

# Reviving a generation of forgotten Italian women journalists

## Abstract

As you delve into the world of 20<sup>th</sup>-century Italian women's periodicals, you'll soon come across names of female journalists who may not be widely recognized today. However, a closer examination often reveals that these journalists must once have been esteemed and influential figures.

The starting point of this paper is one of Italy's most successful women's magazines of the 20<sup>th</sup> century: *La Donna – Rivista quindicinale illustrata* [*The Woman – Fortnightly illustrated magazine*]. Founded in 1904, it served as a home to many Italian women journalists, providing them – often for the first time – with a platform for their work. Today, most of its contributors are largely unknown to both national and international audiences. To name only a few: Felicita Rey Ragazzoni, author of the beloved fashion and beauty columns; Barbara Allason, *La Donna's* war correspondent during the Great War; and the Belgian-born Fanny Zampini Salazar, whose journalistic work was deeply influenced by her social and political commitments. Interestingly, the prolific journalistic career of *La Donna's* founder, Nino G. Caimi, has also been largely forgotten.

The main objective of this paper is to revive the legacy of this generation of forgotten Italian women journalists, who have been virtually erased from Italy's national and cultural memory, and to finally give their often groundbreaking work the recognition they deserve. By starting with one of the most significant examples in the history of the Italian periodical press, this paper aims to analyse the indelible mark these women left, both individually and collectively, on Italian journalism.

## Bio

[Eline Batsleer](#) is a PhD Candidate in Italian Literature at the Department of Literary Studies at Ghent University, where she obtained her master's degrees in Linguistics and Literature: French-Italian (2020) and Comparative Modern Literature (2021). She has completed a research internship within the ERC project *Agents of Change: Women Editors and Socio-Cultural Transformation in Europe, 1710 1920* (acronym [WeChangEd](#)). Her current research project is funded by the Research Foundation-Flanders (FWO) and focuses on the construction of female identity during the Great War in Italy. Her research interests lie primarily in literary history, early-twentieth century Italian literature, periodical studies and women's studies.