field of Italian historical endeavour is now thriving, although it remains somewhat uneven with clusters of publications on certain topics and little on others of great importance.1 Despite the richness and dynamism of this recent crop of research, there have been only limited attempts at synthesis. Italian historians of women have mainly published on fairly narrowly defined topics. The recent upsurge
in research, however, means that the time is now ripe for historians to step back a little and reflect on the broader picture. Moreover, what works of synthesis do exist, are all written in Italian, with the result that, in the English-speaking world, the history of modern Italian women has not received much attention. This history is, however, a truly fascinating one that deserves to be better known.

This collective biography of the female half of the Italian population explores how political, social, economic, legal and cultural changes shaped gender roles in Italy. It also looks at how women were affected by, and how they themselves helped mould, key events such as the rise of Fascism, the two world wars, the ‘economic miracle’, the cultural and political upheavals of the 1970s and so on. Of course, the cadences of gender history are often at odds with the periodisation that seems appropriate for other sorts of historical writing but I selected a (perhaps somewhat unfashionable) primarily chronological format after considerable deliberation. This was partly because the works of synthesis that do exist in this field have a thematic structure and I preferred to do something different, in the hope of enriching and challenging what has been written, rather than covering similar ground. A chronological approach, moreover, can shed much light on continuities and change over time. I also chose this structure because, even though I consider myself primarily a social historian, I believe that, in this particular hundred years of women’s history, politics did matter. As Simonetta Soldani, an authoritative voice in Italian women’s history, recently argued, the thematic approach of most works of synthesis in modern Italian women’s history has tended to obscure the importance of the political dimension.

For the twentieth century there is a strong argument for the usefulness of a chronological approach as this was, par excellence, ‘the century of politics’ (as the Italian Female Historians’ Association entitled their annual summer school when they turned to this period for the first time, in 1995). In this hundred years, more than in earlier times, politics was an important force for change in gender relations (although, obviously, far from the only one). There were, for example, huge changes in family law, which were driven by political lobbying. This was also the century when women really moved into the political sphere for the first time, forming political organisations, acquiring suffrage rights and standing for political office. Women’s political organisations, whether party-political or not, were instrumental in putting women’s point of view forward (albeit with varying degrees of effectiveness).

Politics is, however, far from the whole story and I have also devoted a good deal of space to social, cultural and economic aspects. Indeed, in twentieth-century Italy, political change for women was as much a product of, as it was a shaper of other changes. This is partly due to the weaknesses of the Italian political system and of women’s place in it but also due to the sheer dimension and pace of other types of change in this period. Thus, although these pages teem with political organisations, laws, elections and pioneering parliamentarians, there is much else too.

Unfortunately, the constraints of space in this relatively short volume have rendered it difficult to fully explore the great regional variations that existed in twentieth-century Italy. I have discussed this where possible, as many aspects of
women’s lives were shaped by the many cultural, economic, social and political peculiarities of Italy’s different regions. Only a much bigger book, however, would be able to do true justice to this aspect.

The inherent difficulties in understanding, even less explaining, the history of gender relations in a society as complex and contradictory as that of Italy are hard to overestimate. The fact that I am a foreigner who does not live in Italy (but who has spent extensive periods of time there) may mean that I have failed to understand some things that an Italian would take for granted. I hope, nonetheless, that it has also given me insights that might not be obvious to Italians themselves.
Abridged, Licia, 108
AC see Azione Cattolica
ACLI-COLF (Associazioni Cristiane Lavoratori Italiani – Italian Christian Workers’ Associations. Family Collaborators Section), 179
abortion, 69, 125, 126, 158, 160–3, 165, 186; under Fascism, 66–7; and feminism, 151, 152, 153, 154, 155, 156, 157, 160–2, 165, 167; and the PCI, 157, 160, 162
Adler Hellman, Judith, 153, 155, 164
adultery, 7, 9, 30, 124, 127, 136, 146
advice columns, 78, 115, 126, 131
Agnelli, Susanna, 172
AIED – Associazione Italiana per l’Educazione Demografica (Italian Association for Demographic Education), 125, 126, 132
Albercatzzi, Novella, 104
Aleramo, Sibilla, 25, 40
Alleanza (L’), 39
Alleanza Pro-suffragio (Pro-suffrage Alliance), 133
Altobelli, Argentina, 25, 28, 29
America, influence of, 114–15, 121, 122, 123, 131, 132, 150
Anabasi, 150, 153
Andall, Jacqueline, 180
ANFAL – Associazione Nazionale Fascista Artiste e Laureate (National Fascist Association of Female Artists and Graduates), 71, 79
Annabella, 159
Anselmi, Tina, 166, 170, 171, 187
anti-fascism, 61, 67, 79, 80, 90, 101, 102–4, 129, 139, 145
see also Resistance
Aosta, Duchess of, 31, 34
ARCI – Associazione Ricreativa Culturale Italiana (Italian Cultural and Leisure Organisation), 169
armed forces, women in, 49, 99, 108–9, 147, 176
Ascension Day speech (1927), 65
Asilo Mariuccia, 41
Associazione Madri e Vedove dei Caduti in Guerra (Association of War Widows and Mothers of the Fallen), 45
Associazione Nazionale per la Donna (National Women’s Association), 26, 27
Azione Cattolica (AC – Catholic Action), 81–2, 134, 138, 141–2, 145, 158
Azione muliebre (L’), 33
Azzini, Giovanna, 158
bachelors’ tax, 65, 68
Balabanoff, Angelica, 28
Balbacci, Maria, 16
Banda Koch, 109
Banti, Lucia, 81
Barbagli, Marzio, 16
Barelli, Armida, 80–1, 82, 187
Baricelli, Carmela, 39
Bartolini, Pia, 84
Bartoloni, Stefania, 84
beauty contests, 115, 131
Bebel, August, 25, 29, 36, 187
Beccari, Guadalberta Adelaide, 26
Bellassai, Sandro, 132
Bellonci, Maria, 134
Berlusconi, Silvio, 168, 170
Berta, Luigi, 66
Bianchi, Bruna, 144–5
biennio rosso, 60
Bimbi, Franca, 175
birth control, 66, 125–6, 132, 141, 151, 159, 160–2, 182, 188, 189; and the Church, 124, 125–6, 168; coitus interruptus, 66, 126, 182; condoms, 66, 125, 126, 182; and feminism, 40, 151, 152, 159, 167
see also abortion
birth rate, 1, 4, 30, 59, 62, 64–8, 125, 126, 128, 168; reasons for fall in, 67–8, 182–5
see also demography
Black Brigades, 109
Bonino, Emma, 172
Boschi, Alfredo, 125
Bottai, Giuseppe, 70
braccianti, 8, 77
Bravo, Anna, 12, 104, 105, 111
Brownmiller, Susan, 163, 187
businesswomen, 20–1, 38, 176
Buttafuoco, Annarita, 24, 32, 39, 49, 162
Cabrini, 56
Caldwell, Lesley, 162
Calvi Roncalli, Laura, 91
capoccia, 9, 191n
Caporetto, battle of, 43, 45, 48, 57, 61
Caritas, 179
Casalini, Maria, 28, 29–30, 140
Castaldi, Serena, 150
Castellani, Maria, 71, 72
Cavallini, Ida, 140
Ceppi, Giancarla, 164
Cerchio Spezzato, 151, 153
charivari rituals (scampanate), 9
CIF see Catholic women’s organisations
childcare, 13, 120, 165, 166, 175, 176, 179, 181, 183
childcare training courses, 31, 68, 88, 89, 92, 93
CISA – Centro Italiano per la Sterilizzazione e l’Aborto (Italian Centre for Sterilisation and Abortion), 162
clientelism, 139, 144, 170, 177
Cinciari Rodano, Marisa, 145–6
Cioni, Rina, 109
Cingolani Guidi, Angela, 130, 138
citizenship, 4, 7, 32, 48, 49, 102, 133, 134, 136, 142, 159
civil code, 7–8, 21, 26, 30, 123, 140, 187; 1919 reform of, 57–8; 1942 reform of, 77; 1975 reform of, 159
clerical work, 20, 54, 58, 73, 74, 98, 109, 118, 128, 166
CNDI see Consiglio Nazionale delle Donne Italiane
Coari, Adelaide, 25, 33–4, 36–7
cohabitation, 181
Col di Lana, 153
Colombo Ascarì, Rosalia, 30
Coldiretti, 138
Collegamento tra Lesbiche Italiane (Italian Lesbian Network), 169
Collettivo Femminista Romano, 153
Comitato Italiano per la Protezione della Giovane see Catholic women’s organisations
Committee against the White Slave Trade, 41
confino politico (internal exile), 67, 80, 102
'colonial life’, courses to prepare women for, 87
Constituent Assembly, 135, 144
Constitution, 131, 135–6, 146, 147, 172
Constitutional Court, 124, 136, 162, 172
Consultative Assembly, 133
Consulte Femminili, 158
consumerism, 113, 115, 120–3, 128, 142, 183
Corner, Paul, 55
corruption, 120, 168, 170
Court of Cassation, 21, 147
CRAC – Comitato Romano per l’Aborto e la Contracezione (Roman Committee for Abortion and Contraception), 162
Crainz, Guido, 112
Craxi, Bettino, 175
Crispi, Francesco, 38
Cronache, 122, 143
Cucco, 146
curli, Barbara, 53
Dalla Zuanna, Gianpiero, 183
D’Amelio, Marina, 12, 123
Dal Pozzo, Giuliana, 141
da Persico, Elena, 33, 34, 37
Dau Novelli, Cecilia, 37, 142, 155
DC – Democrazia Cristiana (Christian Democrat Party), 129, 131, 134, 135, 138–9, 141, 142, 144, 145, 156, 158, 163, 168, 170; and abortion, 160, 162, 163; and divorce, 159; female membership of, 139, 170; and feminism, 156; and the Merlin law, 146, 147
De Beauvoir, Simone, 150
De Gasperi, Alcide, 134
De Grazia, Victoria, 61, 85
De Gubernatis, Angelo, 14
Decima Mas, 109
Della Porta, Donatella, 168
Demau (Demistificazione Autoritarismo), 150–1
demography, 6, 125, 180–5; Fascist, 62, 64–8, 70, 71, 72, 73, 85, 92, 124–5, 184
departments, 14
depuies, female see parliamentarians
Detriagache, Denise, 67
Difesa delle lavoratrici, 28, 40, 47
Dittrich-Johansen, Helga, 90
Di Robilant, Daisy, 34
divorce, 1, 6, 7, 11, 124, 159, 165, 180–1, 188, 191; and the Church, 5, 34, 36, 37, 159; and feminism, 29, 160, 167; legalisation of, 159; and the PCI, 131, 132, 136, 141, 157, 159; and the PSI, 132
doctors, female, 21, 22, 29, 72, 176
domestic appliances, 77, 120, 121, 122–3, 178
domestic science, 1, 21, 23, 60, 77, 81, 93, 115, 122, 189
garment-making, 18, 20, 37, 52–3, 76, 77, 98, 104, 187
Dridi, Salua, 180
dual militancy, 39, 156, 157
dual presence, 174, 178, 179, 182, 187
EC/EU – European Community/Union, 159, 172, 175, 179, 187
economic miracle, 2, 112–28; impact on gender roles, 113, 114, 150
education, 1, 15–17, 21, 39, 54, 64, 69–71, 76, 77, 84, 117, 150, 166, 172–4, 182, 186; Church-run, 17; co-education, 10, 16, 22, 70–1, 77, 117; and feminism, 26, 33, 42, 150; ginnasi, 16, 70, 72; higher, 4, 17, 71, 117, 119, 151, 169, 172–4; licei, 16, 17, 70–1, 72, 172; licei femminili, 70; primary, 15, 69–70; secondary, 16–17, 70–71, 94, 117, 172–4
see also teachers and teacher training
Effè, 153, 154, 155
elderly, 125, 181; care of, 178, 181, 185
INDEX 223

Elena d’Aosta (Princess), 51
emancipationism see feminism
emigration, 4, 7, 11–12, 34, 36, 113, 118
employment, 17–23, 52–5, 71–6, 97–9, 117–21, 166, 174–80, 181, 187–8; ‘black’ (informal) economy, 119, 166, 174, 177, 178; in census figures, 17–19, 72, 74–6, 118, 119, 120–1, 174, 177, 188; fascist attack on women’s, 62, 64, 71–5; part-time, 17, 20, 76, 119, 120, 121, 177, 182; public sector, 20, 21, 57, 58, 65, 71, 72, 73, 74, 90, 98, 118, 147, 166, 175, 176, 177; self-employment, 147, 159, 176, 182; tertiary sector, 73, 74, 166, 118, 175; unemployment, 16, 58, 72, 97, 132, 176–7, 182, 183–4
see also outworkers; professions and protective legislation
Ente Nazionale della Moda (National Fashion Board), 77
equal opportunities, 172, 175, 187;
Ministry of, 172
equivalence, gender, 24–5, 32
Ergas, Yasmine, 150
Ethiopian War, 65–6, 75, 87
eugenics, 19, 64

Faita, Maria Luisa, 97
Famiglia cristiana, 131, 143
family, 1, 5–6, 8–9, 74, 123, 124, 129, 131, 132, 134, 142, 148, 156, 166, 168, 170, 175, 178, 180–5, 188; in the Constitution, 135–6; extended, 8, 77, 113–14; and feminism, 24, 33, 34, 151, 152; hierarchies within, 8–9, 11, 60, 88, 113–14, 124, 136, 181, 182, 187; law see civil code; ‘long’, 180, 182, 183; nuclear, 8, 114, 181–2; and political identification, 103–5, 129–30, 139; single-parent, 181; size, 1, 8, 67, 76, 125, 180
see also marriage
family allowances, 65–6, 67, 125, 184
Farinacci, Roberto, 84, 85
Fascio Femminile Democratico Cristiano (Christian Democrat Women’s Grouping) see Catholic women’s organisations
Fascism, 1, 19, 60, 61–95; attitude to feminism, 42, 62, 85, 130; feminists who rallied to, 34, 83, 84, 85; gender ideology, 61–4; historiography on women and, 61; and masculinity, 45, 61, 62, 65, 71; and women’s education, 64, 69–71; and women’s employment, 62, 64, 71–6
see also demography and Fascist women’s organisations
Fascist women’s organisations, 62, 69, 79, 82–91, 94–5; class composition of, 83, 85, 88; FF – Fasci Femminili (Fascist Women’s Groups), 69, 83–8, 89–91, 94, 99; Fascist Home Visitors, 86, 91; Inspectresses, 84, 87, 90, 91, 108; legacy of, 94, 130, 134, 138; Massatiele Rurali (Rural Housewives Section), 88–9, 91, 106, 138; membership numbers, 89, 94; mobilisation for war, 87, 88, 99; reasons women joined, 83, 89–91; SOLD – Sezione Operaie e Lavoranti a Domicilio (Section for Women Workers and Outworkers), 88–9
see also girls’ organisations
fathers, 65, 162, 181, 183
see also paternity leave
Fattorini, Emma, 170
Fava, Andrea, 46
Federazione Femminile Milanese (Milanese Women’s Federation) see Catholic women’s organisations
Federici, Maria, 136, 142, 146
feminism, first-wave, 4, 7, 17, 21, 22, 24–42, 133; Catholic, 25, 26, 32–4, 36–7; under Fascism, 79–80; in World War One, 42, 44, 47–49, 60; and imperialism, 26, 28, 39, 42; and patriotism, 34, 39, 47, 48–9; practical, 25, 30–2; socialist, 25, 26, 27, 28–30, 36, 39–40; weaknesses of, 41–42
see also Consiglio Nazionale delle Donne Italiane and UFN
feminism, second-wave, 25, 113, 148, 149–67, 168–70; autonomy, 149, 152–3, 169, 170; bookshops, 153, 169; causes of, 150–1;
Feminism, second-wave – continued
collectives, 152–4, 155, 157; consciousness-raising, 153–4, 155, 156; decline of, 164–5; ‘delegation’, 163, 169; diffuse, 168–9; and legislative reform, 149, 152, 153, 157, 158–63; publishing houses, 153; structurelessness, 152, 157–8, 164–5, 169; and UDI, 141, 150, 152, 154, 155, 157–8, 159, 160
Fenoglio, Teresa, 102
FILDIS – Federazione Italiana Laureate
e e Diplomate di Istituti Superiori
(Italian Federation of Female Graduates), 79, 133
Finocchiaro, Anna, 172
Firestone, Shulamith, 150
First World War, 43–60; civil preparation committees, 46, 48, 52; death toll, 44, 45; clerical workers, 54, 58; employment, women’s, 43, 45, 52–5, 57, 58–9, 60; and feminism, 42, 44, 47–49, 60; garment-making, 52–3, 58; impact on gender roles, 43, 57–60; munitions workers, 48, 53–4, 58, 59, 60; rationing, 44; representations of women during, 44, 45, 49, 53, 54, 59–60; subsidies, 45, 46, 53, 56–7, 58; tram-conductors, 54, 59
see also welfare
Florenzini, Gisella, 110
FNCA – Federazione Nazionale dei Comitati di Assistenza (National Federation of Welfare Committees), 48, 49
Fortuna, Loris, 159, 162
Forza Italia, 170
Fourier, Charles, 25
Francescini, Clara, 91
French feminism, influence of, 25, 150, 151
Friedan, Betty, 128, 150
Fuori! (Out!), 154, 169
Gagliani, Dianella, 143
Gaiotti de Biase, Paola, 135, 163
Galoppini, Anna Maria, 147
Gasparini, Carolina, 23
Gatteschi Fondelli, Piera, 108
GDD – Gruppi di Difesa della Donna e per l’Assistenza ai Combattenti della Libertà (Women’s Groups for Defence and for Assistance to the Freedom Fighters), 104, 133, 139
Gentile Reform, 70
Germi, Pietro, 124
GF see Catholic women’s organisations
GFRF – Gruppi Fascisti Republicani Femminili (Fascist Republican Women’s Groups), 108, 109
Gini, Corrado, 64
Gioia, 78
Giolitti, Giovanni, 38, 39
Giornata della Donna Cristiana, 144
Giornata della Fede, 87
Giorni, Secondo, 66
Giovannini, Dino, 183
girls’ organisations: Catholic, 80–1; Fascist, 90, 91–4, 108–9; UDI, 140
Ginsborg, Paul, 185
Giustiniani Bandini, Cristina (Princess), 37, 80
Goretti, Maria (Saint), 131
gowns, 107–8
Grable, Betty, 114
Grand Hotel, 159
grandparents, 175, 181, 183, 189
Grazia, 78
Greer, Germaine, 150
Gribaudi, Gabriella, 107, 108
Gruppi, Luciano, 156
Guerra, Angela Maria, 83, 90
GUF – Gruppi Universitari Fascisti (Fascist University Groups), 93–4
Guidi, Tommasina, 11
Harrison, Lieta, 127
Hayworth, Rita, 114
health clinics (consultori), 153, 159, 165
Higonnet, Margaret and Patrice, 43
Hollywood, 77, 78, 114–15, 131
homosexuality, 6, 9, 67, 154, 181
see also lesbians
honour, 5, 7, 12, 14, 69, 124, 125, 127, 151, 163, 167, 186
housewives, 20, 75, 113, 119, 120–3, 128, 140, 141, 142, 147–8, 166, 174, 176
housework, 1, 19, 77, 122, 165, 180, 183, 185; men and, 77, 180, 182, 183–4, 185, 188–9; wages for, 152
housing, 8, 100, 112, 113, 122, 125, 179, 182, 184
illegitimate children, 8, 69, 124, 140, 159, 181
immigration, 168, 170, 178–80, 186, 188
industrial workers, 18, 28, 30, 31–2, 48, 53–4, 55–6, 58, 59, 66, 74, 75–6, 77, 80, 88, 89, 98–9, 104, 118–19, 139, 166, 175

see also outworkers
Industrie Femminili Italiane, 36
infant abandonment, 69
infant mortality, 13, 65, 68, 69, 125
influenza, Spanish, 44, 64
inheritance rights, 7–8, 10, 127–8, 148
International Council of Women, 34
International Women’s Day, 144
International Women’s Suffrage Alliance, 39
interventionists, 42, 43, 44, 47, 49
Irigaray, Lucie, 150
Jews, 17, 25, 66, 79, 98, 104, 106
Josz, Aurelia, 106
Jotti, Nilde, 136, 145, 166, 172
kidnappings, consensual, 10
Kinsey Report, 126
Kuliscioff, Anna, 25, 26, 29–30, 39, 40, 47
Labriola, Teresa, 21, 22, 34, 36, 39, 47, 85
laundry, 14, 18, 77, 121, 122, 123, 132, 138
lawyers, female, 21–2, 58, 72, 187
Lega Nord (Northern League), 170
Lega Promotrice degli Interessi Femminili (League for the Promotion of Women’s Interests), 24
Leghe per la Tutela degli Interessi Femminili (Leagues for the Protection of Women’s Interests), 27, 30
leisure, 13–15, 77–8, 113, 144, 184
see also sport
Lepre, Aurelio, 99
lesbians, 12, 154–5, 164, 169, 186
Letizia di Savoia (Princess), 34
liberation versus emancipation, 157, 169
Libyan War, 26, 28, 39, 42, 47, 50
life expectancy, 4, 125, 178, 180, 181, 187
Liguori, Maria Chiara, 122
Lilli, Laura, 147
literacy, 5, 16, 70, 114, 117; courses, 31, 89, 143
Littoriali di Cultura, 93–4
Lombardi, Elisa, 83
Lombroso, Cesare, 6, 12, 147
Lombroso, Gina, 16
Lonzi, Carla, 150, 153, 154
Lopez, Rosaria, 163
Loren, Sofia, 108
Lotta Continua, 156
Lotta Femminista, 152, 153
Lyceums, 27

madrine di guerra, 46, 99
magazines (for women), 24, 26, 27, 28–9, 33, 34, 38, 39, 78, 84, 114, 119, 121, 122, 126, 131, 141, 143, 153, 154, 155, 159, 169
Magnano, Tina, 156
Maggiore, Giuseppe, 61
magistrates, female, 57, 135, 147, 176
Majer Rizzioli, Elisa, 84, 203n
Majno Bronzini, Ersilia, 25, 26, 30–1, 34, 40, 41, 48
make-up, 109, 115, 122, 131
Malnati, Linda, 27, 29, 36, 40, 48
mammismo, 12, 123, 189
Mantegazza, Paolo, 13
Marani Argnani, Laura, 90
Marchesini, G., 12
marital authorisation, 7, 20, 27, 42, 57, 58, 186
marriage, 1, 5–6, 8, 9–11, 28, 40, 62, 65, 66, 77, 120, 122, 124, 128, 136, 141, 159, 167, 181; bar, 20, 73, 120, 142, 147, 176; ‘companionate’, 9, 77, 124; in absentia, 46; loans, 65–6, 67
see also reparatory marriage
Martini Marescotti, Giacinta, 39
masculinity, 44–5, 61–2, 65, 70, 71, 84, 85, 111, 114, 115, 132, 150, 187, 188–9

Massaie Rurali see Fascist women’s organisations

maternage, 49, 104, 130

maternity, 12–13, 61–9, 120, 124–5, 129, 130, 132, 141, 144, 174, 181–5, 187; and Catholicism, 5, 6, 32, 33, 34, 81, 94, 129, 131, 142; in the Constitution, 135–6; and employment, 13, 18, 21, 29, 30, 62, 65, 72, 73, 74, 119, 120, 146, 159, 167, 174, 176, 177, 178, 179, 181, 182, 183, 188, 189; and Fascism, 61–9, 74, 78, 85, 87, 92, 94; and feminism, 24–5, 26, 31–2, 36, 40, 164, 165; funds, 31–2, 34, 36, 68; leave, 13, 30, 31–2, 74, 120, 142, 146, 159, 177; mothers of war dead, 45, 59, 60, 84; and the nation, 44, 45, 47, 59, 60, 61–2; representations of, 6, 8, 12–13, 43, 44, 45, 49, 59–60, 62, 65, 105, 123, 126, 194n; and the Risorgimento, 26, 59, 62, 189, 194n

see also mammismo; maternage and unmarried mothers

Matranga, Cristina, 170

Mazzini, 25, 26, 27, 194n

media, women in, 114–15, 119, 121, 123, 165, 167, 168, 186, 189

Meldini, Piero, 61

Melegari, Dora, 15

Merlin, Lina (Angelina), 102, 146–7, 180

Meyer, Donald, 32

midwives, 18, 67, 72, 124, 187

migration, 19, 76, 77, 87, 113–14, 118–19, 122, 124, 188

see also immigration

Milanese Socialist League, 27

Mill, John Stuart, 25, 26

Millet, Kate, 150

mimosa, 140, 144, 172

ministers, female, 110, 130, 166, 172, 184

Mirabelli, Roberto, 28, 38, 39

Mitchell, Juliet, 150

Moglia, Teresa, 41

Montemaggi, Loretta, 164

Montessori, Maria, 25, 34

Moravia, Alberto, 107

Moretti, Angiola, 85

Morini, Fiamma, 109

Mother and Child Day, 65

mothers see maternity

mothers-in-law, 11, 114

MF see Catholic women’s organisations

MLD – Movimento di Liberazione della Donna (Movement for the Liberation of Women), 150, 152, 156, 160, 162, 163

Mozzoni, Anna Maria, 20, 24, 25, 26–7, 30, 32, 39, 41, 47

Mussolini, Alessandra, 171

Mussolini, Benito, 61, 62, 64, 65, 71, 73, 79, 83, 84, 85, 90, 96, 97, 101, 108, 109, 184, 186

National Anti-German Conference, 49

National Organization of Women (NOW), 150

National Women’s Conferences: in 1908, 34–6; in 1917, 49; in 1976, 153

Navoni, Maria, 51

New Left, 152, 153, 156, 164

Noce, Teresa, 80, 120, 139, 146

Noi donne, 141, 143, 169

Notin, Jean-Christophe, 108

NOW see National Organization of Women

nuns, 12, 17, 18, 49, 72, 107

nurseries, 46, 47, 74, 132, 140, 143, 155, 159, 166, 175, 183, 184, 189

nurses, 12, 37, 47, 49–52, 59, 60, 72, 99, 104, 189

Obando, Lidia, 179

Obici, G., 12

olive pickers, 19

Opera Nazionale Dopolavoro (National Afterwork Organisation), 77

Opera Nazionale per la Maternità ed Infanzia (ONMI – National Mother and Child Agency), 68–9, 85, 124

Orvieto Fascist sports academy, 83, 93

Our Bodies Ourselves, 150

outworkers, 52–3, 76, 81, 88, 119, 121, 177; and protective/social legislation, 30, 74, 120, 147, 159
pacifism, 47, 105, 140, 169
Palazzi, Maura, 11
Panotti, Elvira, 180
Paper, Ernestina, 17
Parca, Gabriella, 126–7, 153
Parenti, Tiziana, 170
Parity Law, 159–60, 165, 166, 175, 177
parliamentarians, female, 144–6, 166, 170–2
partisans see Resistance
Partito Comunista Italiano (PCI – Italian Communist Party), 79, 129, 131–2, 134, 135, 136–7, 139, 140, 141, 144, 145, 154, 158, 162; and contraception-abortion, 132, 156–7, 160, 162; and divorce, 131, 132, 136, 141, 157, 159; and feminism, 156–7, 160, 170; women’s sections, 139
Partito Democratico della Sinistra (PDS – Democratic Party of the Left), 170
Partito Nazionale Fascista (PNF – National Fascist Party) see Fascist organisations for women
Passerini, Luisa, 67, 69, 128, 154, 165, 188
paternity leave, 160, 183
paternity searches, 8, 13, 24, 33, 34, 40, 41, 49
patria potestas, 7, 58, 159, 191n
Patrizi Gondi, Maddeleena, 80
pay, 18, 23, 37, 44, 45, 53, 54, 56, 57, 72, 73, 76, 91, 113, 118, 120, 122, 148, 165, 166, 174, 175, 177; equal, 24, 31, 34, 119, 135, 138, 140, 142, 147, 177; ‘family wage’, 8, 18, 58, 119, 142
peasants, 5, 10, 18–19, 25, 44, 47, 54–5, 59, 60, 98, 100, 140, 148, 186, 188; in the economic miracle, 113–14, 118, 120, 121, 122, 143; family structure of, 8–9, 77, 113–14; under Fascism, 64, 65, 67, 75, 76, 77, 88–9; leisure time of, 14; marriage for, 10, 11; and maternity, 13, 67; and protective legislation, 30, 31, 74, 120; and sex, 66; sharecroppers, 8, 10, 55, 60, 64, 65, 77, 113–14, 120, 138, 176; and social protest, 56–7, 60, 138
Pelaia, Margherita, 5, 10
Pensiero ed azione, 33, 36
pensions, 58, 160, 175, 178, 184; housewives’, 142, 147–8
Pesenti, Rosangela, 157
Phoenix, 169
Piccone Stella, Simonetta, 117, 126
Picolato, Rina, 133
Pieroni Cortolotti, Franca, 29, 32
Pisa, Beatrice, 53
Pisanelli Code see civil code
Pitrelli, Agnese, 93
Pivetti, Irene, 170, 172
Poët, Lidia, 21, 58
policewomen, 57, 146, 147, 176
Pomeranz, Bianca Maria, 154
Popes: Leo XIII (1878–1903), 6; Pius X (1903–14), 37, 80; Benedict XV (1914–22), 80; Pius XI (1922–39), 5–6, 80; Pius XII (1939–58), 125, 131, 134, 142; John XXIII (1958–63), 131; Paul VI (1963–78), 159
positive discrimination, 175 see also quotas
positivism, 6, 12, 13, 28, 30
Potere Operaio, 152
Procacci, Giovanna, 56
professions, female, 4, 17, 21–3, 57, 71, 72–3, 119, 147, 176
promessa, 10–11, 45
prostitution, 12, 14, 41, 55, 82, 107, 112, 143, 152; regulation of, 19–20, 24, 27, 41, 76; Merlin law, 132, 146–7; migrant women in, 179, 180; and suffrage, 57, 133
protective legislation, 13, 30, 31–2, 74, 76, 148, 160
Protestant women, 17, 21, 25
PSI see socialism
Psychanlyse et Politique, 151
public office, women’s right to hold, 4, 7, 21, 31, 38, 133, 135, 146, 147
quotas, for electoral candidates, 170, 171–2
Quattrini, Laura, 104
Quotidiano donna, 153, 155
racism, 79, 98, 106, 113, 179
Radical Party, 28, 39, 150, 152, 156, 160, 162, 163, 172
Radini Tedeschi (Monsignor), 33
Rasegna femminile italiana, 84, 203n
Ravà, Vittorio, 4
Ravera, Camilla, 101
‘reclaim the night’ marches, 163, 164
Red Cross nurses, 49–52, 59, 60, 84, 99, 189
referenda, 159, 162, 163, 167
reggitrice, 9, 14, 114, 191n
religious education, 6, 33, 36, 37, 42, 93
reparatory marriage, 5, 127, 163
Repubblica Sociale Italiana (RSI – Italian Social Republic), 97, 101–2, 104, 106, 108–9, 110
Republican Party, 21, 28, 38, 39, 49
Rerum Novarum, 32
Resistance, 61, 80, 96, 101–5, 106, 110, 111, 113; and post-war politics, 129, 130, 133, 139–40, 145
retirement age, 177
Reverdy, Adele, 46
rhythm method, 125, 126
Ribero, Aida, 150
rice-workers, 19, 61, 80, 87, 88, 187
Rita da Cascia (Saint), 6
Rivolta Femminile, 151, 152, 153
Rocco Code, 66
Rolando, Rosanna, 106
Rossi-Doria, Anna, 157, 167, 180, 209n
RSI see Repubblica Sociale Italiana
Ruini, Cardinal, 184
Russo Jervolino, Rosa, 172
Sacchi law (1919), 57–8, 74
saints, 6, 144, 131
Salandra, Antonio, 46, 57
Salvatici, Silvia, 75
Samaniego, Rosemarie, 179
Sansone, Antonio, 124
Sant’Alessio college, 91, 106
Saraceno, Chiara, 68, 136
Schiavoni Bosio, Alice, 47
Schiavoni Bosio, Alice, 47
Schiff, Paolina, 21, 24, 25, 27, 36
Second World War, 96–111; air-raid protection, 97, 99, 101; Allied zone, 106–8; attitude of women to outbreak of, 97; black market, 100, 106, 107; bombing, 96, 97, 98, 99–101, 106; civilian mobilisation, 97–9; collaboration, 97, 108–9; deaths in, 96, 100, 106, 107, 110; evacuation, 100–1, 106; ‘grey zone’, 105–6; impact on gender roles, 110–11; massacres, 106; Nazi occupation, 101–6, 108–9; rape, 106, 107–8, 109; rationing, 100, 107
see also GDD; Resistance and Repubblica Sociale Italiana
secularisation, 32, 142, 150, 168, 187; women’s role in stemming, 6, 33, 81
senators, female see parliamentarians
Serao, Matilde, 22
Serpiere Coefficient, 142, 148
servants, 19, 31, 76, 82, 87, 88, 89, 120, 122, 178, 183, 187, 188; migrant women as, 178–80, 188; and protective legislation, 30, 74, 76
Servizio Auxiliare Femminile (SAF – Female Auxiliary Service), 108–9, 110
sewing, 14, 52–3, 86, 122
sex education, 41, 66, 127, 188
sexual difference, 24–5, 47, 85, 149, 151, 165, 169, 170, 180
sexual double standard, 5, 7, 9, 27, 41, 126–7, 132, 146, 147
sexual violence, 152, 159, 163, 171
see also rape
sexuality, 6, 10, 12, 18, 66, 105, 119, 126–8, 167, 181, 186; and the Church, 5, 41, 125–6, 131, 158, 167, 168; and feminism, 40–1, 149, 151, 152, 162; and the PCI, 131–2, 156
see also homosexuality and lesbians
shop assistants, 20, 73, 74, 118, 120
Signorelli, Amalia, 118, 167
silk spinners, 18, 55
Socci, Ettore, 21
social protest, women’s involvement in, 48, 55–7, 60, 80, 100, 104, 107, 136, 138, 142, 150, 156, 158, 160, 161, 162, 163
social scientists, 4, 6, 12, 64, 69, 186
socialism, 4, 5, 6, 23, 25, 26, 27, 29, 30, 32, 33, 34, 36, 66, 80, 88, 104, 186; PSI – Partito Socialista Italiano (Italian Socialist Party), 19, 27, 28–30, 31, 39–40, 42, 79, 132, 135, 140, 141, 144–5, 156
157, 169, 170, 175; and World War One, 47, 48, 56, 59; and protective legislation, 30; and suffrage, 38, 39–40
Società delle Storiche (Italian Female Historians’ Association), 2, 169
SOLD see Fascist women’s organisations
Soldani, Simonetta, 2, 21
Sottosopra, 153
Spalletti Rasponi, Gabriella (Countess), 34, 79
Spano, Nadia, 135
spinsters see unmarried women
sport, 15, 60, 78, 83, 88, 92–3, 94, 109
squadristi, 65, 83
Starace, Achille, 85, 89
Stella, 143
strawplaiters, 19
strikes, women and, 29, 32, 55–6, 60, 80, 104, 136, 138
student movement, 149, 150, 151
suffrage, female, 1, 2, 4, 7, 28, 37–40, 60, 95, 111, 129, 131, 133–5, 142, 191n; arguments against, 38, 40, 134; bill of 1919, 57; as duty, 34, 134; male, 37–8, 40; and Fascism, 83, 84; and feminism, 24, 25, 26, 27, 30, 33, 34, 37–40, 42, 44, 49; in local elections, 34, 38, 39, 57, 84, 134; and the Resistance, 133; suffrage committees, 27, 38–9, 40, 133; Vatican attitudes to, 37, 134
Tambor, Molly, 146
teachers, 12, 17, 20, 22–3, 71, 90, 93, 119, 128, 176; Fascist legislation restricting female, 72; head, 72, 119, 176; primary, 22–3, 25, 27, 28, 46, 70, 72, 73, 85, 91, 119, 176; secondary, 22, 27, 72, 119, 176
teacher training, 16–17, 70, 71, 72
Teimer, Camilla, 37
television, 1, 114, 119, 121, 122, 123, 168, 183, 189
Teodori, Maria Adele, 163
terrorism, 149, 150, 164
Terruzzi, Regina, 88, 91
theatre-going, 14
Third Italy, 166, 176, 181
tobacco workers, 18
Togliatti, Palmiro, 134, 140
trade unions, 29, 39, 67, 76, 79, 136, 137–8, 147, 149, 166, 175, 177; Catholic, 29, 32, 37, 141;
CGIL – Confederazione Generale Italiana del Lavoro (Italian General Confederation of Labour), 137, 143, 155; Federmezzadri, 138; Federterra, 29; socialist, 29, 88; in World War One, 55; and 1970s feminism, 154, 155, 159, 165
tram workers, 37, 54, 59, 98
Treves, Claudio, 40
Truffo, Maria, 104
Turati, Maria, 85
Turati, Filippo, 40
Turco, Livia, 170, 184–5
UDACI see Catholic women’s organisations
UDCI see Catholic women’s organisations
UDI – Unione Donne Italiane (Italian Women’s Union), 139–41, 142–4, 148, 159, 163, 169–70, 187; and feminism, 150, 152, 154, 155, 157–8, 159, 160; renaming as Unione Donne in Italia (Union of Women in Italy), 170
Uffici Indicazioni e Assistenza (Information and Assistance Bureaux), 31
UFN – Unione Femminile Nazionale (National Women’s Union), 27, 28, 30–2, 34, 36, 41, 48, 49, 79, 138
UN – United Nations, 147, 188
uniforms, 49, 51, 115; Fascist, 77, 85, 89, 90, 93, 109; manufacture of wartime, 52–3, 58, 59
Unione delle Lavoranti (Female Workers’ Union), 24
Unione Nazionale delle Donne Socialiste (National Union of Socialist Women), 29
UNPA – Unione Nazionale Protezione Antaria (National Union of Anti-aircraft Protection, 99
university lecturers, female, 21, 27, 72, 119, 155, 176
unmarried mothers, 8, 13, 34, 40, 41, 68–9, 127, 181
unmarried women, 5, 7, 9, 10, 11, 42, 49, 82, 126–7, 174, 181
Uomo Qualunque, 135
urbanisation, 4, 76, 77, 81, 88, 113–14, 118, 119, 124, 150

Valentini, Chiara, 178, 184
Vatican II, 131, 138
venereal disease, 20, 76, 108, 125, 147
Verzelli, Angela, 145
Viganò, Renata, 104
Vita femminile, 27, 38
Vita femminile italiana, 34
Vitali, Ornello, 17, 75
Viola, Franca, 127

welfare: Catholic, 12, 32, 33, 37, 47, 81–2, 94, 132, 143, 165, 179, 186; and citizenship, 32, 49, 142; Fascist, 68–7, 84, 85, 86–7, 88, 89, 90, 92, 93, 94, 99, 108, 143; and feminism, 25, 27, 31, 32, 33, 34–6, 38, 47–8, 79; in World War One, 44, 45, 46–7, 52–3, 56, 57; in World War Two, 99, 100, 108; and UDI, 143

see also Opera Nazionale per la Maternità ed Infanzia and welfare state

welfare state, 68, 120, 168, 177–8, 181, 184

wetnurses, 13, 18, 76

widows, 7–8, 11, 44, 45, 49, 58, 73, 83, 84, 110, 140, 181; ‘white widows’, 11–12, 118, 186

writers, female, 22, 26, 72

Zarri, Adriana, 158