



**Zarri, Gabriella. Figure di donne in età moderna. Modelli e storie**

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new evidence from manuscript recipe books that have rarely been discussed by scholars. “The recipe archive,” Wall concludes, “helps us keep firmly in view the representational, textual, and linguistic character of knowledge production” (250). *Recipes for Thought* does exactly that. The book is a signal accomplishment that will prove as useful in the years to come as the recipes it analyzes proved to an earlier age.

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### **Zarri, Gabriella.**

#### ***Figure di donne in età moderna. Modelli e storie.***

Storia e letteratura, Raccolta di studi e testi 298. Rome: Edizioni di storia e letteratura, 2017. Pp. xvi, 276. ISBN 978-8-8637-2995-5 (paperback) €38.

Gabriella Zarri’s book examines the construction of exemplary models of female behaviour in the Renaissance. She opens with a discussion of the thorny and still unresolved question on the status of women in the Renaissance and then follows with considerations on the important role of religious orders in the creation of behavioural models for women, both lay and religious. In the case of upper-class lay women, the major characteristics of “model” women included a good education, the ability to govern the household or the state, and a profound sense of faith. If they entered a convent, upper-class women were constrained by the rule of closure, especially in the wake of the Observant reforms in the Franciscan and Dominican orders, but still maintained close links with their female counterparts in the secular world, and especially at court. As a result, Observant convents became renowned for their culture. Middle- and lower-class religious women generally did not have the dowry necessary to enter a convent, so they became tertiaries and were not bound by the rule of enclosure (at least not until 1566 when Pope Pius V imposed closure on tertiaries, as well).

In her second chapter, Zarri analyzes four women who come to represent four very different types of early modern women: the wife of an exiled man, the dispossessed woman, the martyr, and the witch. The first type is here represented by Bartolomea degli Obizzi (d. 1426), whose husband Antonio degli Alberti (d.

1415) was exiled from Florence in the wake of a conspiracy. The Dominican friar Giovanni Dominici (ca. 1355–1419) dedicated a number of books to her, including his treatise on family management, *Regole del governo della cura familiare*. The dispossessed woman is represented by Caterina Sforza (1463–1509) who, having been left a widow, assumed the regency of her husband's state (the cities of Imola and Forlì) but eventually lost it to Cesare Borgia, was imprisoned in Rome, and eventually exonerated. The martyr is represented by two Protestant women, Anne Boleyn (1501–36) and Katherine Parr (1512–48). Lastly, the witch is represented by Giovanna Monduro (d. 1471) who was burned at the stake for witchcraft in her native town of Miagliano (Piedmont).

The third chapter opens the subsection on “Women of Power” with a rehabilitation of Lucrezia Borgia (1480–1519), who has come down in history (and not only popular history) as a lustful, malevolent woman. This negative view is, however, a legend created by anti-Borgia writers such as the Florentine diplomat and historian Francesco Guicciardini (1483–1540). Zarri uses a variety of sources, including letters sent to Lucrezia by her confessor, and points out that “her court resembled a monastery” (75). The fourth chapter examines a work composed for Lucrezia by the Augustinian friar Antonio Meli da Crema—the *Libro di vita contemplativa* (1527), a work that seeks to teach biblical exegesis to women.

In the next two chapters, Zarri turns her attention to Caterina Cibo (1501–57), duchess of Camerino, who was unjustly seen as a heretic. Though a friend of the Italian heretic Bernardino Ochino (d. 1564), Caterina did not follow his radical ideas. Nonetheless, because of suspicions of heresy, Pope Paul III confiscated her duchy. In the second of these chapters, Zarri examines Caterina as a political woman, focusing in particular on her management of the duchy during her regency (1527–35).

Chapter 7 opens the subsection on mystics by looking at Camilla Battista da Varano (1458–1524), a Clarissa from Camerino and a writer with considerable talent. Zarri examines, in particular, her *Istruzioni al discepolo* (Instructions to a disciple). This is followed by a chapter on Blessed Lucia da Narni (1476–1544), who fled from an unhappy marriage to become a Dominican tertiary in Rome. Duke Ercole I d'Este so believed in her fame for sanctity and her alleged stigmata that he had her come to Ferrara where he built a convent for her. The ninth chapter is dedicated to the Blessed Chiara Bugni (d. 1514), a Venetian Clarissa. Zarri analyzes a tripartite book on Bugni that

was compiled both to promote her cult and to serve as a rule for the convent; it consists of her biography by her confessor, her sermons transcribed by her fellow nuns, and a second, this time anonymous, biography.

The last chapter is devoted to the Bolognese nun Pudenziana *junior* (d. 1662). She was one of two Zagnoni sisters. The first, Pudenziana *senior*, was a Franciscan tertiary who died very young in 1608 in the odour of sanctity. After her death, her younger sister, Pudenziana *junior*, who had also been a Franciscan tertiary, joined the Clarisse and soon began having visions of her older sibling. Thanks to these visions, Giovanni Andrea Rota was able to compile a hagiography of the older sister whose fame as a saint not only spread but also allowed her Zagnoni family to acquire titles of nobility (a not uncommon process to nobility for some families in the seventeenth century).

With its variety of protagonists, from noble women to accused witches, from saints to heretics, from rulers to ruled, Zarri's volume presents the modern reader with a number of female protagonists who epitomize the diversity present in the lives of early modern women.

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**Zysk, Jay.**

***Shadow and Substance: Eucharistic Controversy and English Drama across the Reformation Divide.***

Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2017. Pp. 377, xiv. ISBN 978-0-2681-0230-2 (paperback) US\$45.

*Shadow and Substance* strives to elucidate how Eucharistic controversies over the exegetic meaning of Christ's body as a set of martyred signs not only transgress any putative pre- and post-Reformation periodic boundaries distinguishing medieval from early modern (and confessional designations like traditional versus reformed) but also raise pressing questions about the distance between textual representation and physical embodiment, the semiotic gaps and fissures characterizing the vexed relationship of all bodies—divine, human, sacramental, and dramatic—to language. Viewing the Protestant Reformation not as a decisive epistemological shift from the sacred to the secular but rather as a constellation