

Title: Italian women's magazines and the First World War: between tradition and transformation

This paper explores the role of Italian women's periodicals during the First World War, and focuses on how they shaped and negotiated concepts of female identity during a time of significant historical and socio-cultural transformation. While some periodicals embraced the opportunities offered by the First World War and adopted bold and progressive views on women's roles and identity, others were more hesitant and sought to protect traditional norms and values in the face of the disruptions caused by the conflict.

This paper focuses on *La Donna* (1904–1968) and *Azione Muliebre* (1901–1951), two of the longest-running and influential magazines of the period. While the former embodies a modern perspective, using the war as a catalyst to promote a progressive vision of womanhood, the latter chooses to reinforce traditional ideas and ideals, responding to the upheavals of the war by emphasizing the importance of women's roles within the family and the home. Through a comparative analysis, this paper explores the profound impact of the war on both periodicals, examining how they adapted their representation of women in the light of the conflict. By analyzing their different responses to the First World War, it will illustrate how both publications tried to navigate a rapidly changing world and the numerous challenges posed by this unprecedented conflict, with particular focus on how they depicted women in the midst of these historical shifts.

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. She is also an editor of the peer-reviewed *Journal of European Periodical Studies* ([JEPS](#)).