



# The Feminist Encyclopedia of Italian Literature

*Rinaldina Russell*

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## **The Feminist Encyclopedia of Italian Literature** Rinaldina Russell

Over the last 20 years, there has been an increasing interest in feminist views of the Italian literary tradition. While feminist theory and methodology have been accepted by the academic community in the U.S., the situation is very different in Italy, where such work has been done largely outside the academy. Among nonspecialists, knowledge of feminist approaches to Italian literature, and even of the existence of Italian women writers, remains scant. This reference work, the first of its kind on Italian literature, is a companion volume for all who wish to investigate Italian literary culture and writings, both by women and by men, in light of feminist theory. Included are alphabetically arranged entries for authors, schools, movements, genres and forms, figures and types, and similar topics related to Italian literature from the Middle Ages to the present. Each entry is written by an expert contributor and summarizes feminist thought on the subject. Entries provide brief bibliographies, and the volume concludes with a selected, general bibliography of major studies.

This volume covers eight centuries of Italian literature, from the Middle Ages to the present. Included are entries for major canonical male authors, such as Dante, Petrarch, and Boccaccio, as well as for female writers such as Lucrezia Marinella and Gianna Manzini. These entries discuss how the authors have shaped the image of women in Italian literature and how feminist criticism has responded to their works. Entries are also provided for various schools and movements, such as deconstruction, Marxism, and new historicism; for genres and forms, such as the epic, devotional works, and misogynistic literature; for figures and types, such as the enchantress, the witch, and the shepherdess; and for numerous other topics. Each entry is written by an expert contributor, summarizes the relationship of the topic to feminist thought, and includes a brief bibliography. The volume closes with a selected general bibliography of major studies.

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