*Making and Remaking Italy: The Cultivation of National Identity around the Risorgimento*, ed. Albert Russell Ascoli and Krystyna von Henneberg (Oxford: Berg, 2001; pp. xviii+332. £42.99; pb. £14.99).

Based on a multidisciplinary conference held at Berkeley in 1997, this well-edited collection of ten essays sets out to explore 'how Italian national identity has been imagined, implemented and contested before, during and after the period when a unified political entity known as Italy took shape'. Such an ambitious remit could never hope to be more than very partially fulfilled in a work of this kind, but the editors are none the less to be congratulated for having provided a stimulating, if eclectic, addition to the rapidly growing body of literature on nation-building and national identity in nineteenth- and twentieth-century Italy. As the historian Alberto Banti has recently suggested, the idea of 'Italy' as it emerged after 1796 – an idea with the power to drive young men to conspiracy, the barricades, and death (or years of penury in exile) – was largely the work of writers, musicians and artists infusing Romantic nationalism with such traditional and largely autochthonous themes as honour, redemption, revenge and martyrdom. The first four essays in the collection explore aspects of this process. Adrian Lyttelton, in a characteristically lucid piece, examines how between the 1820s and 1840s artists and writers such as Francesco Hayez, Alessandro Manzoni, Massimo d'Azeglio and Francesco Guerrazzi mined the Middle Ages and the Renaissance for 'patriotic' topics and managed to give localized episodes such as the Sicilian Vespers of 1282 a national reading. Their aim was to impart unity, continuity and lustre to a past that for many contemporary observers seemed one of dispiriting division, dissension and defeat. The elevation of Dante into a political as well as cultural national icon through the advocacy of patriots such as Alfieri, Foscolo, Mazzini and De Sanctis is considered by Andrea Ciccarelli, while the reception of Verdi – whose importance as a vehicle and sounding-board for nationalist sentiment in the 1840s has recently been re-acknowledged by scholars in Italy – is looked at with a sceptical eye by Mary Ann Smart. The cruel limits and consequences of the imaginative construction of Italy during the Risorgimento are underlined by Nelson Moe in his survey of the attitudes of the moderate leadership towards southern Italy in 1860. He shows how the idea of a picturesque but barbarian South – a 'paradise inhabited by devils' – was given currency by foreign travellers from the late eighteenth century, and then amplified after 1848 by southern exiles eager to convince the outside world of the iniquities of the Bourbons and the moral case for 'liberation'. These negative images were to be reworked again and again after 1860 to produce one of united Italy's most enduring and divisive moral fault-lines. Lucia Re's essay tracing 'the cultural genealogy of the gendering of writing in nineteenth-century Italy' straddles rather anomalously the first half of the volume – which focuses on the period of the Risorgimento itself – and the second half, which jumps to the inter-war years and retrospective readings of the Risorgimento. Its contention that women were locked into domesticity after 1860 as a result of being given 'a crucial political role' by the country's new rulers, namely that of 'forestalling in the microcosm of the home the development of any potential class resentment or conflict', is surely overstated, and in general the essay would have benefited from greater circumspection. With the exception of Silvana Patriarca's wide-ranging and often impassioned final piece examining how in Italy discussions of

national identity have since the Risorgimento often slipped into stereotypical denunciations of the Italian 'character', the remaining essays are essentially case studies. Claudio Fogu offers an interesting examination of the celebrations in 1932 to mark the fiftieth anniversary of Garibaldi's death; though his conclusion that it was not fascism that gained legitimacy by affirming its continuity with 'the Garibaldian past', but rather that this past that was given legitimacy by fascism – at least in the eyes of Mussolini – seems unduly forced. Roberto Dainotto briefly considers the idea of the Risorgimento in the work of the Sicilian philosopher and leading fascist intellectual, Giovanni Gentile, while David Forgacs and Millicent Marcus look at how the Risorgimento was portrayed in the work of directors such as Alessandro Blasetti and Luchino Visconti between the 1930s and 1950s. A still from the 1952 film *Camicie Rosse* showing Anna Magnani as Anita Garibaldi expiring (erotically) in the arms of her husband provides the rather surprising front cover to the volume.

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*Re-presenting the Past: Women and History*, ed. Ann-Marie Gallagher, Cathy Lubelska and Louise Ryan (Harlow: Pearson Education, 2001; pp. xvii + 224. Pb. £19.99).

The attraction of this collection of ten new, mostly research-based, essays on nineteenth- and twentieth-century women's history is that it offers worked examples of *how* to do feminist history. The best of them are so well written and persuasive that they will engage readers new to – even sceptical about – the genre as well as those with established interests in the field. Four in particular are outstanding for their treatment of difficult methodological issues. Claire Midgley maps out feminist interventions in the historiography of the British Empire – imperial, anti-colonial, post-colonial – and outlines her own approach to the imperial context of mid-Victorian feminism. Shani D'Cruze explains the techniques she developed to interpret late-Victorian court records of hearings on sex crimes and domestic violence, combining insights from E. P. Thompson and Foucault with close reading of the contemporary local press. Claire Langhamer takes us back to first principles in her essay on how to incorporate women in the history of leisure, again using a combination of theory and empirical evidence. Oral testimony and mid-twentieth-century local newspapers bear out the view now taken within 'leisure studies', that women's experience of leisure cannot be captured if we persist in defining leisure as antithetical to paid work. Perhaps less innovative, but nevertheless a classic of its kind, is Louise Ryan's analysis of why Republican women have been excluded from (even recent) accounts of the Irish War of Independence and the Civil War that followed it in 1921–23. The women's section of the IRA, Cumann na mBan, was active in both combat and support roles and much publicized in press accounts at the time; yet women do not fit into Irish narratives of national heroism and martyrdom, which remain strongly gendered. With the exception of one rather weak contribution on women's health in Britain at the turn of the last century, the remaining essays have new insights to offer on a variety of topics. Alison Oram takes us through generations of lesbian writing about the 'Ladies of Llangollen', and, by showing how differently their relationship was