

University of Strathclyde

**Advertising in Italian Women's Magazines 1915-1980:
Gender and Evolving Ideologies of the Middle-Class Italian
Woman**

by

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A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

2004

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ABSTRACT

Advertising is one of the oldest methods of communicating messages and ideas. Its role in twentieth century consumer culture in Italy has evolved from one of limitations of media and message to one that uses all types of media and pervades every aspect of daily life. Advertising in women's magazines is a cornerstone of this development. As such, this analysis of advertising in Italian middle-class women's magazines reveals its role in shaping the changing attitudes of Italian women who, throughout the twentieth century, have been core consumers for themselves and for their families. The analysis of specific consumer categories over the 1915 to 1980 time frame, elicits a consideration of fundamental socio-economic contextual factors, which are of interest in terms of how they affect the interpretations that women attach to advertisements throughout this significant period. This interconnected semiotic and contextual analysis is conducted in depth on a selection of product and brand-specific advertisements in these magazines, previous studies of which tended to be from particular ideological orientations without detailed analysis of the advertisements themselves. Alternatively, those few studies with a greater semiotic focus tended to limit consideration of contextual factors to a restricted time frame. This thesis attempts to bridge this gap by means of a detailed analysis of the language and images utilised in a number of advertisements over a crucial, extended historical period. In so doing, the analysis considers both the degree of divergence and of convergence in the advertising discourses within these magazines, from the dominant visions and ideologies of Italian womanhood of a particular period. In analysing the extent of such divergence or convergence, a number of factors are necessarily incorporated into the framework when examining the role played by advertising in Italian middle-class women's magazines. These are based upon the fact that the advertisements became increasingly important as vehicles for transmitting social and cultural messages that even went beyond the intended consumer-oriented messages of the advertisers. In examining these messages, this thesis stimulates a rethinking of socio-cultural and ideological issues in a period of transition for Italian women and society.

I dedicate this thesis to Roberto and Rebecca for all their loving support.

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to thank several people and organisations for their invaluable assistance. First of all, Dr Philip Cooke, my supervisor, provided me with continuous guidance. It was due mainly to his careful reading of the various drafts of the thesis and his useful feedback that it reached its completion. Professor Sharon Wood, School of Modern Languages, University of Leicester, also provided valuable initial supervision in the area of Italian women's magazines. My mother, sister and brother-in-law also gave me much support and assistance. The Carnegie Foundation aided me with the award of a Research and Travel Grant. Other individuals and organisations also provided me with access to crucial information which enriched this thesis. Of much help were the National Libraries at Florence and Rome, the libraries of the University of 'La Sapienza' and of 'G. D'Annunzio', the 'Libreria delle donne' in Florence, the Italian National Statistics Institute (ISTAT), and the Italian State Archives. I also am indebted to the National Library of Scotland with its useful Italian collection, the libraries at the University of Strathclyde and the University of Glasgow, Glasgow City Libraries, and the libraries of New York Humanities and Social Sciences and New York University. The publisher Mondadori's 'Centro Documentazione' in Segrate, Milan provided me with free access to the Mondadori's oldest women's publication *Grazia*, covering issues from 1938 to the 1980s, and to *Confidenze* in the post-war period. This assistance helped me gain an overall vision of important middle-class Italian women's magazines. Mr Berosani, Marketing Manager of the publishers Mondadori was also of great assistance. Rita Carrarini, one of the editors of the comprehensive *Bibliografia dei periodici femminili lombardi: 1786-1945* (Carririni and Giordano, 1993), helped me in her role as librarian and researcher on Italian women's magazines for the 'Istituto nazionale per la storia del movimento di liberazione in Italia', located in the 'Biblioteca Nazionale di Archeologia e Storia dell'Arte' in Rome. The DeAgostini publishing house also helped, as did Mr Ianasce, Public Relations Manager of the Federation of Italian Newspaper and Magazine Publishers, and 'ADS' ('Utenti Pubblicita' Associati' - UPA).

INTRODUCTION

This thesis is a study of advertising in Italian women's magazines during the period 1915 to 1980. The growth and significance of advertising in Italian women's magazines throughout the Twentieth Century, and particularly in Italian middle-class women's magazines, allows this type of media to be taken as the 'prime product promotion vehicle' in terms of usage by certain prominent advertisers during that time period. In this research, the advertisements are analysed in terms of the specific context of the women's magazines in which they were located. This particular context must, of course, be analysed within the wider historical, socio-economic, political and cultural Italian/global contexts in terms of the various periods in question. The nucleus of the research is the advertisements themselves and the focus is on individual advertisements in relation to the manner in which they relate to their various contexts. Thus, the advertisement is analysed in terms of both language and image, in order to see how it fits into both the specific context of the magazines and also into the more general context of the particular period when it appeared. In this way, advertisements may be seen as signifiers both of their time and location, even though they do not always and necessarily reflect the dominant socio-economic, ideological or cultural trends of a particular period.

In Part A, a review of the literature on both women's magazines and advertising, traced mainly from the 1950s until the present, critically analyses interpretations of both magazines and advertisements. These interpretations tend to take essentially unidimensional approaches during particular periods. This is especially true in relation to feminist discourse, where the critical focus has been on the figure of the housewife/mother in terms of her generally defined functions as both carer and consumer. The present research attempts to go beyond such singular and unequivocal visions, by taking a critical stand, which is somewhat apart from these particular perspectives, in order to gain insights into issues regarding Italian women, in terms of gender and advertising, and without undue influence from those ideologies which were influential in particular periods. Instead, this research opens up a fresh examination of

both the advertisers' and the women's visions, which can be seen as much more multiform and interactive in nature than is often assumed in the literature on this topic. This also tends to call into play a number of factors, which relate to a wider arena that includes, but goes beyond, the advertisements, the magazines, and the contexts that advertisers use in advertising, inviting women to interpret the advertisements in particular ways. These factors include those based on the tendency for interpretations of advertisements to be usually made by the target audience in ways that are neither limited nor restricted. Indeed, they often depend more upon the personal, as well as class-based, life courses of the recipients of the advertiser's message.

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE 1915-1980 PERIOD AND THE UNIQUENESS OF THE FOCUS TAKEN IN THE PRESENT STUDY

The period from 1915 to 1980 allows the analysis of some of the most important factors influencing the advertising of products in Italian women's magazines. These go from the actual advertising contained in the magazines to interpretations based upon the evolving socio-economic, cultural and ideological environments, which form their contexts. This research specifically concentrates on the advertisements contained in middle-class women's magazines, which appear to have been the major advertising vehicle during this period. They were used over this time quite deliberately to target Italian middle-class women, who were seen as important consumers, being key purchasers of personal and family goods. More importantly, they were seen as exemplars to other classes, and therefore a means used to help mould female images and concepts of womanhood in Italian society as a whole. Although these magazines, through their content and advertising, were intended to target the middle-class Italian woman as a key figure among the consuming public, and therefore for the Italian economy as a whole, the advertisements can be seen to have been subject to various levels of interpretation, both intended and unintended. At times they appear to have helped consolidate dominant notions of the middle-class woman's roles in Italian society, while at others they seem to have contributed to the formation of new perceptions, and still at others appear to have

resulted in a deviation from accepted and acceptable views about the middle-class woman's roles in a particular period.

As an important influence on, as well as a reflection of commonly held attitudes and perceptions, advertising within women's magazines, as well as the magazines themselves, can be taken as a guide to tastes and to notions of lifestyle in a particular period, in terms of the advertisers' intentions to stimulate direct consumption. The advertising presence of a number of important national and multinational companies plays a significant part in the content of the women's magazines. This presence, along with advertising as a whole, expands throughout the period in question, and becomes central to the identity not only of the advertisements, but of the magazines which contain them. The role of these companies in advertising in women's magazines reflects the increasing centrality and influence of such organisations during this period both within the advertising media in particular and in society in general. Thus, specific analysis of wider contextual issues, and of the content of the advertisements, results in a research focus on specific product categories and on how particular companies presented them over a period of time. Changes in the advertiser's formulation of language and image as influenced by such factors as the nature of the product, the consumer, and the client company during particular historical periods are discussed. The historical dimension thus reveals as much of the advertising language and image utilised to consolidate the establishment of certain large organisations, as of the influential nature of the advertisements in consolidating, or indeed fragmenting, notions of Italian womanhood during different periods of time.

In consideration of the specific period of time forming the contextual foundation of the analysis of the advertisements, it was ascertained from a general overview of advertising throughout the century, that its importance in middle-class Italian women's magazines in the years during and following the First World War and up until 1980 was most significant due to the dominance of the woman's magazine as a vehicle for communicating the advertising message throughout this period. In the period from 1915

up until the fascist era, the magazines stand out for the first time due to their innovative approach to advertising and selling goods. The fascist period sees a further development of advertising in women's magazines with what initially appears to be an almost contradictory message from that of the dominant fascist ideological interpretations of the woman's role, identified mainly with the private sphere of the home. In comparison with the fascist era, convergence is essentially a feature of the immediate post World War II period, with advertising reflecting the then dominant view of the woman's role. Portrayed as a consumer who was almost exclusively situated within the domestic 'haven', this image was not to last for long as women were soon once again to play an increasingly public role as producers in a sphere outside the home, with the build-up to the years of economic boom in Italy. However, despite the Italian woman's increasing contribution outside the home, and her emergence from a role no longer solely signifying 'consumer', a purchaser on behalf of both 'self' and 'significant others' in the family, advertising image and discourse appear still chained on the whole to the centrality of the woman's functions in the private sphere. Therefore, the post-war period of the 1950s and 1960s, whilst signalling a clear convergence between advertising and the ideology of domesticity, also sees the advertising in women's magazines reaching a peak. However, this peak was to herald a gradual future decline as both advertisements and context began once more to diverge in that they no longer appeared on the one hand to reflect the changes in women's lives, or on the other to integrate into the new and different aspects of a society undergoing rapid social and economic change. The subsequent attempt by advertisers in the 1970s to encompass a more feminist perspective into advertising discourse, may be seen both as a reaction to changes in the perceived expectations of the target audience on the part of the advertisers, and as resulting from the rapid exploitation of the image and language of feminist discourse throughout the society. This was also reflected in the increasing formulation and integration of such language and image forms by advertisers who were ready to wield their pens in an effort to be in touch with current trends. They could thereby attract greater numbers of middle-class women who were not only aware of, but often enthusiastically embraced, the feminist movement, its aims and successes. However, paradoxically, despite these developments, the vehicle of the

women's magazines used by advertisers became less and less ideal for their purposes, as part of the resulting effect of feminism, among other things, was a significant decline in magazine readership in respect of women's magazines by the late 1970s, no longer attracting the Italian middle-class woman as before. She became less and less inclined to purchase a middle-class magazine that reflected to an ever-diminishing extent in its contents, her changing perspectives, choices and present and intended life courses. The specific focus on middle-class women, and the magazines targeted at them, therefore, highlights various stresses and conflicts in Italian society throughout the period in terms of the ideologies that influenced the various perceptions of the Italian woman and her various roles and images in a changing society.

The period of 1915-1980 was therefore considered as the most significant in terms of interpreting advertisements in women's magazines. It is, of course, also a key period of wider socio-economic and political changes, when Italy was transformed from a predominantly rural economy and society, to a vibrant urban dominated society within the wider global economy. An increasing number of external influences were absorbed, while at the same time Italian tastes became increasingly influential both at home and abroad through the projection of a unique but typically Italian vision of food, fashion, and lifestyle in general, partly by an imaginative use of advertising and the media.

In considering the significance of women's magazines in targeting the female public, the research necessarily limits any consideration of other advertising media. The most influential of these, such as billboards and in particular television, tend to target a mainly male or mixed public where the portrayal of a particularly one-dimensional image of women as housewives seems to have dominated. Indeed, television did emerge as probably the most potent advertising medium by the early 1980s, especially with the rapid expansion in the number of television channels and the corresponding development of the empire of media mogul, Silvio Berlusconi. Thus, references which are made in this thesis to other forms of media, and other social categories of magazines, are purely

for informative and comparative purposes, particularly where the influence of other factors on advertising in middle-class women's magazines necessitates recognition.

In terms of the Italian women's magazines under review, the concentration on predominantly middle-class magazines reflects the fact that these magazines may be considered highly representative of the advertising targeted at this expanding group of women, given the increasing numbers of middle-class Italians throughout the century. This stratum of Italian society became increasingly significant in terms of presenting role models to those less privileged. Women are also an interesting focus as they came to embody the notion of consumption by wielding a much sought after purchasing power not only in relation to themselves but also to their families. This was to be strengthened when they did combine their roles of consumers with those of producers within an increasingly successful twentieth century Italian economy.

Finally, this study is unique in a number of respects in its approach, scope and focus, if one takes into consideration the research previously conducted on advertising and on the context of Italian women's magazines which is subsequently explored in detail given the lack of an existing comprehensive review. Indeed, with the exception of a handful of specific studies which are explored in some detail, previous studies have concentrated mainly on women's magazines in general terms, with only a few referring to the advertisements therein located, and then only in terms of content, style, and target considerations, whilst rarely utilising even in passing a socio-historical approach. Thus there is a notable absence of a historical perspective in the research undertaken. Studies have not only been limited in terms of their historical continuity but have tended to lack any integration of wider contextual elements into the discussion. Apart from the few exceptions which are highlighted in the next chapter, the limitations of analysis are most pronounced for those studies which relate to the pre-war fascist period, and in which only very occasional reference is ever made to advertising in women's magazines. Most relevant work originates in the 1960s in terms of available studies of advertising, but these studies were frequently of a very general nature. The critical accounts of that

period, which relate to advertising and gender issues in advertising in particular, tend to be those which take a left-wing political perspective on advertising. However, there was a lack of significant overlap between such critical analyses of advertising in general and actual advertisements, including those contained within women's magazines. References to the role of advertising and the connection between gender and advertising abound in various general publications of the feminist period starting in the 1970s and, as one progresses through this era, there appears to have developed a clear feminist critical agenda in relation to gender in advertising and women's magazines, although the two were generally discussed separately except in a small number of instances. Thus, although the persuasive force exercised by both women's magazines and advertising in Italy was increasingly being recognised during this period by feminist commentators, the two were very rarely linked together by placing one in the context of the other. This was despite the fact that advertising covered over two-thirds of the content of women's magazines during the 1960s and 1970s, and was a major determinant of editorial strategy, women's purchasing decisions and therefore of economic growth in Italy during this period.

THE RESEARCH AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the thesis are based mainly on the key aim of analysing the advertisements placed by large national and multinational companies in middle-class Italian women's magazines by means of investigating the language and images which are contained in specific advertisements. This analysis is set within the context not only of these Italian women's magazines, but also within the wider context of the historical periods under consideration that are contained within the broad span of the period from 1915 to 1980. It is intended in this way to provide a major academic contribution towards understanding the meaning and significance of the advertising in Italian women's magazines over that particular socio-historical period. A related aim is therefore to explore this socio-historical period, as one where new advertising techniques are used and in which the advertising in women's magazines had increased in volume

and importance, sometimes in excess of the actual magazine itself and its content. Thus the advertising of the early 1900s is excluded from the analysis, as essentially embodying a continuation of previous techniques, whilst at the other end of the twentieth century, the latter two decades are also excluded as they are seen to reflect an expansion and dominance of the use of the television medium to target the female audience.

A further related aim entails conducting this analysis of advertising in the women's magazines of the pre and post-World War II periods in Italy, in the light of the relevant literature, where there has been a relative neglect of the role of advertising in the former period. Although this is not true of the latter period, it has nevertheless been imbued in a politically left-wing, and increasingly feminist critical vision. The present analysis may allow the emergence of other perspectives on the advertisements that address middle-class women of the period. Possible explanations may be considered in terms of whether there could exist 'new or alternative truths', and whether the theories and views advanced at the particular time in question appear to be a true analysis, or whether alternative perspectives beyond the left-wing and feminist interpretations of the period may be found, especially with the aid of a more objective critical view of the period.

In order to achieve these broad aims, the specific objectives of the study are:

- to analyse the language and image of specific advertisements, in selected product categories, utilised by large national and multinational companies in middle-class Italian women's magazines of the 1915 to 1980 period;
- to analyse the nature of the advertising discourse, and gender messages projected by the image, language and text of the advertisements, and by the advertisements' locations within the context of the women's magazines in which they feature;
- to interpret the significance and implications for women of the advertising image and language transmitted to them, and to consider how these images were targeted at the middle-class women whose perceived socio-economic characteristics and purchasing power tended to influence advertising strategies;

- to consider the formal dominant ideologies of identified periods in Italy within the span of the years in question, and how these dominant ideologies are reflected in the advertisements within Italian women's magazines, and how, and to what extent, the advertisements converge or diverge from these influences;
- to consider the nature of the intended audience also in terms of the historical period, the wider and non-country specific socio-economic and cultural factors dominant at that time and how these factors impact upon the vehicle of the woman's magazine and the advertisements contained therein;
- finally, to consider the results and conclusions in light of the research conducted, and to suggest areas of future possible research interest.

In order to achieve the aims and objectives of the study, a wide secondary data base of Italian middle-class magazines for the period in question was analysed, whilst data and information were obtained directly from relevant national and multinational companies that advertised regularly over the time period in question in middle-class Italian women's magazines. Relevant academic books, papers and journal articles were explored, and other secondary data sources were examined, for comparative purposes and in order to get additional background information. The latter included newspaper and magazine articles, as well as other popular press publications, and other multimedia sources. Finally, interviews were conducted with specialist librarians, experts in Italian women's magazines, publishing houses and advertising associations in Italy.

THE ORGANISATION OF THE CHAPTERS

The organisation of the chapters reflects the inherent rationale of the analysis. The importance of the role placed upon advertising in Italian middle-class women's magazines in the 1915 to 1980 period lies in the emergence and development of various approaches in the advertising and selling of goods to middle-class Italian women. The different periods which emerged as significant are analysed in terms of the extent of the convergence between advertising language and image, and socio-economic influences

and ideologies, as the gradual emergence of women into public areas appears to be submerged in the 1930s, but reappears eventually in the build-up to the economic boom, transforming the role of the middle-class woman from solely that of consumer for self, home and family into producer for the expanding Italian economy. By the 1960s, the immediate post-war convergence between the ideology of domesticity and advertising in women's magazines appears to have reached its peak. However, as a target for criticism, it still helped to stimulate a feminist backlash in opposition to these views of Italian womanhood. The changes which resulted changed the face of advertising but also helped to speed up the decline of the dominance of middle-class women's magazines as the key vehicle for the advertiser's message to a particular chosen audience.

The thesis is organised as follows:

In **Part A, Chapter One** presents a literature review that analyses the literature produced by mainly Italian authors within the two areas of Italian women's magazines, and gender in Italian advertising. The studies considered have mainly been produced in Italy, as have the few specific studies that overlap both areas. However, in terms of the focus of this thesis, this overlapping area of advertising in Italian women's magazines is significantly absent in most of the relevant literature, almost as much as that relating to the analysis of the socio-historical context of advertisements. This is the gap in the research which this thesis is intended to fill. **Chapter Two** considers the research methods and analytical approaches taken, and the tools utilised in the analysis in terms of the language, image and context of the advertisements focused on in this research.

In **Part B, Chapters Three to Eight** provide an in-depth study of the advertising in middle-class Italian women's magazines by means of a detailed analysis of the language and image contained in a sample of advertisements pertaining to specific product categories over time. Analysis of the advertisement departs from the micro level of the advertisement, incorporating a consideration of the magazine as vehicle of the specific advertisement, and a discussion of the influence of wider contextual issues. The six

chapters analyse some of the most advertised products targeted at women in women's magazines, with a focus on multinational and large national producers of domestic appliances, food, cars, cosmetics, and toiletries.

Chapter Nine, as the Conclusion, draws together the main findings of the thesis, briefly considering the significance of the findings, and furthermore of those areas which the research has highlighted as possibly important, but due to the original aims and objectives of the research has left unexplored. This points to areas of future related research interest.

PART A: THE BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

INTRODUCTION

Part A gives a background to the research with two key chapters giving first of all an overview of the literature and secondly an outline of the methodological approach, research process and conceptual orientation. Thus, Chapter One provides a literature review that analyses the literature which relates to firstly, Italian women's magazines produced mainly by Italian authors, and secondly, to gender in Italian advertising. The historical journey undertaken through the literature on Italian women's magazines provides an essential initial perspective on the underlying absence of relevant literature, and culminates in a commentary on contemporary research. Similarly, the review of literature on gender issues in Italian advertising indicates the prevalence of studies produced in Italy, as well as the fact that few specific studies exist that overlap both areas of gender and advertising in Italian women's magazines, not to mention the socio-historical context of advertising. Notably, the feminist era is of particular relevance in terms of the influence exerted over the analysis of advertisements, based on the 'feminine mystique' critique of consumption. Despite the force of feminist thinking, the lack of any existing detailed review of such literature requires a depth of analysis in the chapter in order to provide an appropriately exhaustive literature review. Chapter Two then considers the methodology, research process and conceptual orientation, outlining primary and secondary data sources, the sampling criteria used for the middle-class Italian women's magazines, the specific magazines sampled, and the criteria utilised for sampling the advertisements. Contemporary analytical approaches relating to the analysis of language, image, including gender images, the magazine as a vehicle for advertisements, and the wider socio-economic and cultural contexts of advertisements, are explored in recognition of the contributions made from various fields of study and in different countries. The chapter ends with a detailed analysis of the verbal and visual tools utilised for the analysis of the advertising images focused on in this research, thus allowing a comprehensive analytical framework to emerge in terms of the language, image and context of the specific advertisements.

CHAPTER 1: A REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE ON ITALIAN WOMEN'S MAGAZINES, ADVERTISING CONTENT AND GENDER IMAGES

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The following literature review covers the two different but key areas of the relevant literature. The first is on Italian women's magazines, and the second is on gender issues in Italian advertising with special reference to magazines. Both have essentially an Italian bias, given that studies of Italian advertising and on Italian women's magazines have mainly been produced in Italy or by Italian authors. These two distinct areas within the literature find a meeting point in terms of the focus of this thesis which is on advertising in Italian middle-class women's magazines, which is discussed in detail towards the end of the chapter. However, this overlapping area is particularly lacking in terms of Italian literature, although all relevant sources are discussed in as much detail as they warrant.

This thesis aims to merge an analysis of both the socio-historical context of the advertisements, and the language and image of specific advertisements, where the woman's magazine is the vehicle used both for the advertisements and therefore, in the present instance, for analysing the advertisement in relation to the magazine. A further step is to place this analysis in the context of the socio-economic and political developments of the period. In order to do so, the two bodies of literature, firstly with a focus on women's magazines, and secondly on gender in advertising in Italy, again in relation to women's magazines, are also reviewed from the socio-historical perspective of when they appeared in print both in terms of the influence of the culture and ideology of the period in question on the ideas that the authors put forward, and in terms of the reciprocal impact which they had on the views of that and later periods.

The first section of the literature review, therefore, considers analyses of Italian women's magazines in terms of a socio-historical progression. This goes from the initial studies on this topic, which were conducted in the 1950s and early 1960s, produced mainly under

the influence of left-wing political ideas, to those of the late 1960s and early 1970s, which mark the key period of feminist debates and the movement of Women's Liberation. The literature from the 1980s up until the present is significant in that it heralds a renewal of interest in the fascist period, with a re-evaluation of women's roles within that period, in the wake of a number of initial studies in the 1970s. Following the pattern of presentation adopted in this chapter, the sequence of sections, referring to the literature and the debates that ensued, such as those pertaining to the fascist period, follows the dates of publication of the literature in question. This places the works into the time of the development of the key intellectual and cultural ideas of the period when they were published, rather than into the particular historical era to which they refer.

The second section analyses the literature pertaining to gender in Italian advertising, and especially in relation to the advertisements which appeared in Italian women's magazines, by reviewing studies that consider the interpretation and the impact of the language and image of the advertising in these women's magazines. The feminist era is of particular relevance again here, as analysis of advertising at that time formed the basis of a critique on consumption in terms of the 'feminine mystique'. However, it still rarely appears to reflect within feminist publications its due importance in that era. The conclusion to this chapter draws together the principal contributions specifically regarding advertising in Italian women's magazines and indicates both the paucity of work done to date and the need for more to be done. It may be noted that given the researched absence of an exhaustive review of literature, a certain amount of detail is provided in the following sections.

1.2 ITALIAN WOMEN'S MAGAZINES: A HISTORICAL JOURNEY THROUGH THE LITERATURE AND DEBATES

Women's magazines have long been a primary source of reading material, advice, information and education on a variety of issues for women in Italy and elsewhere. Unlike the sector's long history, dating back to the second half of the eighteenth century,

interest from an academic perspective emerges slowly. The only study that even cites women's magazines to any significant degree, in the years preceding the Second World War, is a publication by the journalist Orazio Buonvino entitled *Il Giornalismo Contemporaneo* (Buonvino, 1906). His analysis of journalism reflects occasionally on the part played by women's magazines and on their evident centrality in determining the advertising targeted at the female consumer in Italy. Buonvino provides a turn of the century perspective that, whilst still remaining valid during the following decades, finds practically no corroboration from other sources, or even an elaboration on its themes, in the decades leading up to World War Two.

It is not until the 1952 publication by Grazia Cesarini and Ghita Marchi on the history of women's magazines that these initial stirrings of interest in women's magazines find a later endorsement. However, this interest was only maintained and developed further in the 1960s, and to a greater extent in the 1970s, when it featured in some studies of that period which focused on women, popular magazines, and the importance for them of the use of the advertising media (Gennaro, 1960; Istituto Doxa, 1963; Dogana, 1973). The emergence of the Italian neo-feminist movement, with a growing attention being paid to women's studies in terms of their culture and history, also stimulated the exploration of this medium as a source of influence upon them. As a result, the woman's magazine begins to find a space in the publications of many feminist and non-feminist writers, although without taking centre stage in most cases.

Historical and analytical studies of women's magazines have depended mainly on the contributions by feminists, journalists and politically active individuals. As a result of the prevalence of non-academic sources, and the relatively limited scope of the academic analysis available on the issue of women's magazines, this chapter also, therefore, considers non-academic sources such as the influential contributions made to the debate in the press. Indeed, given the relative paucity of studies conducted in this area, and in the specific area of the analysis of advertising in women's magazines, which is the focus of this thesis, the literature review is widened to include various contributions, that although

often written by academics, are utilised as a vehicle for the raising of consciousness and the increasing of the level of general awareness about certain, mainly ideological, issues of the time when they were published. The mixture of semi-academic and semi-popular publications in Italy during the late 1960s, and 1970s, may be regarded as a fundamental part of a revolutionary social movement that was underway at the time. It also reflects the essentially flexible nature of some Italian professional roles, from those in academia to those in journalism, in a country where the boundaries between academia, other forms of employment, and self-expression are free from many of the constraints experienced elsewhere, for example in the U.K. and U.S.A. These broader contributions in that they influenced subsequent theoretical debates, also provide a significant underpinning for the present analysis.

1.2.1 The 1950s and 1960s: An Era of Emancipation and Consumption

Apart from Buonvino's 1906 analysis, the initial interest in women's magazines emerges only in the 1950s and more clearly in the 1960s in the build-up to the economic boom. At this time they gain recognition as being of significance as a social force among women in the urbanising and industrialising Italy of that period. Much analysis comes from an origin within the political left in a period that sees women's magazines as consumption-focused, and decidedly non-emancipatory in the struggle for women's rights. By the early 1950s, Cesarini and Marchi's analysis of women's magazines (1952) can be considered to have broken new ground in this area. However, one year earlier in 1951, Camilla Ravera also gave some consideration to women's magazines in her treatise on the female condition. Ravera's work reflects a decidedly left-wing perspective, taking magazines as non-emancipatory instruments that help to keep women in a submissive state. Indeed, the author reflects a somewhat typical left-wing political view of the period that sees Catholic magazines as the means of consolidating the Church's hold over women by reinforcing a traditional home-family-religion link, whilst considering the 'bambola' image promoted by the more market-oriented magazines as serving to preserve passive submission and socio-political absenteeism on the part of women. The perspective, which

was relatively common within the Communist female ranks of the period, focuses on a much-idealised view of emancipated womanhood as being defied and denied by the frivolous, consumption-based images of these 'capitalist' instruments of control where:

In 24 pubblicazioni rotocalco che si stampano ogni settimana, la donna è dipinta come un essere vuoto, egoista, rivolto soltanto alla ricerca di avventure amorose, oppure in preda a complessi morbosi, isterici e snobistici (Ravera, 1951, p.217).

Anna Garofalo (1956) expresses a similar view that real women never filter through the pages of women's magazines dominated by the 'donna-balocco' and the 'collezionatrice di ricette di cucina' (Garofalo, p.75). These authors appear to have adopted the prevailing left-wing political perspective which can sometimes function as a macro-level screening device, preventing any deep understanding from the perspective of the woman reader of the attraction of the woman's magazine. Indeed, although such interpretations may indeed be valid if one is focusing on relationships of power and control in the society, they do not go far in interpreting the meanings that the magazines have for the individual women who read them. Most women read the magazines willingly and enjoy doing so as they may not be searching in them for any political message but rather view the magazines as providing a combination of entertainment, education and information, often of relevance to their daily lives, which may not be easily accessible to them from other available sources.

The rapid growth in importance of women's magazines appears to have occurred alongside increasing left-wing attention being paid to this sector of the press. An example is the special edition of the Communist Party's magazine *Rinascita* (March 1961) analysing the contemporary Italian woman. Typically in this edition, Giuliana Dal Pozzo (1961) roundly criticises Italian women's magazines, at this time of dire struggles for female employment rights, as annihilating the budding hope of female emancipation, and as not questioning the inequalities of Italian social and economic structures in any significant way. According to the author, a focus on elegance, etiquette, correct speech

and success with the opposite sex, leads to all other issues being effectively nullified, as the ideological orientation of the magazines, in addressing only occasionally any socially significant issues, is seen as completely conservative. Indeed, the role of the various experts who provide advice to women is viewed as particularly detrimental as they effectively ensure a conservative mental state, and traditional roles and behaviours in the women readers. Of course, one could argue that other forms of 'persuasion' also existed in the society, such as the popular cinema and other types of advertising other than those within the magazines. Women's magazines, it may be thought, are merely one of a number of factors which mould women's perceptions of themselves and their lives. However, Dal Pozzo (1961) does not take these other influences into account in the extreme importance that she attributes to the woman's magazine for Italian women of her time.

A fundamental criticism of women's magazines in Dal Pozzo's 1961 article, which she elaborates on further more than a decade later along with various other authors, is the very lack of focus on social needs and the causes and potential solutions of social problems. According to the author, the different middle-class women's magazines present diverse ideological formulae, albeit conservatively oriented, to generate contradictions in image, content and interpretation. Anna Garofalo (1963) similarly criticises women's magazines as conservative instruments used by those in control for maintaining the *status quo*, with any novelty rapidly reinterpreted in appropriate traditional-moralistic tones. Any discussion on emancipation is likewise seen as very limited, as women are deliberately directed towards an existence based on vanity and the striving for possessions, and where their social acceptability, financial support, and even the satisfaction of their desires, such as for eroticism, can only be found safely within the moral confines of matrimony. However, these left-wing viewpoints, such as those of Dal Pozzo (1961) and Garofalo (1963) about the totally conservative influence of women's magazines, have also to be considered from the point of view that the political Left was as imbued as the political Right, throughout this period in Italy, with a sense of profound almost traditional morality as to what were acceptable codes of behaviour. These were

considered as elements essential in appeal to the average Italian voter. They were also to become the object of critical attack in the later feminist backlash. It is also important to note that, as was previously pointed out, they did not consider the magazines from the perspective of the women themselves and what they meant to them. Although women's magazines cannot certainly be considered as tools of emancipation in terms of the perspectives advanced by left-wing writers, they can, nevertheless, be instrumental in providing some of the women readers with the means of attaining a level of knowledge of the world around them, and a certain awareness of personal, social and even employment potentials, that might not have been easily available from other alternative sources.

By the early 1960s, increasing interest in the 'female factor' involves consideration of magazines by popular authors such as Giorgio Bocca (1963), whose critical investigation into the new, economic boom in Italy provides a less ideologically committed and a more culturally oriented perspective. Indeed in 1956, women's magazines were to undergo a radical transformation in the build-up to the economic boom, as industrial output increased and the centrality of women's roles as consumers was increasingly recognised. According to Bocca (1963), the year of 1956 marked the entrance of most women into a world focused upon wealth and consumption. However, if this new world of consumption was to be a reality, it was to emerge gradually for the majority of women. There was to be no immediate radical change in living standards. However, it may also appear more appropriate to identify the attempted improvement of the middle-class woman's magazine by publishers like Mondadori and Rizzoli as being linked to the emergence of new social groupings, their arrival at the news-stand, and the reciprocal attempt to influence them being exerted by consumption-oriented advertising executives, linked to various media channels which were voicing myriad heady calls for personal and social betterment. Significantly, as noted by Bocca (1963), the increasing importance attributed to the woman's magazine as a source of revenue is reflected in the rapid substitution of female with male editors, as the magazines became increasingly important businesses in their own right, even commanding the attention of the male-dominated publishing establishment. The greater amount of advertising space included in their magazines by

market leaders such as *Grazia* and *Annabella*, and the transformation of the magazines' mix with a dominance of fashion, eroticism/sentiment, practical/educational advice, and general culture, are central characteristics of this development as seen by Bocca (1963). The fact that the content of middle-class women's magazines always rotated around such issues seems to have been forgotten by an author whose view of the irrefutable centrality of the fashion industry, and its advertising (clothing, accessories, cosmetics, home accessories), as directed towards a female public with increasing purchasing power, is based on his views about the evolution of a society where appearances had become paramount. Mass production, consumption and the desire for wealth came to abound in a country where a rapid and unbalanced economic spurt, according to Bocca's perspective, is reflected in a view of women's magazines that have become an indispensable part of the consumption system. However, he was aware that women were essentially excluded from this system, given their lack of awareness of women's rights and the prevalently 'male' hold over all business concerns including women's magazines. Yet, it is open to question whether the middle-class Italian woman, in a period dominated by an improvement in living standards and a lightening of her domestic load, really wanted to search for discussions on women's rights, within the women's magazines, even if the issue of women's rights was in a position of priority on her scale of values at that time. However, these works helped to fuel a growing awareness of the significance of women's magazines for the increasingly literate Italian female public.

Along with these publications, there were other related investigations on the topic such as Rosselina Balbi's (1962) noteworthy contribution. Balbi's article reflects the first attempts at penetrating further the magazines targeted at women. Her work came in the wake of Gabriella Parca's 1959 explosive *Le italiane si confessano*, which expressed women's sense of alienation and displacement. Parca saw them as being caught between traditional and modern role models and social constraints. Balbi (1962) presents women's magazines as a source of women's identifiable lack of a sense of homogeneity, by perpetuating the existing socio-cultural situation through the use of a static formula: the imaging of an idealised timeless and spaceless placid reality. The author's attempt at

plumbing the depths of these publications results in a number of generalisations that reflect a personal and ideological conviction common in much politically oriented writing in Italy of the time. A much-desired sense of homogeneity is seen as the means by which women attain concerted social, political and personal goals. Their real awareness of identity is seemingly negated by the static formula presented in women's magazines. The diverse nature of the various women's magazines, however, goes unrecognised, as much as the fact that women frequently read magazines not for the sense of reality which they bring them but for their escapist nature. In this sense, they are aware of the nature of their content but still choose to read them. Indeed, as in Dal Pozzo's (1961) work, few redeeming qualities ever seem to be found by critics of the women's magazines such as Balbi (1962). Successful career women are not thought to read them, as the magazines do not appear to reflect their life experience or interests, given the absence of reality, current affairs or politics. At the other end of the social spectrum, the 'Cinderella' myth is used as heady opium for the photoromance-dependent Italian working class women. The fact that successful career women are undoubtedly also exposed to the contents of women's magazines given the magazines' location in a number of public places, and particularly to the advertising that finds its way into a number of other media channels goes unrecognised. Also, there may be a greater flexibility of readership which is being denied by any rigid categorisation of magazines by the authors taking, for example, a Marxist stance which relegates the photoromances to the working class.

The limitations of these initial contributions containing strict categorisation of magazines, according to ideology, socio-economic grouping and education, contrast with the increasing mobility and flexibility of a society undergoing rapid development under a variety of internal and external influences. In the in-depth study which he conducted on the sector, Gioachino Forte (1966) analyses some of these elements of transformation in women's magazines during the first half of the 1960s, a period in which the author sees the magazine becoming a prime vehicle for promoting new ways of living, alternative notions of consumption along with the paramount vision of the woman as 'regina della casa'. As the 1960s progress, the author is one of the few to note that the magazines are

changing, being characterised by a gradual integration of new issues that transcend the previous limited model. Forte (1966) judges this to be beneficial in terms of the development of individual and mass perspectives on education, work, personal relationships and social issues. Nevertheless, the author also highlights the subjectivity, poor quality of journalism and low standards in the surveys conducted, without acknowledging editorial obstacles to detailed investigations, the diverse readership of any one magazine, and the inherently different nature of women's magazines, when compared to other types of press output. In this way, the magazines generally must use a less polemic approach, a 'softer' form of communication, to avoid alienating readers and upsetting the delicate balance achieved by the various types of contents of the magazine.

However, Forte's (1966) overall perspective is significantly different from previous contributions where, although the magazines are seen as submerged by a mass of editorial views and direct advertisements, their presence in women's lives is regarded as more positive and beneficial. However, in revealing the strategies used by the highly concentrated Italian advertising industry in consolidating their hold over the women's magazines which are increasingly seen by them as leading to increased profit making, the author is at the same time one of the first to indicate that magazine content is also dictated by the investment criteria of their advertising clients. He sees this factor as dominating the efforts of editors to balance, what he regards as a profound conservatism, with an occasional dash of novelty. The author sees the transformations in Italian society reflected in women's magazines to a greater degree by the mid-1960s, compared to the total negation of such issues in the immediate post-war period, and as an inevitable effect of a mass culture based on market demand and women's experimentation with non-domestic environments. Indeed, the average reader, as defined by Forte is 'con interessi sociali piuttosto limitati, spesso un po' gretta, conservatrice, legata alle tradizioni più di quanto non si creda, in politica piuttosto 'chiusa'' (1966, p.116). Yet she has widened her horizons to the extent that the magazines tentatively explore beyond the psychological confines of the 'bella' and 'buona' reader. For Forte (1966), the magazine informs, albeit in a limited way, and moulds attitudes and opinions, but above all it sells a set of

products and information services according to the target social group, designed to 'help' the woman construct a suitable life-style, set of behaviours and basic knowledge of her culture. It is important to note that such an information-education function may be found in Italian women's magazines in the 1950s, and to a greater extent in the 1960s, where domestic issues do alternate with employment, childcare or other social problems, in the imparting of information, too frequently characterised by authors as ideologically constricting.

Forte's (1966) positive vision of the developments in women's magazines, unfettered by the limited home-family-sentiment-consumption formula of the previous years, undoubtedly reflects a change in attitudes and expectations that, however, remains almost confined to his work. Few authors during the following decade are to consider women's magazines as making a concrete contribution to their readers' lives, although an earlier study by Evélyne Sullerot (1963) considers developments in the popular photoromances as encouraging, with an integration of narrative classics, and the increasing reality of story lines that, nevertheless, are condemned by the author for continually reflecting the 'rags to riches' theme. However, the years following Sullerot's contribution mark an increasing interest in the role played by women's magazines in the daily existence of the women readers, and in their consumption of information, cultural knowledge and goods. General studies on women contain various analyses of women's magazines, with significant contributions by Bertoni Jovine (1964; 1967), Lilli (1966) and Alterocca (1968). Milly Buonanno (1968), and a publication by the left-wing 'Unione Donne Italiane' (1969) also provide broad overviews of women's magazines in Italy. Such work heralds the feminist debates on this topic in the 1970s, which the next section examines.

1.2.2 The 1970s: The Feminist Debate

The 1970s may be deemed to be the most prolific period of research and analysis into women's magazines, and the advertising contained therein. The feminist movement provided an ideology that was used by a variety of academics, journalists and writers, as a

means of contributing to important areas relating to women's lives and their contributions to Italian culture and society.

One of the first Italian books to take an essentially and very clearly feminist stance is by the journalist Carla Ravaioli and is entitled *La donna contro se stessa* (1969). In this work, she suggests women's involvement in their own oppression, albeit not consciously. As part of the consciousness-raising popular literature of the period, Ravaioli roundly criticises women's magazines for their lack of depth, content and inspiration to women. The author's feminist stance is reflected in the sweeping categorisation of the category as rampantly conservative. This is a fact that would certainly be denied by the editors of many women's magazines such as the decisively more open, yet middle-class *Amica*. Defined as 'totally negative' by Ravaioli (1969) in the pre-1968 period, the magazines are viewed as an effective 'ABC' on everything from household tasks to daily difficulties, whilst on a cultural level, discouraging women from both developing critical, self-analytical powers and searching for personal identity. Traditional role models are seen as being proposed over and over again to the reader, with superficial variations to 'quench any thirst' for change, as the reader is lulled into a false sense of security by the absence of the fundamental facts of her existence. As a result, real situations and needs become even more difficult to articulate for the woman, according to Ravaioli's analysis. This allows the process of her conditioning by the media to continue unabated. However, the lulling effect that seems to be an essential part of the identity of women's magazines is open to question in terms of the woman's interpreted passivity. Her active purchase of the magazines almost denotes a desire to be lulled into a different world where the magazines present the woman with a refined, idealised, and generally welcome, version of a reality to which they are regularly exposed or aspire. Ravaioli (1969) does not take into account the woman's active role in the selection and purchase of magazines. This could be seen as a form of relaxation, a mental escape from a role involving, among other things, managing the inefficiencies of the public sector, as well as childcare provision and the daily routine difficulties, which do not spare even the middle-class housewife.

Communication in Italian women's magazines, according to Ravaioli (1969), is based on the idea of the 'typical' reader who is seen to adopt the image proposed by the magazine as a guide to daily living. Copious guidance is provided in this way on clothes, etiquette and aspects of motherhood. Combined with information on personal, medical, legal and socio-economic problems, the reader is then guided towards a certain cultural perspective. However, Ravaioli's views are limiting, both in terms of the magazines and their content. She also appears to take a stereotypical view of the female reader, who is seen as enclosed in a world of women's magazines with few sources of information, and stimulation, outside the magazine. Similarly, the author sees the reader's identity as inextricably linked with, and dependent upon, the highly debatable but reassuring fantasy depicted within the magazine. Although Ravaioli's (1969) work is a fundamental element of the early Italian feminist-inspired literature and gives an acute insight into the function and influences exerted by the women's magazines, her views are also heavily influenced by feminist rhetoric. This sees women's magazines as part of a media system that submerges the female identity, and provides women with unchanging images designed to limit risk, controversy and therefore problems with the profit line for the magazines' owners. Indeed, as noted by the author, the centrality of the women's magazines as the 'cash cow' for most publishing houses of this period is unquestionable, as they were used to support the daily newspapers and weekly current affairs magazines which had substantially lower margins although, as Ravaioli points out, a more culturally prepared readership.

In a later study, Chiara Saraceno (1971) draws a picture of middle-class womanhood that, while differing little from previous perspectives, brings a sociological perspective to the analysis. It is interesting also as she explores the significance of advertisements in relation to the women's magazines. She describes how the 'donna moderna', heralded by the press with great fanfare at the turn of the new decade, can be seen merely as a variation of the only acceptable model assigned to women by society. That model is still one of the private carer, who is bound and dedicated to home and family. Free time, provided by the use of new convenience goods, according to this academic, is constantly

absorbed by the new 'duties-needs' found for women by their magazines, and in particular for the still labour-laden housewife by the advertisements. In the latter case, the sense of ambiguity and insecurity provoked in women by their role is mitigated by the same advertisements that encourage the full use of time in terms of achieving perfection in the detailed absorbing and scrupulous execution of all household tasks. Saraceno's particular contribution lies in the analysis of those women for whom the middle-class ideal of happy housewife, perfect hostess and good mother, projected by the advertising images, is almost impossible to achieve. The woman thus becomes even more psychologically fragile, as she is thought to be under the illusion that the possession of advertised goods will transform her lifestyle and make her similar to the ideal woman depicted by them. In considering Saraceno's contribution, one asks whether most women do actually aspire to such a domestic haven, or whether they are aware of the fact that the ideal is yet another advertising ploy designed to boost the product's appeal. The second alternative may be as probable an explanation as the first, given that advertisements of that period advocate time saving through product use, without necessarily capitalising on the free time obtained for use in further chores.

According to Saraceno's analysis, the importance of women's magazines in forming images of this illusory condition is nowhere as strong as in the magazines at the lower end of the social class market spectrum, with all the magazines of the period encouraging women, as the target consumers, to aspire to a higher social class. Middle to lower-middle-class magazines like *Confidenze*, and other even more working-class magazines, make particular use of a 'pull-push' approach, where readers are attracted by the possibility of attaining a higher class, and yet are rapidly propelled back into their own, as the cultural values proposed, and subsequently adopted, are merely those prepared for their consumption by the dominant class. The nature of this hegemonic culture and dominant ideology, originating in the ideas of Antonio Gramsci (1948), and analysed by Umberto Eco and others (1970), appear to diverge from much feminist rhetoric, attributing limited significance to the difference between women's magazines and enhancing their possible functions. As noted by Eco et al. (1970), the socialisation and

educational functions of the woman's magazine form a reality, allowing difficulties to be tackled, and new social models, and a certain degree of social mobility, to emerge. The role of hegemonic culture lies in managing the nature of the education imparted, by educating women to aspire only to the social model immediately above. Although insightful, such a perspective does not consider the role of market forces in establishing a range of products, and hence a lifestyle, constantly beyond the reach of any one consuming class, yet ensuring survival of the system, and the continued purchases by various social groups aspiring to a higher rung.

In the specific case of women, the resulting conditioning by the dominant ideology, according to Saraceno (1971), leads to a certain degree of freedom for young women, who through employment and consumption are convinced of achieving the proposed models, until traditional roles are forced upon them, following the much-desired achievement of marriage. Saraceno's study highlights the importance of analysing women in the lower social strata who, unlike their middle-class contemporaries, frequently do not find comfort and identification in a single social model, which is positively evaluated by the dominant ideology. Obligated through economic necessity to work, they automatically diverge from the dominant middle-class model of mother-housewife, and do not form an identity based on this model. It is difficult to agree with this view, as the working-class woman forms an identity precisely because she evades her hegemonic destiny, consciously or unconsciously, willingly or unwillingly, and thereby achieves what many middle-class women through time strive for. Furthermore, as has been pointed out before, the absolute nature of the housewife model for the middle-class woman may be open to alternative interpretations including denial or mediation. Such reactions may take place in contradiction to the picture painted of legions of women, who are seemingly bowed by total acceptance and absorbed by the model of the ideal housewife/mother, that is largely viewed as unconditional in the literature of the period.

By the mid 1970s, women's magazines are paid particular attention in both academic and popular literature, as they are seen as playing an increasingly influential role in women's

lives. Paolo Murialdi's study (1973) of the post-war press explores the significance for the female public of women's magazines, which are able to approach a social group that the daily press are largely unable to attract. The author highlights the role that is played by advertising in these magazines, as part of a modern printing and editorial strategy. Indeed, magazines such as *Grazia* and *Annabella* are then able to command significant advertising revenues. The 1972 study by Arturo Quintavalle *et al* on the structure and morphology of women's magazines provides a detailed perspective on various magazines, their use of language and advice for physical and emotional needs, their editorial strategies, and the predominance of advertising in them. Contributions by a number of authors in more general works on women's emancipation and oppression actively point to women's magazines as a decisive factor in this respect (Rava, 1972; Nozzoli, 1973; Dal Pozzo and Rava, 1977), in line with the analysis in Ravaioli's earlier (1969) work. They attempt to 'demystify' the strategies and contents of women's magazines, as part of a more general consciousness-raising process. Giovanna Pezzuoli's (1975) analysis of seven of the most widely read women's magazines between November 1972 and April 1973 leads to a sweeping condemnation of the sector as reinforcing a cultural-traditionalist and psychologically-based and self-defined inferiority of women, with the stereotypes promoted by the magazines sold as an explicit passport to happiness, social acceptance and self-realisation. The use of more complex stereotypes in the early 1970s by some middle-class magazines, identified as the 'consumption-emancipation' model by the author, is seen as allowing a limited degree of change to be injected into the lives of those women who no longer see themselves as relating to the more unidimensional models. The progress made by the relatively conservative magazines is minimised by the author, whilst analysis of a limited time period does not examine the effects of the magazines on readers over an extended period of time, especially in terms of the more conservative reader who is gradually exposed to a number of issues. Milly Buonanno's study (1975) reinforces a similar vision of women's magazines, whilst identifying the 'innovation-preservation' dialectic, not simply in relation to the contents of the magazines but also in relation to the advertising in women's magazines.

A further significant contribution within the same prolific year is by the journalist Fulvio Stinchelli (1975) whose investigative series into 'la stampa femminile' is practically unique, yet takes a largely condemnatory critical stance in relation to Italian women's magazines, denouncing them for their hold over women in that:

... le donne italiane sono tenute a impazzire una volta alla settimana sotto il martellamento ideologico che l'industria culturale produce a loro esclusivo uso e consumo (Stinchelli, 1975, p.3).

Stinchelli's approach, based on interviews of magazine editors, highlights the centrality of advertising in editorial strategy, and the fact that most of the revenue for the magazines comes from advertising rather than sales, given the average 3 to 4 readers per magazine copy sold. He also points out the fact that at that time the only magazine to be directed by a woman, *Gioia*, is, nevertheless, steeped in the consumption based ideology which held the entire sector in its grip. Although the tentative innovative advances made by the magazines in terms of content are recognised, the dominance of a strategy, aimed at fulfilling the desires of all the different readers to see what they wanted in the magazine appears to confound his assertion of a distinctive market segmentation having taken place in the magazines in reaction to a post-1968 reduction in sales. Indeed, the author's condemnation is almost total, evidently influenced by the feminist rhetoric of the period, despite the few redeeming qualities found in favour of more realistic photoromance story lines in his last article in the series (28.07.1975). There is also a hint of criticism towards the more feminist and political magazines that use language and forms of address that few readers can empathise with. For Stinchelli:

La donna perfettamente emancipata, liberata, "realizzata", cui i fabbricanti dell'opinione femminile mirano è un individuo che abbia finalmente raggiunto il vertice di un illuminato conformismo aderendo al principio di realtà dell'ordine razionale, costruito, custodito e difeso dai maschi. L'importante è che la natura femminile si conformi senza eccezioni (Stinchelli, 1975, p.3).

Laura Lilli's analysis of editorial strategy (1977) is once more highly specific to a particular period. She interprets what she sees as vague attempts in the middle-class magazines at discussing issues relating to women's daily lives as direct attempts at mitigating the post-1976 recession in the sector. Falling circulation, compounded by the increasing availability of other media channels, leads to marginal changes in editorial strategy in acceptance of a generalised 'demystification' of consumption, where consumption is no longer universally identified with the emergence from tradition of the middle-class. The author indicates that this is only one element in the general crisis and lack of direction affecting women. Other elements such as greater knowledge, information, and a desire for employment possibilities that increasingly characterise the middle-class woman are not discussed. The middle-class magazine, in losing a previously unquestioned anchor to its readers, is seen to be in decline, as the more culturally prepared reader is subjected to a number of competing influences, including that of the feminist movement. This decline compares to the absence of decline in the readership levels of working and lower-middle-class magazines whose readers are not exposed to the same extent to such conflicting forces of change.

Other authors like Antonia Enzo (1977), in a decidedly more Marxist-feminist contribution of the same period, notes that the assimilation and discussion of emerging issues such as women's liberation and emancipation into women's magazines, is based on the information-persuasion potential of this channel of communication as used by various significant social actors (concerned with capital, education, the family and organised religion, for example). She sees this channel as being used specifically and even created for the female public in order to act as a braking mechanism on change in terms of women's established status. The variety of views of the period, from the more objectively analytical to the more ideologically oriented, nevertheless all converge on the central issue of the social influence exerted by women's magazines. However, they are generally regarded as conservative and non-emancipatory. This 'fact' is still open to debate and depends upon the parameters set out to explain such notions as

'emancipation' in light of the different approaches used by the magazines in communicating content and advertisements to their target readership.

Laura Lilli's contribution to Castronovo and Tranfaglia's (1976) history of the Italian press may undoubtedly be identified as one of the most historically comprehensive studies of women's magazines. It was written in the mid 1970s at the height of Italian feminism and contains a certain inevitable feminist input whilst attempting to transcend simplistic and politically based interpretations. Lilli's analysis of a range of women's magazines over an extended historical period highlights the fascist period as one of mass publication and distribution of women's magazines, unearthing for the first time their profit potential. As noted by the author, fascist ideology regarding women is mainly reserved for the newspapers and journals that were heavily controlled by the regime, and for the staunchly supportive Catholic women's magazines, that unlike the mass-market magazines rarely transmit any sort of ambiguity about women's roles. The post World War II period heralds a defence of women's traditional roles, interpreted by Lilli as tantamount to a right-wing position taken by the women's magazines. Indeed, as she points out, all profit-making ventures for publishing houses also operated within the conservative atmosphere of the period. Enthralled by the 'Cinderella' fairy-tale image, that acts as one of the most efficient conservative forces in a society in the grip of the Marian cult, the author considers women to be plagued by a system which is not only dominated by but also personified by fathers, husbands, brothers, priests and, most importantly for this topic, problem page agony aunts (Lilli, 1976, p.280). The woman as 'Cinderella' in a Catholic perspective is deemed a hegemonic reality by the author, and whole-heartedly adopted by a mass media that forcibly pulls women into the role of the new Italian housewife.

Lilli (1976) further asserts that the role of the middle-class women's magazines is one of marrying Catholicism and advertising, virginity and consumption, and even marital fidelity and supermarkets (p.284). This 'lethargy' into which women are lulled by the Catholic, political, consumerist, advertising, publishing alliance (p.288) is reflected in the

conformity of the magazines up to the 1970s, avoiding issues faced by the only politically oriented women's publication *Noi Donne*. In contrast, according to Lilli, the emancipatory developments of the previous decade are only partially reflected in the weekly *Amica*, founded in 1962 with the intent of providing modern and open discussion of women's issues. The cultural delay characteristic of women's magazines is only marginally repaired she feels following 1973, the year in which socio-political issues affecting women are characterised by a profusion of feminist publications. As indicated by Lilli, this year also paradoxically sees the launch of the Italian *Cosmopolitan*, a commercial product focused on sexual relations as an expression of emancipation, and *Brava* symbolising the omnipresent 'angel of the hearth'. Lilli's contribution is illuminating, but at the same time constricting, as the author frequently resorts to an outright condemnation of post-war women's magazines from a combined left-wing and feminist perspective, whilst not attempting to analyse the magazines in greater detail, in terms of their content and advertising, which could take us beyond this vision. She also fails to really connect to the readership of the magazines or to explore any exceptions. Thus, influenced by the dominant and prevailing view in that era of the inherently conservative nature of middle-class women's magazines, even the most interesting, and relatively unknown, fascist period magazines become submerged in a condemnation of the genre as a whole, whilst the magazines from later periods are universally criticised with repeated condemnations of their consumption-oriented and non-emancipatory focus.

1.2.3 The 1980s and 1990s: Discovering History and The Fascist Era

The focus of women's studies and feminism on producing the consciousness-raising literature of the 1960s and 1970s was also complemented by more academic studies of both the present and the past, which came to take more centre stage in the field in the post-feminist eras of the 1980s and 1990s and up until the present in Italy. This evolution of interest included the analysis of the press and the role and influence of middle-class women's magazines. The interest in consciousness raising and in the present, which marked the development of the feminist movement, did continue in a number of

publications (for example, Garroni et al, 1986). However, the exploration of a number of issues from a more historical perspective emerged more fully in the aftermath of the movement, with the greater access to research sources and publishing funds by women academics and researchers. An increasing interest in various areas pertaining to the past of Italian women was complemented by more investigations into the sources of literature, culture and information that had been accessed by women readers. This had led a few authors initially like Franca Pieroni Bortolotti (1963; 1974; 1978) to discuss women's political and literary magazines in her analysis of historical feminism. By the 1980s, research into these sources widens considerably with renewed interest in the early decades of the century (Cotti, 1981; Di Cori, 1981; Bigaran, 1982; De Giorgio, 1993) and in the fascist era. Indeed, the reinterpretations of the culture and politics of this period signal a certain acceptance of the past. Women's magazines begin to feature as an invaluable source of socio-historical material with a comprehensive sourcing of the 1919-1943 period provided by Emma Scaramuzza (1981), and of the 1861-1985 period by Rosanna De Longis (1986), whilst a convention on the publishing industry between the wars considers the role of women's magazines in a large publishing concern such as Mondadori (Cantani, 1983).

The post-feminist period, therefore, heralds a discovery of women's history and in particular of the fascist period. These interpretations were clearly inspired by earlier feminist studies (e.g. Meldini, 1975; Santarelli, 1976; Macciocchi, 1976; 1978; Pieroni Bortolotti, 1974; 1978) with which continuity is maintained with work in the 1980s. Saraceno (1981), Bartolini (1984) and Fraddosio (1986) reflect this continuity, while Fallochio (1988), Saracinelli and Totti (1988) and Bartolini (1988) take the historical approach much further and do indeed focus on feminist issues during the fascist period. However, women's magazines continue in the 1980s to be attributed limited importance in all but a number of specific academic studies with particular agendas. For example, Bartolini (1982) and Salaris (1982) put forward the theses that women intellectuals can contribute to a futurist type of magazine. The significance and influence of middle-class women's magazines in the fascist period do, however, partially emerge from the semi-

autobiographical pen of politicians like Miriam Mafai (1987), whose considerations provide an understanding of reader selection criteria on the eve of the Second World War. However, Elisabetta Mondello (1987) conducted the first really significant study with a comprehensive analysis of the 'nuova italiana' in the press, and of the culture of the fascist period as emerging from a variety of perspectives. As indicated by the author, the 'new man', proposed by the futurist Marinetti (Mondello, 1987), is transformed into the 'new Italian', capable of constructing a 'new Italy' for Mussolini, and a 'new' woman, whose political contribution lies in the ability to procreate. This, however, is not the unequivocal model of the period, and as argued by the author is merely one of a range of types reflected in the press and in women's magazines. The dedication of practically an entire chapter to the mass market magazines originating in the early 1920s alongside the analysis of upper-middle-class magazines, reflects their role in the culture of the period, although the author does note the lack of research conducted:

Stranamente, mentre sono stati studiati con attenzione i vari aspetti della cosiddetta 'fabbrica del consenso', analizzati i meccanismi predisposti e utilizzati dal fascismo, distinti i vari livelli socio-culturali sui quali agivano, assai poco è stato scritto sul ruolo giocato da uno dei prodotti, e insieme dei canali, più tipici della cultura di massa, rappresentato dalla stampa femminile a larga diffusione (1987, p.102).

From this analysis, women's magazines and their advertising content are seen as the source from which an ambiguous and multifold image of Italian woman emerges. This 'protagonismo' reflects a variety of images, from an everyday version of the working-class woman as seamstress, shop assistant or secretary, to the archetype, sporty, emancipated 'garçonne'. Finally, there is the inevitable housewife. Similarly, the complexities of papal and political dictates, requiring the woman to be an 'angel of the hearth', and yet socially active in a variety of roles for Church and State, is revealed in the mass market magazines, and to a certain extent in the Catholic women's press. As a result, a complex image is formed from the myriad influences exerted over women in the

fascist period. These go from the Catholic views on family and work, to the fascist ideological position, to the stress on consumerism as well as the intellectually-based emancipatory tendencies which also emerged during that period. Mondello's analysis has only one fundamental limitation. This is the relative lack of sufficiently detailed analysis given to the middle-class women's magazines, where consideration of the most important magazines, and their content, forms part of a more general discussion of various cultural influences such as those from the press during this period.

In the 1990s, Victoria De Grazia's insightful analysis of 'how fascism ruled women' (1991; 1992a; 1992b; 1993) provides a penetrating vision of a commercial culture that dominated in the inter-war years. According to the author, the importance attributed to the female citizen, in the recently formed European nation states, increases following women's contribution to the First World War. There is also a proliferation of models of collective and individual identity as a consequence of mass consumption, with women being associated to a greater degree with this emerging culture given their dominant role in the home. As forms of mass culture become linked to mass consumption through the press and advertising, the early decades of the century see a significant growth in the number and type of mass produced media and cultural products, with women's magazines forming a fundamental part. The result, as considered by De Grazia, is the emergence of an increasingly consolidated link between the consumption of mass manufactured goods and the advertising of these same goods. The latter promises, in addition to the goods themselves, a unique identity and social realisation for women. The fascist regime's policies regarding emerging mass consumerism, identity models appealing to women, and the cultural vehicles used to promote them, are considered as ambiguous by the author.

De Grazia also focuses on the process of 'Americanisation' and the development of a commercial culture. She stresses the role of the cinema as important in this respect. However, her analysis is essentially devoid of any in-depth discussion of the key role that was played by advertising in this process of Americanisation, although the author does

outline the importance of imported American images of beauty to the Italian woman, and the fact that advertisements make use of American promotional tools. Indeed, these are fundamental to the advertisements of national and international companies, and play an important role in diluting the regime's attempt at creating a single reference point for women in commercial Italian culture. However, De Grazia notes that women's central role in the regime is contradicted by this consumerist counter-role, that is embedded in the very American influences that lead to a view of women:

as the main protagonists of a post-political citizenship, given that their new forms of collective identity and presence in the public arena were principally linked to the birth of consumerist culture (De Grazia, 1992b, p.111).

As indicated by the author, the importance of commercial culture, especially for the younger generations of women in the 1920s and 1930s, is immediately grasped by publishers like Rizzoli and Mondadori, who segment their markets and adopt American-style magazine formats and rotogravure presses. Nevertheless, the significance of this innovation in improving the quality and appeal of advertisements, and not simply of the magazine itself, is generally overlooked by De Grazia, whose focus on consumer culture integrates only fleeting reference to advertising, despite its centrality to the identity of women's magazines, to the formation of a modern consumption culture in women influenced by direct and indirect advertising, and to the fact that the increasing presence of mass-market magazines influence the advertising content of the advertisements targeted at women.

Indeed, although the concept of consumer culture is based on the mass production and advertising of goods to women, Elisabetta Mondello (1987) is one of the few authors, with her analysis of specific women's magazines, to acknowledge the decisive contribution of advertising to the function and modernity of the magazines. She describes the importance of *La Donna* that, from its launch in 1905, is particularly full of

advertisements for home goods and relates closely to the particular 'ideal-typical' image presented of the modern woman:

La donna era presentata come l'amministratrice della vita domestica e l'organizzatrice del *ménage* familiare, già inserita in quel processo che la trasformava nella consumatrice prediletta dei messaggi pubblicitari (Mondello, 1987, p.96).

In contrast, in terms of advertising content in the fascist period, an upper-middle-class magazine, *Lidel*, is identified as very rich in full-page advertisements for female, luxury and élite products. According to Mondello (1987), women's magazines reveal, amongst other things, a 'decontextualised' image of women in a society based on the increasing importance of central themes such as evolving cultural models, and the marginally explored link between advertising and consumption. The very lack of studies conducted on women's magazines 'a carattere divulgativo' with a high advertising content is later also signalled by Helga Dittrich-Johanssen (1995) whose contribution to the analysis of Mussolini's 'Donna Nuova' reveals the contradictions contained within the regime's dictates, and the attraction exerted by mass cultural vehicles like women's magazines on the masses of women searching for means of escape, and willing to spend their meagre earnings on passports to such escape in the form of advertised products in the magazines.

A more recent historical overview of women's magazines undertaken by the researcher Rita Carrarini (1992; 1993) is likewise open to criticism in dedicating limited attention to the advertising content of mass-produced women's magazines, accused of portraying a predominantly family and home-dedicated woman. This is compared to the more intellectual and politically engaged magazines that, despite the greater importance attributed to them, have significantly lower readership numbers, and a consequentially reduced influence on women's consumption decisions.

Despite the dominance of advertising in the make-up of women's magazines, the paucity of analysis may be attributed to a variety of elements, from a post-feminist elimination of issues which are perceived as being permeated by feminist perspectives and deemed to have been sufficiently debated from this particular ideological stance, to taken-for-granted assumptions on the fundamental role of advertising in the propagation of twentieth century consumer culture.

1.2.4 Some Comments on Contemporary Research into Italian Women's Magazines from Italy and Elsewhere from the Late 1980s Onwards

It may be noted that, despite frequent contributions to the analysis of the content and format of women's magazines, variously reflecting dominant ideologies of particular eras in Italy, significant research dedicated to the analysis of Italian women's magazines from the turn of the century onwards is still limited to a few key studies.

The interest shown by researchers from outside Italy in the history, culture and media as affecting Italian women likewise appears to have practically ignored the role played by the consumer-oriented women's magazines. Although less influenced by the ideological currents in force in Italy, these academics have tended to focus on other media forms, such as women's writings, and their various roles connected to the film industry, or on the culture, society and politics of Italy as related to women, including studies on the fascist and feminist periods (e.g. Chiavola Birnbaum, 1987; Testaferri, 1989; Bono and Kemp, 1991; Caldwell 1991a and 1991b; Cicioni and Prunster, 1993; Miceli Jeffries, 1994; Pickering-Iazzi, 1995; Panizza and Wood, 2000). This neglect of the women's magazines is surprising due to the fact that many prominent female, and male, writers contribute articles actively to these magazines, and in so doing mould the magazines' identity for readers (Carrarini and Giordano, 1993). Nevertheless, there are a number of references in more general work that indicate a continuing, if feeble, interest in Italian women's magazines that complements the broader but continuous production of research into the life and times of twentieth century Italian women. Donald Meyer's comparative

analysis of sex and power in terms of the rise of women in America, Sweden and Russia alongside Italy (1987) is one of the few studies to indicate the role played by women's magazines in conceptualisations about Italian women's culture. Despite a lack of reference to periods outside the economic boom years, Meyer does acknowledge the centrality of the women's magazines in this period of growth and his analysis is, therefore, central enough to deserve a lengthy quotation:

The economic miracle sufficed to generate the basis for the emergence of a kind of woman's sphere within the social whole, picking up from a middle class feminine culture taking form from the late 1920s under fascism and cut off by the war. Now national magazines for women, running up to 500,000 in circulation, sought and found a variety of audiences. Some - *Confidenze*, *Brava*, *Intimità* - simply ignored feminist issues. Others - *Grazia* and in particular *Gioia* with its specifically Catholic inflection explicitly deprecated organized feminism. *Amica* and *Annabella* supported freedom of divorce; *Annabella* welcomed career women as a cutting edge. *Arianna*, upon effecting its partnership with *Cosmopolitan*, took up that American magazine's preoccupation with sexuality. Continued economic growth was necessary, if such media were to facilitate a culture among Italian women increasingly free of the constraints of the past - a past characterized by rural poverty and subordination to the church (Meyer 1987, pp.38-39).

Meyer's hasty and generic categorizations appear to reflect views previously expressed by Italian feminist writers. However, the attempt to integrate the role of women's magazines into wider media, culture and social discourse is yet laudable as few writers outside Italy appear to have taken them into consideration in this way. His work reflects the approach of earlier Italian authors like Bocca (1963) and Forte (1966).

More recently, women's magazines have resurfaced in Italian publications, albeit in very generic or specialised form. Fausto Colombo's (1999) analysis of Italian twentieth century media, and cultural industry is generic, yet of some relevance. More specific

studies refer to the role of women's magazines in terms of their problem pages (Trigila, 2000), or the fashion industry from its origins to the establishment of the fascist 'Ente nazionale della moda' (Gnoli, 2000). Changes in terms of younger generations of Italian women, have been examined as seen through the magazine *Cordelia* (Stival, 2001). Female writers and journalists have also been the subject of research (De Nicola and Zannoni, 2001).

Finally, although references of a general nature have been made to advertising in middle-class women's magazines, as described in publications especially of the 1960s and 1970s, with the most detail provided by Giochino Forte's (1966) social analysis of a number of advertisements targeting women in women's magazines in the 1960s, the studies specifically regarding advertising in women's magazines are investigated in the next section. However, it is important to place the next section's analysis in the context of the literature review of women's magazines provided above. Indeed, the aim of the following section is to consider advertising studies and the available literature on gender images in advertisements in Italian women's magazines in order to provide a basis for subsequent analysis of the language and images targeted at women through the women's magazines.

1.3 GENDER, ADVERTISING AND ITALIAN WOMEN'S MAGAZINES

Advertising as a phenomenon has always caught the imagination and pulled at the public's purse-strings. A wide variety of studies has been conducted on the nature of advertising, in terms of analysing, comparing, suggesting, instructing and discussing images, techniques, strategies and life-styles. Interest generally in the emerging phenomenon may be traced back to the nineteenth century, although actual publications relating to the concept of advertising and the media emerge later in Italy and only from the 1930s, when interest in the attraction and greater sophistication of American advertising was heightened. Only in the 1950s did a concrete interest begin to emerge, with publications by advertising professionals directly involved in the planning and production of advertising campaigns such as Felice Cunsolo (1955; 1957) and Dino

Villani (1957). Publications of this nature continue with Gian Paolo Ceserani's invaluable contributions (1980b; 1981; 1988) on the nature of advertising in Italy from the turn of the century to the 1980s. An abundance of advertisements is provided by the author. They are of a commercial and political nature, and effectively support the advertising-oriented perspective. Ideas about consumerism, fascism and the role of the 'Duce' are also explored along with an analysis of post-war developments. Undoubtedly, the importance of these contributions lies in the possibility of penetrating the significance of the advertising conducted, and the inherent rationale and the objectives pursued vis-à-vis other interpretations. Indeed, with authors such as Ceserani providing an advertising-oriented key for interpreting various socio-economic and political phenomena, advertising rapidly can be seen to have become an essential feature of the Italian economy.

The 1960s are particularly prolific in terms of literature on advertising. Advertising can be seen to be an essential component of the marketing strategy of growing companies. Sociologists struggle to make sense of Italians' willingness to sacrifice the old for new. The various influences of advertising contributions by Americans such as Vance Packard (1957), Rosser Reeves (1960) and Russell Colley (1961) appear to have permeated into Italian society. By the 1970s, an increasing number of studies by authors like Arturo Quintavalle (1972) lead to a veritable explosion in the following two decades, as marketing is swiftly integrated into university degree courses, and advertising becomes worthy of academic, as well as technical, consideration. Technical contributions are matched by more academic research funding, leading to an expansion in advertising-related publications analysing a myriad of the inter-connected factors involved in advertising. However, although advertising has been a rapidly evolving and researched area in Italy since the 1970s, the research conducted on gender images, and on advertising in women's magazines is surprisingly meagre, and concentrated within a period of time notably influenced by a number of other forces, the feminist movement again being amongst the most significant.

1.3.1 Images of Gender in Advertising: Implications for Women's Magazines

The late 1970s and 1980s herald the emergence of a number of studies focusing on gender in advertising. Indeed, the print media increasingly becomes a source for gender analysis, albeit by a limited number of authors. In Pignotti and Mucci's (1978) analysis of the 'woman invented by advertising', the authors draw on a range of advertisements relating to the signs most linked to the female figure in advertising: the woman as seen by the male gaze, as a part and user of nature, active/passive, part of the couple, family, society, the workplace and ethos. Pignotti's view that attention be directed at elements other than the 'woman-object', but from which all factors undoubtedly develop, reflects an attempt at reaching beyond the limitations of what he sees as the sexually-related language and images of the period. As argued by Pignotti (1978), the woman 'invented' by the advertisements becomes a mere 'still life', with all erotic appeal transferred onto the product, so much so that she becomes false and ambiguous despite the unidimensional nature of her image. The woman is thus seen as part of a system based on a total identification of the consumption of sex with the consumption of products, but significantly on an inferior level to that of men. Indeed, as argued by the author, advertising images merely serve to portray this lack of equality of both a gender and class nature, where in the latter case, emotions are the prerogative of the rich, with a specific 'type' of woman used to reflect viewer expectations and class consumption categories. Pignotti (1978) notes that advertising also adopts extremist feminist concepts, distorting feminists' 're-appropriation' of their bodies by transforming the act into one of total narcissism, with mirror images constantly utilised to exhibit the 'woman-object' to its maximum effect. The final result of the fragmentation and distortion of the female image is its profound alteration, with a loss of identity, and the propagation of discriminatory, and pre-packaged, versions of womanhood.

The decidedly feminist stance adopted by the author reflects a prevailing view of the 'woman-object' in advertising of the period that, seen in isolation, does appear to infer that only women are portrayed in this limited role. The fact that men are increasingly

exposed to similar advertisements featuring men is overlooked, as much as the fact that advertisements featuring women as 'objects' do not dominate all media forms, and are present only to a certain degree in the women's magazines of the period. Nevertheless, the distinct impression given by Pignotti (1978) is one of the dominance of these advertisements in the media. This is a debatable, yet understandable assumption, given the perhaps greater visibility of these advertisements in certain mixed gender media channels such as television, which tend to use such an approach in advertising image and language. In comparison, a later study by Arturo Quintavalle (1981) provides greater gender balance in utilising both male and female images from a variety of magazines to demonstrate gender-bias, and sex-based divergences in the images used through various life stages.

A significant study by Milly Buonanno (1983) on mass culture and female identity, albeit with television as the focus, may be similarly identified as part of an academic effort to widen research horizons in this area. Buonanno (1983) criticises the previous concentration of research on the print media, given the overriding influence of television in proposing a single image, compared to other media such as women's magazines, where television's focus on the young, happy housewife in television programmes and advertisements bases women's total sense of self-satisfaction on an immersion in domestic duties. The portrayal of men performing 'typical' female duties by this period, with certain significant limitations, is interpreted by the author as a way of attributing importance to the private domain, given the consequential male recognition of it. The greater versatility of the male figure is also seen as a possible signalling of a further devaluation in women's traditional role, a role that emerges through this medium with greater and greater frequency, given the targeting of the average viewer with these role models and experiences on a daily basis. The author's new focus on television, in comparison with a previous interest in women's magazines and their advertising, is indicative of a developing view among academics that there is no longer anything new to be said about the latter advertising vehicle, despite the changing nature of the magazines, and their continued influence on women's perceptions of their roles. However, it must be

agreed that from the 1980s onward the influence of the women's magazines may have been reduced due to the advent of the highly competitive private television stations. It is for this reason that the present research goes no further than 1980 in its analysis of the advertisements appearing in the women's magazines.

In analysing the use of female and male images in advertising, however, these studies do form part of an academic trend towards providing an interpretation of a dominant social phenomenon. Indeed, the 1980s and 1990s are characterised by the financing of studies conducted by the National Commission for the Achievement of Gender Equality. These studies were conducted on women's image in terms of the mass communication media, and indeed they confirm the findings cited above (Di Cristofaro Longo, 1986; 1995). According to the latter findings, the somewhat static nature over time of the advertising in women's magazines appears to be confirmed, where the 'cultural identikit' of the woman reader remains oriented towards the two dominant features of youth and beauty on the one hand, as used principally in the advertising of clothing, cosmetics and jewellery, and the housewife on the other, in relation to the advertising of domestic appliances and household products (Di Cristofaro Longo, 1986). The author views these factors, compounded by other common stereotypes, as having been almost untouched by social and historical developments, with the female image being constantly depersonalised and used only to reinforce selected messages. The recognition and monitoring of media stereotypes in order to 'change the association between women and information' (Di Cristofaro Longo, 1995, p.196) is deemed a necessary step towards regulating advertising production, and preventing the use of sexist cultural models. Although written within a post-feminist era, these contributions seem to denote a continued, if somewhat feeble, interest in a much under-researched area of advertising in women's magazines as well as in other media. The fact that women have long been used in a variety of ways in advertising in order to provide a product with a distinct image, and association of ideas for the consumer, is ignored in the study, as much as wider socio-cultural and economic factors that influence the use of the female image in the advertising of certain products both in and outside women's magazines. Finally, the much

longed-for greater personalisation of the female image appears somewhat unrealistic in a society that is also increasingly depersonalising the male in advertising. Also stereotypes in media advertising provide what advertisers see as a means of attracting the addressee's attention using familiar, or innovative, concepts while still touching on the known, cultural notions and ideas. Such concepts have long formed the backbone of much advertising, but whether they are interpreted in the restrictive ways suggested by authors like Di Cristofaro Longo is open to question.

Finally, a fact that emerges in the contributions of the authors discussed is that, although they provide useful insights into the advertising contained in women's magazines, the description of advertising sources and vehicles appears general, lacking sufficient attention to detail. To the extent that in the more general studies by Pignotti and Mucci (1978), Quintavalle (1981) and Ceserani (1980b; 1981; 1988) there is no clear detailing of the advertisements in terms of their language and image in relation to their time and place location in women's magazines, then it appears necessary to recourse to accessing once more issues of women's magazines of the period analysed. This is in order to confirm that what the authors are saying actually applies to the women's magazines as a source of particular advertisements. The inclusion of this literature review section, nevertheless, reflects a recognition of the centrality of such research and the importance of exploring the historical nature of Italian advertising in terms of the advertising targeted at women, and the importance of obtaining a greater and more in-depth understanding of the use of the female image in advertising in Italian middle-class women's magazines. This is explored further in the next section in terms of the breadth of understanding which the literature brings to these topics.

1.3.2 Advertising in Relation to Italian Middle-Class Women's Magazines

Women's magazines begin to be recognised as a potent advertising vehicle in studies of the late 1950s, as the potential for development of this vehicle begins to be identified. Felice Cunsolo's studies (1955; 1957) provide a historical perspective of the advertising

conducted from the late nineteenth century with reference to the innovative companies in the field (1955), with extensive use of female images and messages appealing to women, much in line with Dino Villani's study of the same period (1957). Cunsolo's earlier study and Villani's historical treatise of advertising both contain ample reference to the advertisements in women's magazines, despite a lack of detailed sources, which is only clearly evident by conducting corroborative research into issues of women's magazines as in the case of the present research. Nevertheless, the later study by Cunsolo (1957) does analyse women's magazines in some depth, identifying the high circulation and readership levels reached by the magazines, and target social class, with a statistical focus that acknowledges the significance of the medium as a prominent advertising vehicle. This factor is highlighted by another study of advertising in women's magazines (Gennaro, 1960) that focused upon page size in terms of product category distribution of goods such as food, domestic appliances, airlines, prestige products, home and personal care.

The process of rapid development, which the Italian economy was undergoing, stimulated initial contributions of this nature. The advertising sector began to recognise the potential of women's magazines as an ideal vehicle for targeting the middle-class woman who was seen as the 'queen of consumption' (Ceserani, 1980a). According to this study, the role of advertising as part of the growth engine appears to be partly one of accessing the increasing purchasing power of Italian families by targeting the female buying public.

In terms of an analysis of advertising and the use of gender-role terms, there appears to be an emergence of awareness by the end of the 1960s, about the importance of Italian women's magazines in terms of being used as a vehicle to present gender role images. This accompanied the striving for emancipation and the equal rights struggles of that decade, and more specifically looked forward to the feminist wave of the following one. Although, as outlined in the preceding section, a variety of works briefly had discussed the nature of advertising in women's magazines, one of the first in-depth contributions may be identified in the journalist and writer Carla Ravaioli's work (1969). Ravaioli's

analysis of advertising in women's magazines for the first time provides an in-depth view of the interconnected advertising client-editor-reader relationship governing editorial strategy choices. Ravaioli's contribution precedes the feminist interpretations of the coming years, as do the brief references made by other earlier writers who had also recognised that what was taking place was the transformation of the image of the Italian woman into an avid consumer. Forte (1966), for example, provides a view of advertising in the post economic boom Italian society, through the recognition of its role in conditioning the Italian woman's behaviour, lifestyle and social class-based perspectives.

The second wave feminist movement in Italy had gathered various elements of feminist thought initially under French and American influences, especially with the much cited contributions of Simone de Beauvoir (1949) and Betty Friedan (1965). However, this gave way subsequently to a self-propelling momentum. Images of women prevailed as consumers and consumed, of woman as object, gazed upon by men and society and distorted in her essence. These then became major issues, as much as those of consciousness-raising, self-help and education in the construction of individual and group female identities. In the initial stages, as is symptomatic in Ravaioli's work, advertising is seen as part of a system imprisoning women into defined roles. Language and images are used in this way in the increasing number of pages of advertisements in the press. Newspapers and magazines succumb to revenue requirements, and join to project images of the Italian woman as an expert and informed consumer. According to Ravaioli, this appears to be an attainable ideal in terms of the lifestyles of many of the readers. Women, she feels, are seen as a homogenous group by the magazines, and as such remain the main advertising target. The advertisers at that time apparently defy the sort of customer diversification in terms of social class, age and income that was to take place over a decade later. Other writers such as Nozzoli (1973) also see the advertisements as offering a consumption-oriented solution to the woman's search for self. The woman then becomes an ally of the consuming society, where this role of consumer provides a sense of self-worth in tandem with the magazine's creation of dependence as an alternative to the woman's often enforced solitude in the home (Nozzoli, 1973). During the 1970s,

Ravaioli (1975) continues to assert that this consumption-centred role of women remains unchanged, with the female image still being the most widely used factor for stimulating this consumption. In Ravaioli's analysis, women are offered objects by advertisements as a type of 'sleeping pill' to deaden any true search for their identity. Although an identifiable component of the feminist consciousness-raising literature of the 1970s, and one to be reflected even in works by renowned writers such as Alberto Moravia, seeing women as brain-washed beings, plagued by advertising and a culture geared towards consumption seems somewhat overly simplistic. This view paints them either as similar to robots or at least as objects being pushed hither and thither by forces out of their control rather than as thinking, choosing and acting individuals.

These perspectives are formulated on conceptions of an Italian middle-class woman, who having obtained the modern conveniences and lifestyle portrayed in the advertisements, either, in the worst case scenario, is blinded by the apparent satisfaction in her role, to the extent that life, beyond the advertised pages of the woman's magazine, is inconceivable or, on the other hand, experiences a certain frustration and guilt associated with the idealised housewife-mother-hostess role and status that it brings. Lack of consideration of other variations to this scenario, and of women's keener perception of what their magazine and its advertising is all about, is apparent. The emphasis given to the Italian middle-class woman, by consciousness-raising literature of that time, is as the person most influenced by the consumer society, and, therefore, the one embodying most its 'myths'. This aspect is difficult to agree with, as any sense of security, individuality and satisfaction which women find in the role of capable household manager with a central purchasing function for self and others, is somewhat arbitrarily pointed to as being a state of false consciousness of self worth. As a result, on the eve of the second wave feminist movement, advertising is increasingly criticised in studies of Italian women's magazine content, as it is seen as influencing women's visions. All are included from the most up-market progressive magazines to the more down-market escapist ones. This is so much so that Laura Lilli (1976; 1977) critically attributes a particular force to advertising in women's magazines, and the almost exclusively male magazine editors who are

apparently selected for their managerial qualities and ability to manage advertising clients. Indeed, feminist rhetoric finds its way even into Lilli's brief incursion into women's magazine advertisements, where an 'advertising ideology' is seen to dominate magazines, providing an 'updated cage' for women from which to gaze upon their world.

A unique contribution to a special understanding of advertising in women's magazines is Ravaioli's study of male images (1973) in which the force of stereotyping is viewed as a strong one, with a 'virility myth' saturating all media forms, including women's magazines. This is compared by the author to the much-propounded 'feminine mystique' which, like that, is used as a tool for maintaining established social functions and the status quo. Men are exhorted to conform to an expected male role, where, in the author's analysis, aggressiveness and virility are linked to all manner of products, as stereotypical images are deemed just as much a 'mystifying' force for men as for women, given the purchasing of many of the products by women. Financial standing, success, family harmony, authority and competitiveness are all associated with this purchasing power as male and female roles are reinforced, 'provider' for the former and 'carer' for the latter. The author sees this gender and class-based system as unchallenged, given that the average man is always provided with images that he can easily identify with or aspire to. The contribution is significant in its uniqueness, in that it complements the feminist perspectives on women and their magazines, and their images and purchasing roles influenced by explicit and implicit gendered-stereotyped messages in advertising. Yet it is once again limiting in its view of men as essentially shackled to an image and message that they cannot escape from. Thus, like the women they are seen as neither being able to evade nor refuse the dictates of the advertisements in favour of alternative interpretations or product selection criteria.

The 1970s are, therefore, characterised by a relatively prolific production aimed at dissecting gender-based advertisements, and especially the advertising in women's magazines and the gendered images of the period. Milly Buonanno's 1975 publication is significant in this respect, unearthing the myriad strategies, unstated ideologies and

advertising that are viewed as permeating every aspect of women's magazines. The 'innovation-preservation' dialectic is advanced by the author in relation to the widened interests and behavioural models espoused by the magazine editors, who are aware that they are dealing with a more informed public. The author sees this as an essential part of the advertising as much as of the magazine itself. Tightly linked to the social class targeted by the magazine, advertising is seen to saturate the pages of middle and upper-middle-class magazines, whilst becoming notably more limited in the working and lower-middle-class magazines, where saving and spending power are lower. This reduction of advertising in the second category of magazines is evident from an analysis of the magazines, where food and detergent advertisements dominate the images. However, the author's assertion that women of the latter lower socio-economic groups are encouraged to forsake beauty for hygiene is open to question given the presence of the lower priced cosmetics available to them, if not frequently advertised in the magazines. The advertising language is criticised by the author as 'barbaric' in its frankness, leaving little to the imagination with the so-called process of civilisation which apparently is taking place - 'sembra di assistere a un'opera di dirozzamento' (Buonanno, 1975, p.92). Indeed, for Buonanno, a 'no frills' approach, combined with limited sophistication and customer naivety, has led to the implementation of two basic approaches involving firstly a lack of personalisation of the method of advertising and secondly of the products. The 'star' personality is used to encourage interest in the readers, whilst the same readers are constantly reminded of their limited economic condition and lack of opportunities that, it is inferred, only the product may contribute towards alleviating. Beauty and elegance seem to be taken as a prerogative of the middle and upper-middle-class reader, as their cosmetics are no longer low cost and mass produced, and are said to denote a certain exclusivity, desirability, mystery and youthfulness, which the readers are increasingly enticed to desire. The transformation of the readers identified by Buonanno (1975) undoubtedly occurs, but is also a feature of various magazines and extended over a longer period of time than the author appears to suggest. Similarly, expensive cosmetics have always been the prerogative of the well-heeled consumer whose wish to have access to products not available to others is emphasised by the exclusivity of the particular brand.

Also, the use of a number of advertising strategies in women's magazines are by no means isolated to the period considered, but are continually used to instil feelings as diverse as fear of social exclusion, desire to belong, and aspiration to the 'star' characteristics of one famous personality or another.

In a later contribution, Buonanno (1978) further develops the notion of social class-based advertising in women's magazines by means of conducting a content analysis on the most widely read women's magazines, thus challenging a prevailing view that uniform, undifferentiated advertising messages are used in the media and in the various categories of women's magazines. Although advertising levels and product categories demonstrate that there is a high correlation in the use of particular types of products and the readership of certain magazines with different socio-economic groupings, there are some magazines which dominate the market, having a very broad middle category of readership and therefore being of particular interest. Buonanno explores some of the most sought after magazines and their roles as advertising channels (1978, p.60). At the time, they had a good circulation and a high readership level reaching a conservatively calculated weekly average of 20 million readers. The author sees standard recurrent images of housewife, homemaker, mother and woman as 'object' as permeating the advertisements. The magazines, thus, communicate certain values through the use of language, roles, and the presence or absence of the female image in accordance with the target market. The main 'promise-threat' (Nozzoli, 1973), which is present at all levels, is the risk of status loss, and a fall from social grace, with the advertisements inviting the consumer not merely to consume, but to assimilate consumption into a taken-for-granted conception of life. Buonanno indicates the use of outdated images at a time of rapid change in women's condition, signalling the function of advertising as an instrument of control and traditionalism, socialising women to a common individualistic ideology. In fact, 'Fra i contenuti della stampa femminile, quelli pubblicitari sembrerebbero gli ultimi a resistere al rinnovamento' (1978, p.91). It is again difficult to agree with the author's entire approach and findings, given the limitations of content analysis and the focus on an extremely limited period of time, which results in an inevitable loss in the scope of the

analysis of material from other periods, and with the exclusion of those product categories that do not adhere to pre-established criteria (van Zoonen, 1994). The very lifestyle aspirations, and status seeking, which are criticised, have indeed a long history in Italian middle-class women's magazines. Also, the use of differentiated advertising images in different magazines is a characteristic of much advertising in women's magazines over time.

Generally speaking, studies of women's social condition of the 1970s period contained the inevitable chapter on women's magazines and the advertising contained therein. Giovanna Pezzuoli's (1975) research, conducted in 1972-73, examines advertising in the most popular lower-middle to upper-middle-class women's magazines, concluding that the advertisements play a similar role to the magazines themselves, by directing women's sense of identity, and not facilitating the development of a sense of personal self-fulfilment ('formazione' rather than 'informazione'). Little of an innovative nature is added to Buonanno's more detailed research, although the author notes that the messages are aimed at encouraging women to buy products as a means of obtaining a sense of identity and of becoming a modern, dynamic, informed consumer. The 'woman as object' is also highlighted by Pezzuoli (1975), although this is analysed to a greater degree within various media types by authors like Ellena Pellegrini (1977) and Serena Nozzoli (1973). Nozzoli is more adamant as to the 'blackmailing-reassuring' (p.177) message destined for the prevalently housebound female population, with happiness to be achieved only when in possession of the required material comforts and within the appropriate traditional roles envisaged by a male-dominated society. Such contributions are, once more, limited by a feminist vision that denies the value of real self-fulfilment found by middle-class women in the domestic environment, whilst constantly reaffirming the subjugation and disempowering effect of women's magazines and the advertising contained therein.

A recent publication of particular relevance to this study is Arvidsson's (2003) analysis of Italian advertising in the period from Fascism to postmodernity. Of particular interest,

apart from the time period covered, is the discussion of a number of Italian advertisements, including some from Italian women's magazines specifically relating to women's domestic roles. Arvidsson (2003) adopts a broad-based sociological approach to Italian advertising that is useful on a general level and provides a review of some advertising content, which is analysed within a framework that examines the evolution and changes in marketing and market research techniques in the post-economic boom years. However, Arvidsson's broad focus on different media and limited focus on post-war Italian women's magazines, demonstrates a lack of detailed attention to long-term socio-economic developments in the advertising targeting women specifically through Italian women's magazines per se. The more rigorous socio-linguistic analysis of the magazine advertisements provided by the present research is therefore necessary in order to develop a more coherent understanding of both the specific content and the way in which it is indicative of wider changes and evolving ideologies created by and affecting the women concerned, and in turn actively produced and reinforced by advertisers. This micro yet context based approach therefore specifically directs our attention towards the particular significance of the magazine advertisement throughout the period between 1915 and 1980, and not merely during the post-war period which is focussed on by Arvidsson (2003), during which time production and dissemination was more prolific.

The analysis by Virginia Baradel (1977) is probably more useful due to its specific focus on the woman's magazine in its entirety as an advertising vehicle, given the prevalence of advertisements over actual information. Seen by the author as a means of 'indirect and non-violent control over women, the Italian woman's magazine is considered an instrument for ensuring acceptance of the existing system. The role of advertising within a system that provides a repressive response to problems in order to ensure their ideological negation, is to focus attention on the individual rather than on social or individual needs. As a result, a 'self-punishing state of tension' is created within the reader, by the magazine, as she becomes aware of the impossibility of becoming like the woman imaged, and links this dissatisfaction to her reality and the housework that is asked of her. Baradel's semiotic analysis of advertisements draws on previous work done

by authors like Buonanno (1975), Eco (1968) and Eco *et al* (1970), where verbal and iconic messages are based on the aesthetic and sexual in the upper-middle-class magazines, progressing to a focus on housework as a service in the lower-middle-class magazines. Home-based roles are thus made erotic in the first, and rapidly re-evaluated as daily essentials in the second, without the use of any mediation mechanisms, such as hope of change and illusions, which are taken as the prerogatives of the frustrated upper-middle-class reader. Accordingly, Baradel (1977) identifies a mystifying effect exerted over certain groups of upper-middle class women, convincing them to accept the role of full-time carer by boosting a return to the joys of the home, with the possibilities of exciting interior creative activities. Once again, this aspect of advertising in the less sophisticated magazines becomes communicated to the lower-middle class woman with the traditional housewife role model. She, unlike her more affluent counterpart, is not approached as an amateur interior decorator who can recreate her home with taste and sophistication. The central role of purchaser-consumer assigned to women by the advertising system, thus becomes, according to the author's Marxist-feminist perspective, a means of masking women's productivity on the home 'front', and their role in maintaining the economy's labour force. The reader's identity and role, prevalently one of housewife according to the advertising images, is also based on the husband's salary. This is emphasised further by images and language that mould her according to the male 'gaze' and needs. Despite an overriding feminist perspective that locates women firmly in an advertising dependent role, Baradel's contribution utilises a semiotic approach in analysing specific advertisements in greater detail, and as such emerges from the more general contributions on women's magazines, or content analysis studies considered above.

1.3.3 Some Concluding Comments

In final analysis, as the heyday of the feminist movement wanes at the end of the 1970s, authors such as Anna Riva (1980) face the new reality of previously designated feminist issues being incorporated into mainstream culture and politics. The debate on advertising

appears to be a fundamental element of the feminist stance, yet one that is totally submerged by feminist considerations. It is totally identified with objects, which the woman consumes as housewife, and is in turn consumed as object, conferring products with an identity and in turn being provided with a presence and a utility that is otherwise limited. Women are seen by feminist authors as being encouraged to internalise advertising, and hence consumption, as part of a selective notion of lifestyle. They are viewed as having become socialised by a common ideological way of thinking into a way of thinking and living in which they play an irreplaceable part. This view of women, their roles and the ideologies governing their thinking, as expressed by Riva (1980) provides a concluding, summarising vision of an essential thread of thought that underlies studies of gender models in the advertising contained in women's magazines throughout the period.

1.4 CONCLUSION: ADVERTISING IN ITALIAN WOMEN'S MAGAZINES

The research available on advertising in Italian women's magazines is of a diverse nature. Dispersed throughout the post-war period, analysis of women's condition and women's magazines in different decades leads most authors to acknowledge the force of the advertising content within these magazines. This state of affairs is evident from contributions of the 1950s, through to those of the 1990s, where most authors touch on the issue of advertising to a greater or lesser extent. Indeed, the only real analysis of the actual advertising content in Italian women's magazines, and of the language and gender images contained in the advertisements pertains to the 1970s. In this case, the research available on women's magazines and the advertising contained varies from the more strictly academic works of authors such as Milly Buonanno to the consciousness-raising contributions of Carla Ravaioli, whilst contributions by authors like Pignotti, Pezzuoli and Baradel adopt certain research criteria in an analysis conditioned by a feminist perspective. In view of the particular influence of such perspectives, and relating to notions of women's oppression in aspects of daily existence like the media, the contributions provide insights that are necessarily tempered by the particular lens of interpretation adopted by the authors. Furthermore, the lens utilised is frequently

unstated, albeit evident from the analysis, as the authors do not clearly indicate their perspectives or theoretical orientation.

The contributions to the study of advertising in women's magazines take a contemporary, yet selective view of the advertising content, image, language and possible effect of the advertisements in women's magazines, with the authors incapable, or unwilling, to take a step backwards and consider alternatives to the interpretations provided. A lack of in-depth consideration of advertisements may generally be identified, where efforts like Buonanno's content analysis (1978) provides a partial vision of advertising content in Italian women's magazines, Baradel's semiotic approach to analysing a handful of magazine advertisements (1977) adopts a limiting interpretation of the role of advertising for the addressee, Pezzuoli's bland investigation (1975) of a limited period reiterates the much utilised notion of advertisements moulding women to a consumerist identity, Nozzoli (1973) and Pellegrini (1977) highlight the 'woman as object', consuming and being consumed by a male-dominated society, without a coherent or analytical approach to advertising content in magazines. A notable feature of these advertising contributions lies in the relatively selective vision provided of advertising in women's magazines, as a form of communication seen to brainwash the naive reader, totally defenceless against the persuasive force of the advertiser's pen. Similarly, the absolute focus on the female public denies the well-known 'coffee table' effect of women's magazines, whose distribution in a number of public areas result in a gender, class and age readership spread of the magazine and of the advertisements. The only author to consider that men are as targeted by products, and advertising stereotypes, as much as women is Ravaioli (1973), whose contributions (1969, 1978), nevertheless, evade the increasing use of the male in advertising aimed at women.

A number of fundamental gaps can be identified in terms of a lack of any in-depth analysis of actual advertisements, where periods analysed are frequently limited to a handful of months or years, providing a relevance tied into a particular time period, and without an acknowledgement of the approach utilised, or the visions that condition

interpretation of the advertisements in those studies that actually analyse advertising content in greater detail (Pezzuoli, 1975; Baradel, 1977; Pellegrini, 1977; Buonanno, 1978). Furthermore, the multiple perspectives, and greater insights to be gained from a longitudinal study of advertising are missing from studies conducted on the advertisements in the frequently cited, but insufficiently researched, area of advertising in middle-class women's magazines. The adoption of a limited frame of reference for the advertisements places the research conducted in a time bubble, with the consideration of a number of contextual socio-economic, cultural and political factors totally absent from advertising analysis, and only superficially referred to by more general studies on the Italian woman's condition, or in publications with women's magazines as a focus. In terms of a consideration of middle-class women's magazines, the lack of consideration of issues pertaining not simply to the woman's magazine as a vehicle for the advertisement, but to wider industry and country specific factors impinging on an analysis of magazine and advertising content, language, image and message, is instrumental in relaying findings that reflect such limitations.

A lack of detailed analysis of advertisements in women's magazines is especially notable as far as the period from the First to the Second World Wars is concerned. The emphasis by authors in the 1980s and 1990s is on discovering fascist ideologies, and commercial influences, regarding women. This leads to an analysis of cultural factors by authors like Victoria De Grazia (1991; 1992; 1993), but few detailed studies as to the nature of the advertising influencing the social perceptions, and purchasing decisions, of the Italian woman magazine reader in an evolving mass culture. Analysis of advertising in women's magazines in this period is particularly absent, with the resulting impression that advertising is a marginally used tool in this period, is not a significant presence in women's magazines, and is a factor that in a limited way influences evolving mass consumption and culture trends. Such is the lack of emphasis attributed to advertising by authors like Mondello (1987), De Grazia (1991; 1992a; 1992b; 1993) and Dittrich-Johansen (1995), that the evolving consumption, and commercial culture, of the period appear to function almost apart from the influence of advertising. The role of advertising

in middle-class women's magazines is central to the identity of the magazines, in this period as in others, yet is hardly recognised by De Grazia, whilst Mondello and Dittrich-Johansen indicate its significance, and the need for further research into this aspect of women's magazines, without actually broaching the subject further in their analysis of the cultural make-up of Mussolini's 'donna nuova'.

The immediate post-war years and the decade of the economic boom are similarly lacking in detailed analysis of middle-class women's magazine advertisements, despite attempts by authors like Ceserani to provide a socio-historical view of various periods throughout the twentieth century, and Villani's historical overview of advertising (1957). Whilst both utilise women's magazines as a source, albeit Ceserani (1980b, 1981, 1988) to a lesser degree, the contributions are generic in nature and lack detailed analysis of advertisements. The interpretations of advertising conducted in the second half of the 1960s, and throughout the 1970s, reverberate with the cultural influences prevalent at the time, with no analysis identifiable after this period. The overall lack of historical continuity, and contextualisation of the advertisements, not simply within the immediate context of the magazine itself, but within wider socio-cultural, political, economic contexts, to extend to those areas that take language, image, and gender issues into account is identifiable in the existing contributions of advertisements in middle-class Italian women's magazines. The 1990s are remarkably lacking in studies of Italian women's magazines and the advertising contained, despite numerous contributions on the mass media, the consuming society, and advertising. Where women are the focus of the research, relatively little attention is paid to the function of women's magazines, and their advertising content, not simply in inciting purchase of goods, but in fashioning perceptions, lifestyle and change. Such is the case of Laura Minestrone's analysis (1996) of the domestic sphere and the advertising conducted over time for the home.

These overriding factors invite one to ponder the nature of the advertising displayed in Italian women's magazines, the messages sent and received, and the dominant ideological issues that influence use of image and language, and interpretations of the

advertisements. In this respect, it is interesting to compare Italy to other countries, where a greater interest in women's magazines, the nature of the advertising targeting women, and the interpretations attached by women to media messages, has developed further. It would be interesting to consider the advertising in Italian women's magazines in light of these developments elsewhere.

CHAPTER 2: RESEARCH PROCESS, METHODOLOGY, CONCEPTUAL ORIENTATION

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The aim of this chapter is to set out the research process, methodology and conceptual orientation which guide the study. This is undertaken firstly by means of a consideration of the primary and secondary research sources used, the process of sample selection of the Italian women's magazines, and the categories of advertisements as well as the individual advertisements utilised in the actual analysis. The development of a conceptual orientation which guides the analytical perspectives adopted in the study is also detailed, with a consideration of those perspectives originating in countries outside as well as within Italy, given the researcher's own background and preparation in such areas. Also, the fact that much recent advertising analysis in Italy has been directed towards the television medium rather than magazines must be taken into account in terms of the dominant Italian perspectives in this area. As a result, perspectives such as advertising language and image, and research into gender in relation to women's magazines, even when originating in other countries, have been investigated and incorporated into the analysis of advertisements in Italian women's magazines. Indeed, the actual tools adopted in analysing the language and images used in the advertisements are discussed in the light of their usefulness in contributing to the interpretation of the advertisements rather than in terms of their historical antecedents. However, it is important to set out the history of the analysis in terms of the researcher's own methodological and theoretical insights and reflexivity. Also, before proceeding with the analysis of the actual advertisements, detailed information relating to the wider mainly Italian socio-economic, political and cultural contexts of various periods was investigated and obtained, as well as that relating to the advertising vehicle of the Italian women's magazines, and the advertising data currently available about women's magazines. The research background therefore involved a continuous dialogue between researcher and subject area, which included analysis of relevant literature of the local

context of the women's magazines, as well as the wider national and international contexts in which the advertisements were located. Given the relative absence of a coherent model that could effectively be applied to an analysis of advertisements in Italian women's magazines over an extended time frame, use was made of various methodological tools of analysis and conceptual orientations which have been developed in a broad academic context both within and outside Italy. These were essential in informing the discussion and in contributing to the formation of the particular analytical approach utilised in the analysis of the advertisements.

2.2 THE ROLE OF REFLEXIVITY IN THE RESEARCH PROCESS

The underlying rationale for the methodological approach outlined in this chapter derives from the researcher's ontological position, including personal and academic background, understandings and experiences. These features act as meaningful aspects of the research process and are necessarily context driven. Reflexivity (Giddens, 1991) is an important tool for demonstrating both to the self and to the reader the importance of the role of the researcher in the tasks of describing, interpreting and analysing the data which is the focus of the research exercise. It is the awareness of a sense of self and the 'writing and re-writing [of] an emotional and mental script for oneself' (Jones, 2003, p.181).

Reflecting upon the role of the 'self' from the outset of the research involves a process of transparent, honest reflection by the researcher of her position and stance, and involves a conscious act of self exposure in producing and writing up the research account (Gergen and Gergen, 2000). This approach also ensures that the dialogue between the researcher and the research subject is ongoing and dynamic. It is important to note that in terms of the specific analyses of the women's magazine advertisements, researcher reflexivity was used primarily as an additional tool for assisting in the understanding of interpretations made of the advertisements as detailed in Part B of this thesis, rather than as a primary aim of the research in its entirety. The practical reflexive strategy employed to assist in this endeavour was the use of reflective memos by the researcher throughout

the duration of the research journey. These were mainly written as loose notes and observations intended only for readership by the researcher herself as an aide memoir, and to chart the development of her conceptual thinking and analyses. To this end, it is important to be aware of and reflect upon one's 'research situatedness' (Ward and Jones, 1999) and pay due acknowledgement to one's experiences. This is due to interpretations being essentially influenced by factors such as the gender and socio-economic status of the researcher, access issues, and one's own individual views and experiences.

2.3 RESEARCH SOURCES

The research approach used for obtaining primary and secondary data is that of a combination of methods that allow a particular degree of flexibility, in order to have a wide enough database from which to conduct the research, thereby obtaining a representative sample of material. The approach adopted, using information obtained from a variety of both primary and secondary sources, substantiates an essentially qualitative approach to data gathering and analysis. The use of a mixture of techniques facilitates and channels the qualitative analysis conducted on the advertisements, given the absence of a quantitative approach in the research and the decision, which was made after supervisory consultation, not to take a statistical sample of the women's magazines.

The secondary data sources utilised allow information to be obtained about women in Italy but covering the wider socio-economic, political and cultural context prevailing in different periods. As well as advertising data, Italian, British and American literature on women's magazines and gender images were explored. As a result, secondary data was obtained principally from Italian and British library sources and from a few American sources. Above all, access to copies of Italian women's magazines was obtained from the publishers Mondadori and from the Rome and Florence National Libraries.

The primary data sources used background contextual information taken from various perspectives, most significantly those of librarians and researchers with expertise in women's magazines, and managers in advertising associations and publishing houses.

Formal mail and telephone enquiries were made to librarians at Italian National Libraries from late 1999 to mid-2000, in order to obtain information on the nature of Italian women's magazines, actual library contents of women's magazines collections and any other relevant information relating to the magazines. Between 1998 and 2000, twelve of the major publishing concerns of Italian women's magazines located in Italy were contacted twice by mail or fax, and three to five times by telephone, to increase the probability of a favourable response to requests for data and information.

The use of marketing strategies by national and multinational companies advertising in Italian women's magazines also necessitated a wider information base than that normally available from standard secondary sources. As a result, the other method used to obtain data was to contact directly the companies producing the mass-market consumer goods that had been generally advertised in the women's magazines analysed. This followed a general analysis of the main advertising conducted in women's magazines in various periods, but above all in the post-war decades, given the prevalent advertising of products by national and multinational companies in this period. Between Autumn 1998 and Summer 1999, sixty-five companies located on the national territory, and twenty-one advertising agencies, were contacted twice by mail or fax, and three to five times by telephone over the following year, so as to increase the probability of a favourable response. The low response rate reflects reluctance to provide information not directly related to customer issues, and lack of importance attributed to research-related requests.

2.4 SAMPLING RATIONALE: SELECTION OF ITALIAN WOMEN'S MAGAZINES AND THE ADVERTISEMENTS

The rationale and criteria governing the selection of the Italian women's magazines to be included in the research, and the specific advertisements analysed, are of a diverse nature, reflecting a number of initial criteria, and then various evolving considerations as investigation into the women's magazines selected took place. Initial criteria for magazine selection was based on the definition given to middle-class Italian women's

magazines with a consumption and, therefore, advertising, orientation. Following a narrowing of the field of interest, the available distribution data was used to narrow the selection to those most widely bought and read in the category, whilst the actual selection of the specific advertisements was based on a scrutiny of the magazine issues in terms of the relative frequency of certain product categories, and producers, as deduced from an overall analysis of the various magazines.

2.4.1 Method of Sample Selection of Italian Middle-Class Women's Magazines

The selection of women's magazines for the research is based on the researched fact that women's magazines, and in particular, middle-class women's magazines, have long been the primary source of reading material, information, advice and assistance for many women in Italy (Carrarini and Giordano, 1993). Long before the popularity of radio, television and other mass media forms, middle-class women's magazines were one of the few instruments of self-expression available to women, through letters, problem pages, and contributions by female writers. They also provided one of the few means that middle-class women have of projecting their existence outside the home confines, whether through contributing to the publication of these magazines, or simply by purchasing the magazines. Thereby, they may still have followed advice and suggestions in the advertisements, obtaining a degree of independence through consumption, purchase and the ensuing management of their domestic sphere.

Middle-class Italian women's magazines have been selected for analysis as the vehicle of a particular advertising content, given the interpretations that have been attached to this content. The range of middle-class magazines is investigated from the lower-middle to upper-middle class end of the spectrum. They can be compared to the working-class and upper-class alternatives that provide a more restricted and less pertinent sample area for this research, given their targeted readership. Likewise, the expansion in readership of the Italian middle-class woman's magazine over the twentieth century is an influential factor in determining the overall importance attributed to this range of magazines.

The operational concept of Italian middle-class magazines used in this research is based on the underlying premise that readers would possess a level of literacy and socio-cultural awareness deriving from some years of secondary school education. The significance of this literacy level as a defining point lies in the use of minimal linguistic tools in other magazines such as photoromances, where unlike with the middle-class magazine, the use of pictures and photography communicates the content. Middle-class magazines rarely resorted to such tactics, requiring the participation of more literate readers to interpret their contents. The importance of the expansion in readership of this category of magazine is also linked to the growing educational opportunities available to Italian women throughout the inter-war and post-war years. However, consideration of other magazines, such as weekly current affairs magazines with a certain, if small, readership amongst the more educated middle-class women, are excluded due to the inherent nature of these magazines as dominated by a male readership (Lumley, 1996). Furthermore, as the primary vehicle for an advertising content dominated by increasing advertising conducted by large national, and multinational, companies over time, the middle-class Italian woman's magazine may be considered at the epicentre of multiple cultural, consumerist and ideological forces influencing middle class women as an expanding sector of the Italian female population throughout the twentieth century.

The selection of the magazines is based on a number of criteria that allow a representative sample of middle-class Italian women's magazines within the various periods to be obtained, by means of an inclusion of those magazines that are considered important advertising vehicles in specific periods, and those that are significant for their advertising content over several decades. Thus, the main criterion used is that of the middle-class magazine 'genre' outlined above, given that the aim of certain categories of magazines is essentially consumer oriented with a substantial advertising content over time. As a result, initial consideration of various middle-class magazine types leads to the exclusion of religious, educational and sector or activity specific women's magazines, in favour of the more generic middle-class women's magazines covering a

variety of issues traditionally covered in such magazines like fashion, cookery, beauty, health, home, childcare, relationships, public figures, society, work and social issues.

Having established this criterion, and limited the sample scope, the magazines were then sampled according to distribution figures. This second factor is undoubtedly correlated with perceived level of advertisement exposure. Thus, the fact is being acknowledged that middle-class women's magazines first of all attract substantial advertising content for mass-market goods targeted at the middle-class woman who has purchasing power not only for herself but also for others. There is also the fact, recognised by advertisers, that the magazines often circulate beyond the limited sphere of the initial purchaser and reader (Allen, 1983). However, distribution figures for the middle-class magazines are particularly difficult to obtain, given a relative lack of such data and their unavailability at publishers' offices due to war-time destruction, elimination or reluctance to provide access to such data for later post-war years. The data available is fragmented depending on the period in question. As corroborated by the experts contacted, data is virtually non-existent for the period preceding World War Two, and fragmented up to the second half of the 1970s. Furthermore, the historian Michela De Giorgio, in her analysis of women's press writers and journalists, notes that: 'Gli archivi dei periodici più importanti sono andati quasi tutti perduti: è molto difficile quindi quantificare la diffusione di molte testate in termini di copie vendute' (1993, p.485). As a result, advertising quantity and quality are also considered in the selection, given the propensity of some magazines to have a high distribution level, but relatively low advertising content, as in the case of photoromances. Generally, those magazines are sampled which have a relatively high level of advertising content, largely aimed at the middle-class woman. This criterion is linked to two other key criteria: firstly, the magazine's longevity, a clear indication of long-term success in the market-place, as well as the publisher's ability to fine-tune the product to changing market trends, and secondly, available distribution figures.

In terms of distribution data, two main sources accessed are: firstly, publications by a limited number of authors directly analysing, or referring to, women's magazines and

advertising content (principally: Cunsolo, 1955; Bocca, 1963; Forte, 1966; Buonanno, 1975; Lilli, 1976; Mondello, 1987; Carrarini and Giordano, 1993; De Giorgio, 1993), and the data contained in the 'Accertamenti Diffusione Stampa' (ADS) information fact sheets for the 1970s. For the pre-war period, the work of Mondello (1987) and, to a lesser extent, that of Lilli (1976), Buonanno (1975) and De Giorgio (1993) are used as a guide to the selection of middle-class magazines in the inter-war period, initially on the basis of these authors' categorisation of magazines belonging to the middle-class range of women's magazines, and subsequently in terms of the magazines' abundant advertising content and categorisation as generic women's magazines as defined previously. Specifically, De Giorgio (1993) identifies *Margherita* and *La Donna* as the most widely read women's magazines of the pre-World War One period. *La Donna* also expanded its inter-war readership. According to Mondello (1987), the market for women's magazines begins to develop early in that period with the arrival of the advertising dense *Lidel*, and by the 1930s with the more middle-class options in the guise of the widely read and distributed *Grazia*, *Gioia*, and *Lei*.

The data available in the post-war period, does allow a picture of distribution to be obtained as a guide to magazine selection within the category of middle-class women's magazines. The magazines with both the highest readership, and with significant market longevity, are selected to permit analysis of advertisements over an extended period of time. In terms of distribution and readership data, access to the various sources cited above allows confirmation of the identification of the middle-class Italian women's magazines to be sampled in terms of advertising content and distribution levels. Starting from Cunsolo's identification (1957) of the most widely read women's magazines with significant advertising content in 1954/55, the author excludes photoromances, despite their high distribution levels, analysing ten of those defined as the more middle-class women's magazines (*Grazia*, *Gioia*, *Annabella*, *Intimità*, *Alba*, *Bella*, *Eva*, *Lei*, *Marie-Claire*, *Novella*). However, the data referring to the most widely read magazines emerge fragmented for the years 1957 and 1962 in Bocca (1963, p.110). A comprehensive 1960 list is in the work of Forte (1966, p.114), 1969 data are in Lilli (1976, pp.258-259) and

Buonanno (1975, p.39). Finally there are ADS data from 1976 and 1980. A selective overview of the weekly publication data for generic middle-class Italian women's magazines is provided in Table 2.1.

Table 2.1: Average Weekly Publication Figures for Popular Italian Middle-Class Women's Magazines for Selected Years from 1957 to 1980*

Magazine	1957	1960	1962	1969	1974	1976	1980
Annabella (later Anna)	300,000	300,000	500,000	440,000	317,953	250,466	
Grazia	200,000	350,000	400,000	450,000	450,000	315,398	348,544
Confidenze		200,000		483,735	483,735	390,050	447,362
Gioia				435,641	435,641	277,821	329,645
Amica					402,000	402,000	315,599
Bella (later Bella Più)	120,000				441,000	441,000	315,522
Alba			212,843	212,843			

*Adapted from Bocca (1963); Forte (1966); Lilli (1976); Buonanno (1975); ADS (1976;1980).

In view of the earlier discussion, the principal magazines sampled in terms of distribution and longevity are: *Grazia* (Published by Mondadori, Milan, from 1938); *Gioia* (Published by Rusconi, Milan, from 1937); *Lei* that undergoes a name change to *Annabella* (Published by Rizzoli, Milan, from 1933. Name change in 1938); *Confidenze di Liala* (Published by Mondadori, Milan, from 1946. Became *Confidenze* in 1951).

Other magazines sampled for specific periods include: *Margherita. Giornale delle signore italiane* (Published by Treves, Milan: 1878 to 1921) for the years preceding World War One, given its essential role in advertising to women in the years straddling the two centuries; *La Donna* (Although published originally between Turin and Rome, publication stabilises with Mondadori in Milan from 1922. Published: 1905-1968), as one of the most widely read middle-class women's magazines over this period, it is sampled from its inception to World War Two; *Lidel* (Published originally by Edizioni

Lidel, Milan, then by Edizioni S.A.P.E.R.E, Milan: 1919-1935), as one of the few inter-war magazines with an extremely high advertising content for the middle to upper-middle-class reader, is sampled from its inception to its final years of publication; *La massaia* (Published by Edizioni S.A.P.P.I.A, Milan: 1931-1937) is sampled from inception to termination of publishing activity, given its central, and relatively unusual, function as an advertising medium for a number of industries; *Bellezza* (Published by Società Editrice Torinese, Turin: 1941-1943) is sampled for the period of publication, given the reduction in publication by other publishers during the war years; *La donna, la casa, il bambino* (Published by Ditta Eredi Canetta, Milan: 1930-1967) is sampled for the war years, given the reduction in publication by other publishers in the war years.

The *Almanacco della donna italiana* (Published by Bemporad, Florence: 1920-1943) is also included in the sample, despite the fact that it is not a weekly, or monthly, but a yearly publication subdivided into sections. Nevertheless, it functions as an important means of communication to middle-class women, as indicated by Mondello (1987), and as corroborated by an investigation of the actual advertising content. Furthermore, the publication has one of the highest identifiable distribution figures for the inter-war years, at 17,000 readers for 1923 (Mondello, 1987, p.202). Although declared by the publishers, and decidedly inflated according to Mondello, this data cannot exclude the publication, and its impact on middle-class women, from any analysis of Italian women's magazines, as acknowledged by Mondello. Indeed, its advertising content has, therefore, been regarded as important, particularly given the presence of a range of advertisements that are less present in the few pages making up most middle-class women's magazines of the period, whilst providing a source open to analysis in that it complements the other more appropriately labelled middle-class women's magazines.

Table 2.1 does not include any data relevant to such magazines as *Novella (2000)* and *Eva Express* which are of an essentially 'gossipy' nature, whilst specialist needlework monthly magazines like *Brava*, *Milleidee* and *Rakam* have also been excluded, despite their increasing readership throughout the post-war period, which is on a par with the

growth of other more general women's magazines. Furthermore, their monthly nature makes them less pertinent for an analysis based on magazines purchased regularly, with substantial advertising content and frequent exposure of readers to advertisements for goods targeting women. Similarly, although data exists for the monthly magazines *Arianna* (subsequently *Cosmopolitan*), the monthly nature of the magazine, inception of publication in 1957, and its relatively contained readership level (rising from 200,000 in 1960 to 230,000 in 1974) does not enter within the scope of the research. In terms of the weekly magazines, *Amica* is excluded given its lack of historical continuity (founded in 1962), despite the magazine's greater propensity to discuss issues regarding women that the other magazines minimally covered, as the magazine would probably merit a distinct categorisation and study, given the probable influence of the content of the magazine on the advertising. In reference to the above table, the restricted readership of the Catholic *Alba*, despite the fact that publication initiates in 1922, and the fluctuating nature of *Bella*'s readership over time, does not allow these magazines inclusion in the research.

The investigation of various magazines leads to a general exclusion of photoromances and magazines based solely on 'sentimental' story lines, given their greater location within the lower-middle to working class end of the Italian women's magazine spectrum, and their extremely low, if not negligible, advertising content in the period considered. Nevertheless, as a result of the very high distribution levels reached by these magazines, their utility lies in the underlying advertising implications deriving from their readership compared to the more middle-class magazines. The only photoromance, and romance-based, magazines analysed, for a lower middle-class/working-class target, are *Grand Hotel* and *Intimità* (both published by Del Duca, Milan, from 1946), in order to provide a socio-economic point of reference and contrast for the other categories. Although the above explanation prevails for the exclusion of other magazines of this genre, the well-known heights reached by these magazines, and in particular by *Grand Hotel*, in terms of copies sold, is a phenomenon that marks the end of an era when format changes. Typically, by July 1974, 1,236,941 weekly copies of *Grand Hotel* are bought by readers, followed by 687,561 of *Intimità*, and only 435,641, 440,000, and 450,000 copies

respectively of the longer running, more traditional, *Gioia*, *Annabella* and *Grazia* (Buonanno, 1975, pp.39-40). The change in format in the case of *Grand Hotel* occurs between the late 1970s and early 1980s, when the number of copies sold progressively diminishes and the magazine adopts a mixed format, which is somewhere in between that of the photoromance, the more classical woman's magazine and the illustrated gossip magazine.

The lack of advertising in these magazines is not as evident by the 1970s, as in the past, according to Buonanno (1978) in her analysis of different social class categories of magazines. However, the tendency of these magazines to carry mainly advertisements directly related to other issues of the same magazine, or a limited number of products and services, defy any serious attempt at analysis. This is despite their undisputed popularity even outside the working-class, and even their utilisation in films with such popular actresses as Anna Magnani. As a result, a consideration of the reasons underlying the lack of advertising in these magazines aimed essentially at the working/lower middle-class reader provides a greater understanding of the conversely relatively high levels of advertising to be found in the other categories of magazines, and the consequent implications for advertising in middle-class magazines and their targeted middle-class woman consumer. Typically, financing, apart from magazine sales revenue, is not required, given the photoromances' principal aim of attracting a steady readership, often with soap opera style story lines. Lower costs, resulting from the elimination of 'extras' like glossy covers, expensive investigations, in-depth articles and other features that add 'value' to the magazine, also imply an elimination of much advertising that is not seen to be in keeping with their readers' often meagre budgets and daily requirements. Finally, the growth in popularity of the photoromance is also significant in the effect which this had on other magazines. For example, the use of budding popular actors for the photoromance story lines, and the adoption of the photoromance format by other more middle-class magazines like *Confidenze*, allow such influences as the use of photo sequences and the 'rags to riches' theme, to increasingly filter into other areas, such as the advertising themes in other categories of magazines. This is much in line

with the increasing emphasis on certain mores and behaviour patterns for women in the post-war period up until the 1970s, with their emphasis on an idealised view of marriage, and which were encapsulated in the photoromance formula.

2.4.2 Advertising Selection

The first advertising selection criterion is dictated by the time frame established for the research, with selection of the advertisements occurring between 1915 and 1980. In the period before the First World War, advertising, and the techniques used, basically reflect a continuation of the advertising seen in the years of the Giolittian miracle, with some of the developments, in terms of image and language, considered in the analysis in terms of their innovative appeal. A landmark is the year 1915 as the starting point, reflecting acknowledgement of the significance of Italy's entrance into the First World War in terms of the wider context of Italian women's existence and the resulting impact of ensuing events on both the content of middle-class women's magazines, and on the advertising contained therein. The 1920s are a period of change with notions of independent womanhood reflected in the advertising of women's magazines. Change is also present in terms of a country progressing towards fascism, and the development of a strong fascist ideology regarding women in the 1930s. The nature of the advertising in the middle-class women's magazines of the inter-war period provides particularly strong scope for analysis in the light of the many developments of these two decades. Similarly, the advertising contained in women's magazines, and the interpretations attached to the image and language, may be seen as indicators of a number of factors that mutate with the Second World War, and the advent of restructuring and the subsequent economic boom period. Indeed, such is the centrality of advertising in women's magazines in this post-war period, that the magazines and their advertising increasingly become the focus of a debate at the centre of the second wave feminist movement.

The importance of women's magazines in the 1915-1980 period also lies in the innovative approach utilised in the advertising, and selling, of an expanding range of

goods to the growing middle-class. Innovation develops in the years straddling the two world wars, and up to the early 1980s, when the rapid growth of other forms of advertising result in the increasing product specificity of the advertising content of women's magazines. Finally, the notion of 'middle-classness' and the expansion of the middle-class in Italy may be defined within this period, as the First World War and, in particular, the post-war reconstruction heralds a definite expansion in the middle-class, with a slow, but inexorable, growth that continues throughout the inter-war period, and that culminates in an undeniable spurt in the period of the economic boom and in the following years. The prosperity and growth of the middle-class that characterises the 1980s provides an appropriate point of closure to the period, especially as middle-class women's magazines see their greatest 'flow and ebb' in readership levels in this period.

In terms of the actual sampling of magazines, given the extended, and relatively complicated, nature of the period of time under consideration, the criteria for the selection of the advertisements to be included in the research are based, first and foremost, on obtaining a sample of yearly issues of the middle-class Italian women's magazines. The sampling technique for advertisement selection entails stratified sampling of the magazines in a random way with an issue sampled every four months of one year, or, according to availability, every two years. *Grand Hotel* and *Intimità* are the only magazines where a sample from every four months was taken but at four year intervals, given their reduced function within the overall scope of the research.

The other criteria guiding advertisement selection are related to the nature of the advertisement and its regularity within the sample issues of the magazines selected. Selection of the advertisements is based principally on page size, where full page advertisements allow the reader's attention to be immediately captured. The lack of full page advertisements in earlier issues sometimes entails recourse to half, or even quarter page advertisements where the magazine has a large format. The concentration on the full page advertisements, for the purpose of the analysis, do not, however, exclude consideration of other advertisements in terms of their location within the magazine,

regularity and nature of the product or producer, given the holistic nature of the magazines and their advertising content. Regularity of the advertising exposure is not interpreted in terms of individual advertisements, due to the fact that the scope of the research is not to provide a content analysis of advertising content in women's magazines, nor to analyse the reader's exposure to the specific advertising message. Rather, the concept of regularity is interpreted in terms of a certain frequency with which a specific national or multinational producer advertised in middle-class Italian women's magazines with a range of advertising image and discourse. Over time, a regular pattern emerges, with certain producers appearing to advertise frequently in women's magazines over an extended period, and with a consequent effect on the use of advertising image and language, and on the historically continuous nature of the advertising conducted.

The pattern that emerges essentially has two strands, whereby the regularity of the advertising conducted by certain producers over time converges or diverges from prevailing ideologies and norms in the wider socio-economic context, and that most advertising conducted in a historically continuous manner over time undoubtedly belongs to large national and multinational producers, whose use of the middle-class woman's magazine as an advertising vehicle becomes increasingly visible over time. As a result, these prevailing strands naturally channel the research, and it becomes increasingly focused on a limited number of national and multinational producers for different product categories over the time frame considered. However, the preponderance of particular product categories, and the relevant producers, precludes the inclusion of a number of product categories, which like soap powders, detergents and deodorants, become increasingly universal to various types of media, and permeate the spectrum of women's magazines by the later decades of the post-war period. Similarly exclusion of an in-depth analysis of other products, like baby goods, is due to the basically unchanging nature of the advertising discourse and the specific user category targeted, although reference to such categories has also been made to inform the discussion. As a result, of the five categories analysed in detail in Part B of this thesis, four relate to goods that are heavily advertised in women's magazines over time by

multinational and large national producers: domestic appliances (see Chapter 3 in Part B), food (see Chapter 4 in Part B), cosmetics (see Chapter 6 in Part B), and toiletries (see Chapter 7 in Part B). The section on cars (see Chapter 5 in Part B) provides an interesting analysis on a product, that, although long advertised in middle-class Italian women's magazines from the turn of the century, is lacking in terms of frequency, despite its paradoxically greater visibility in Italian women's magazines, and the various visions of womanhood attached to these advertisements.

The historically continuous nature of the advertising by a producer for one or more brands permits a significant degree of analysis to take place within a stable brand-related dimension, as well as allowing an insight into how the advertisers of large national, and multinational, producers mediate the changing external context through their advertisements. A degree of brand-producer continuity has, thus, been sought, and achieved, in order to prevent fragmentation of the analysis, and to facilitate the analysis of contextual factors from a precise point of departure. This degree of focus is achieved in all but the section on domestic appliances, where the necessary inclusion of advertisements from a number of producers, nevertheless, allows the research objectives to be reached. In analysing the advertisements as the central dimension of the sections, the focus on the language and image of the advertisements progresses towards a consideration of a range of contextual issues in accordance with the product, the brand, the specific advertising vehicle used, and the wider contextual issues influencing the advertiser's vision of the Italian middle-class woman. The importance of the effects of the advertising strategies of large producers consequently emerges, as much as the mediating effect the advertisements have on notions of gender through time.

2.5 BEYOND THE ITALIAN CONTEXT IN ANALYSING ADVERTISING: GENDERED IMAGES AND LANGUAGE IN WOMEN'S MAGAZINES

This section considers various analytical approaches to advertising, in terms of the language, images and wider context of the advertisements, and investigations of gender

issues in advertising especially in women's magazines. Analysis of a number of approaches, and publications, from fields as diverse as those relating to advertising history and language, semiotics, pragmatics, and studies of women's magazines in other countries, is seen as indispensable in developing an analytical approach in this area. The latter requires not only the analysis of advertising in Italian women's magazines generally, but also an exploration of the influence exerted by ideology in the images and language, as well as an examination of the nature of the messages transmitted in advertising terms. Given the greater interest demonstrated outside Italy in the study of women's magazines, media and consumption issues affecting women, and the images portrayed, the advertising in Italian women's magazines is considered in the light of these developments elsewhere, with these studies informing the discussion of the advertisements. Specifically, the first section discusses a number of analytical approaches in terms of specific studies into the language and image of advertisements. The second section progresses on to consider actual studies of gender in advertisements, within and beyond women's magazines. Finally, the last section reviews historical, ideological and cultural perspectives as far as advertising, consumerism and women's magazines are concerned. Although somewhat artificial, due to the multi-faceted nature of various studies, the division of the studies into separate sections relates to a desire for greater clarity. Furthermore, the importance of these studies lies in their contribution to the overall formation of the analytical approach and specific tools utilised, and discussed, in the subsequent chapter section.

2.5.1 Analytical Approaches: The Language and Image of Advertisements

Analysis of advertisements in terms of their semiotic, sociological and ideological significance has been conducted since the late 1960s, in a number of countries, in tandem with the developments in popular culture, mass media and feminist discourse. As progression in theoretical formulation opens the way towards in-depth consideration of media forms, advertisements with their eclectic variation of content, language and structure are analysed in detail by authors in a number of countries.

In terms of the analysis of language and image in advertising, various ideas may be drawn upon from the area of media studies and semiotics. Semiotic research provides a useful means of examining the specific nature of media texts in that it considers all cultural phenomena as communication, demonstrating how communication is dominated by a mass of socially and historically determined codes. With media texts constructed within an 'encoding/decoding' process, meaning is produced in a social context and encoded into meaningful discourse dominated by 'the formal rules of discourse and language' (Hall, 1986, p.130), and subsequently decoded to produce a meaning in a given social context. The centrality of the elements of discourse, language and the encoding/decoding of media texts have been explored by semiotic analysts in specific case study applications, given the detailed nature of the analysis required. Roland Barthes' essay *Rhetoric of the image* (1977), originally published in 1964, explores the central notions of encoding, decoding, anchorage and relay at the heart of most advertisements. The signs and sign systems of language and image provide the means of unravelling the meaning of the message. Indeed, the application of semiotic analysis to advertising texts abounds as noted by van Zoonen (1994):

Signification has developed into an art form in advertising, making it probably the most popular object for semiotic analysis. As a concentrated form of communication, advertising needs to present its message in an extremely short time span, and depends heavily on the successful exploitation of the connotative power of signs. An advertisement cannot afford to be cast aside or leafed over; it must stand out in the flow of signs that bombard us daily. For the target group to recognize immediately what is being expressed, it is necessary that advertising draws from relatively common cultural symbols and meanings ... (van Zoonen, 1994, p.75).

The centrality of advertising discourse is also considered by Eco (1968) in his original work on semiotics. He considers advertising discourse as articulated on an ever-present

emotive base with the presence of other varying functions, invariably linked to the two main verbal and visual registers. According to Eco, rhetoric advertising generally adheres to a number of factors based on a message that frequently repeats what the receiver already expects and is familiar with, elicits unconditional acceptance of premises even when false, evokes the universal ideology of consumption and produces signals based on conventions that lead to a particular response.¹ Significantly, in terms of Italian advertising, Eco analyses five Italian advertisements in detail, two evidently taken from Italian women's magazines, although only one of the two sources is cited. The advertisements for 'Camay' soap and 'Knorr' packet soups are emblematic of a semiotic analysis with the first using a simple persuasive message, with rhetoric and ideological redundancy, and the second lacking in particular aesthetic qualities given a low level of communication, and understandable referential and emotive functions. Such factors may be seen to characterise the advertising in women's magazines. However, the use of two advertisements, specifically denoted as belonging to a 'middle-class' ideological way of thinking, denotes the centrality to academic analysis of women's magazine advertising.

The meaning of advertising, as a form of communication, is further developed by other authors. Gillian Dyer's (1982) method of analysis based on 'lines of appeal' indicates how different lines are identifiable throughout various historical periods, and are attributed greater, or reduced, importance in media such as women's magazines in relation to the period, socio-economic factors, target audience and other criteria. For Dyer, description and interpretation are inextricably linked at the denotative, connotative and ideological levels. The particular importance of people, and other visual elements, as carriers of meaning in advertisements is what allows the advertisement to establish a link between the product and viewers. Emotions, and relationships, as communicated by the advertisement, thus, become the key to unlocking this link. The specific discourses or signs contained in the advertisements are read by the viewer according to her social position, and her baggage of cultural knowledge is used to interpret the advertisement.² The importance of using an approach in which systems of signs analysed results in:

.....a critical shift from the simple interpretation of objects and forms of communication to investigations of the organization and structure of cultural artefacts and, in particular, to enquiry into how they produce meaning. It is argued that the meaning of an advertisement is not something there, statically inside an ad, waiting to be revealed by a 'correct' interpretation. What an ad means depends on how it operates, how signs and its 'ideological' effect are organised *internally* (within the text) and *externally* (in relation to technological, economic, legal and social relations) (1982: p.115).

The role of social systems and historical periods, as much as ideology, is emphasized by Judith Williamson (1985). 'Assumptions are made about us which we do not question, because we see them as 'already true'' (p.41). The production of ready-made facts about social groups is compounded by an illusion of the freedom to choose which, according to Williamson's Marxist perspective, is 'the most basic ideology' on which advertising is grounded. Williamson's work is interesting in that it investigates the ideologies employed by advertisers. However, it is open to criticism, given the essential lack of attention given to context. This feature is also identifiable in the work of the various academics who use a semiotic framework for their analysis, as discussed above. Elements such as non-linguistic communication, audience interpretation, and contextual factors thereby allow the interpretation of advertising language and image to emerge from systems of signs.

A recent contribution by Guy Cook (1992) on advertising discourse orients the analysis to the centrality of context as composed of substance, music and pictures, paralanguage, situation, co-text, intertext, participants and function. Cook's view of the importance of paralanguage leads one to emphasise such elements as behaviour, body posture and gesturing that, whilst not carrying meaning, reinforce or contradict the language utilised. The signs and symbols used in advertisements are corroborated by these elements, usually contained in the image of a person, and in particular of women in women's magazine advertisements. The social and semiotic interpretations of advertisements is

developed by other authors with specific case study applications (Zakia, 1986; Klapisch, 1995; Ahmed, 1996; Park, 1996; Mortelmans, 1998), with links between socio-historical dimensions, product categories and identity being established in advertisement analysis.

2.5.2 Further Academic Approaches to a Study of Gender in Advertisements:

Within and Beyond Women's Magazines

A further area of relevance regards a number of contributions specifically related to advertising in women's magazines and the use of the female image in advertisements. The symbolic interactionist sociological study of gender in advertising by Erving Goffman (1985) presents 'advertisers' views of how women can be profitably pictured' (p.25), provoking an awareness of stereotypical gender postures, and of the fact that gender stereotypes involve a 'two-slot format' where a woman in a 'feminine' position is often seen relative to another woman and not simply to a man. This leads to a differentiation not always based on gender. Goffman's contribution allows insight into how images of femininity shape, and exploit, cultural values, whilst John Berger's earlier influential 1972 study *Ways of Seeing* imparts a fundamental perspective of the fact that 'men act and women appear'. How women 'watch themselves being looked at' influences their relations with men, and with other women, as they consider it fundamental how they are seen by others, and how they in turn survey themselves, to the extent of transforming themselves 'into an object - and most particularly an object of vision: a sight' (p.47). Berger's insights are fundamental for an understanding of advertisements, specifically in terms of those targeting women, with the emphasis attributed to appearance and appropriate product use signifying integration or deviation from accepted social norms.

A number of other contributions similarly provide a variety of perspectives. Alice Courtney and Thomas Whipple (1980) indicate the prevalence of definitive sex stereotyping in advertising, and Jane Root (1984) similarly discusses the sexualisation of the female body in advertising, and the role of advertising in recasting popular idioms

and stereotypes of women, thereby giving them new currency. Rosemary Betterton (1987) considers the theoretical views of the advertising of femininity, noting that '[A]s a system it is universally visible and yet is given little cultural value or significance. In spite, therefore, of its enormous economic and ideological importance, advertising is commonly dismissed as meaningless or simply untrue' (p.19). The centrality of the portrayal of 'women's place' in print advertising is highlighted by Linda Lazier-Smith (1989), who sees the continued and widespread use of stereotypical imagery by advertising as 'a shorthand form of communication that must make contact with the consumer immediately, establishing a shared experience or identification' (p.248). The negative consequences of a continued focus on traditional roles, is not to acknowledge women's increased social status, with advertising reflecting traditional balances of power and a significant cultural lag in terms of attitudes and opinions about women. In specific, yet pertinent, case studies, Ann Treneman (1988) considers the referent systems used in the advertising of female sanitary products, whilst Kathy Myers' (1986) left-wing critique of the British Left's under-estimation of the significance of consumption reveals a political perspective. Lorraine Gamman and Margaret Marshment (1988) argue that disturbances of dominant meanings that occur in mainstream advertising may imply shifts in 'regimes of representation' of women, and therefore, in more common-sense notions about women. Such a view differs from those who see the language and image of advertising as essentially static and not open to change and reappropriation by different social groups.

In terms of specific studies of women's magazines, Trevor Millum (1975) provides a perspective on the cultural significance, and meaning, of advertising, with the 'world of woman' constituting a particular set of images and meaning. Following an analysis of the content of advertisements targeted at women within British women's magazines, Millum deems minimal the variations in the image and language of advertisements, to the extent that 'conventions of ideal types/stereotypes' are confirmed in the advertising (p.178). More debatable is the conclusion that '[T]he advertising thus acts as a social regulator, to preserve the *status quo*. It is part of the socialization of women, educating

them to their roles' (p.179). Yet, Millum's analysis of advertisements provides a useful perspective by considering a number of elements relating to the advertisement, and wider contextual information drawn upon by the advertiser. Similarly, Janice Winship's detailed studies of women's magazine advertisements are a particularly strong point of reference (1980; 1986; 1987a; 1990) with a historically comparative analysis of post-war advertising in British women's magazines, and an analysis of specific advertisements in terms of language, image and use of signs and symbols. Winship's analysis of the significance of hands in advertising targeted at women is a particularly strong point of reference (1987b), as much as the analysis of advertising in British women's magazines in the 1956-74 period in terms of the dominant ideologies of 'femininity' communicated by advertisements in a changing economic and political environment (1980).

A number of other contributions regarding women's magazines varyingly indicate contextual factors and the issues of gender, femininity, media use, advertising and consumerism (Ferguson, 1985; Endres and Lueck, 1995; Hermes, 1995). In terms of the link between contextual factors, advertising and the role of women's magazines, a case study of the emerging Indian female consumer by Alladi Venkatesh (1994) highlights the very importance of particular socio-cultural, historical and economic contexts affecting women's evolving consumption roles. As noted by Venkatesh, the role of women's magazines has been to identify the changes relating to women's income, employment and social independence, despite the inevitable pull of tradition in conditioning a mix of advertising messages targeted at women. Although brief, the author's analysis indicates the centrality of contextual factors in understanding advertising, consumerism, and the overall role of women's magazines in a particular cultural context. A further contribution by Risto Heisakala (1991) considers appropriate, and therefore 'virtuous' male/female behaviour, and identity models in terms of gender politics in Finnish magazine advertisements from 1955 and 1985. The specific use of women's magazines, and other magazines generally read by women, highlights the relevance of Heisakala's study in investigating certain types of gender portrayal in advertising in different periods of time. By seeing advertisements as documents of a prevailing morality, the study emphasises

the role of advertisements in reflecting defined behavioural modes. 'In trying to sell a product, the advertiser must create an image where the product is associated with one or more virtues and buying or using the product is seen as a technique of the self leading to a virtuous state' (Heisakala, 1991, p.387). Although a lack of emphasis on contextual factors arises from the approach used, where advertisements 'are read as a hyper-ritualized reality based on the social ritualism that makes it possible for us to understand glimpses of real life' (Heisakala, 1991, p.392), the prevailing virtues of the 1950s appear as general characteristics of this 'modern' period in the West, irrespective of national differences and other internal influences specific to a particular nation state.

Case studies relating to a number of advertising issues affecting women are also investigated, from physical attractiveness in advertising as a prime determinant of addressee self-esteem (Martin and Kennedy, 1994), to the portrayal of women in television advertising (Whitelock and Jackson, 1996). Martin and Kennedy's (1994) study highlights the emphasis given to thin, blonde women in advertisements, leading to a greater likelihood of self-comparison to this ideal model on the part of women. This they highlight particularly when they compare their findings to their analogous study on men. Whitelock and Jackson's (1996) comparative study of British and French television utilises studies on magazine advertisements as a point of departure, whilst indicating the general lack of historical context in studies on the use of the female image in advertising. Although the authors' focus is on television, their analysis of certain issues relating to advertising is still applicable to some extent to women magazine advertisements, perhaps even more so, given the use of both forms of media to target women. They both use the male as an authoritative figure, concentrate on women in their home-maker and mothering roles, portray women as having little or no technical expertise and in a limited number of employment roles, usually white-collar, and rarely of responsibility. Above all, such studies are revealing of a number of elements relating to the different portrayal of males and females in advertising, with the reinforcement of images in different media.

An important study of recent years, largely focusing on magazines, advertising and film, is Myra MacDonald's analysis of 'myths of femininity in the popular media' (1995). Taking an array of British and American textual examples, the author investigates the notion of 'myth', as defined by Roland Barthes (1977) in terms of 'ways of conceptualizing a subject that are widely accepted within a specific culture and historical period, despite having little necessary connection to reality' (MacDonald, 1995, p.1). Femininity myths are analysed within cultural and historical contexts given consumers' active and passive interpretation of media messages. Tracing the use of stereotypes in the media reveals changing ideologies, where, according to MacDonald, advertising constructs and reconstructs femininity in various ways. In her analysis of the inter-war years, advertising is seen to construct multiple identities for women who are, thus, encouraged to consume ever more, in virtue of the consumption activities increasingly associated with the female sex and notions of femininity. The centrality of cinema and Hollywood in promoting products in this and subsequent periods, is evident from MacDonald's analysis, as from those conducted on British female audiences (Stacey, 1994) and in European societies (Sorlin, 1991). Furthermore, the identification of three dominant forms of feminine identity in inter-war advertising discourse, 'the capable household manager; the guilt-ridden mother; and the self-indulgent 'flapper'' (MacDonald, 1995, p.77), points to a strong advertising-based influence in propagating myths of femininity that extend beyond the somewhat limited British/American context analysed by MacDonald. With household wares, children's goods and various cosmetic and luxury products respectively targeted at the three groups, MacDonald views women as being effectively discouraged from participating in the public sphere. Whether this generalisation may be applied across other European countries is debatable, given country specific factors, whilst the fact that most women exposed to underpaid, exploitative labour, associate the figure of the full-time housewife with that of 'technologically sophisticated craft-workers with special competencies and skills' (MacDonald, 1995, p.86) may be considered a general phenomenon, and not necessarily restrictive.

Whilst MacDonald (1995) provides an interesting treatise of the period, the elimination of intervening periods results in a somewhat artificial analysis, with the feminist movement of the 1970s heralding sudden changes in advertising discourse. According to MacDonald, the rapid emphasis on such elements as androgyny and individualism allow sales of fashion, cosmetics and perfumes to be boosted as women's magazines come into their own as the primary vehicle of this particular message content. Whilst the gap of intervening years appears initially of little consequence, the fact that developments in advertising from the 1970s seem to find their roots exclusively in that period, effectively provokes unanswered queries as to the advertising state of affairs in the preceding years. The emphasis on more recent periods sees a consideration of dominant myths in women's magazines, such as sexuality, personal relationships, the body and appearance, and their impact on advertising, as they define, and redefine socio-cultural notions of femininity. In advertising terms, the body and sexuality become paramount signifiers for lifestyle aspirations, and later for prestige, status and women's unending battle to avoid loss of social acceptability, and self-esteem, associated with ageing. Finally, although MacDonald analyses the use of language and image in women's magazines advertisements, the lack of detailed analysis of visual and verbal registers, and the consideration of a limited number of advertisements from specific periods, is replaced by an emphasis on the advertisements' propagation of stereotypes and ideals of femininity, that the advertising industry is notoriously deemed to produce.

2.5.3 History, Ideology and Culture: Women, Advertising and Consumerism

Recent studies of issues relating to advertising, consumerism and women's magazines in terms of ideology, culture and historical perspectives, are numerous and variously inter-related, despite the fact that the presence of women's issues in mass communications is virtually non-existent prior to the late 1960s, if not the early 1970s (Lent, 1991). As a result, although various studies generally consider gender issues to a greater or lesser extent, this section attempts to highlight those studies that are more historically or

culturally-oriented, and are considered to have influenced the research into Italian women's magazines from these perspectives.

The historical-ideological dimension is explored by Erica Carter (1984) in post-war West Germany. There the nature of consumer culture and its influence on young women provides a refreshingly different European context. This relates to the colonising nature of the post-war market, the expanding availability of leisure goods in the 1950s, the 'enfranchisement of the middle-class housewife' (1984, p.190), the nature of consumption in a process characterised not simply by manipulation, but also by appropriation. Although media and advertising are investigated in terms of the silk stocking as a commodity, the absence of reference to women's magazines is surprising given the influence of this media on tastes, although the role of institutional and political contextual factors feature. In terms of other studies into the culture and ideology shaping women, Efrat Tseelon (1995) analyses the presentation of women in everyday life, investigating how culture shapes personal presentations of self. For Tseelon, the importance of cultural factors in forming notions of femininity within Western cultures sees women 'simultaneously constructed and condemned' (p.77), in terms of seduction, artifice and spectacle, to beauty and life. Women's signification of these cultural signs and their opposites involves exploration of various historical, religious, and social developments that impinge on cultural perceptions. The application of such concepts to Italian culture reveals myriad socially and historically evolving influences that frame women within a number of advertising guises.

The way women live in the consumer culture in the twentieth century is similarly explored from a number of perspectives by various authors (Andrews and Talbot, 2000), where the centrality of the media, places, the manner of consumption and advertising, in the articulation of consumer culture, propel women to the centre of the debate given the historical development of their consumption-centred role. In gaining an understanding into the evolving nature of female images, the vision of the changing nature of the ideal woman in historical terms is of importance, given the influence exerted on advertising in

America and Europe. As a result, Marianne Thesander (1997) considers the moulding, and fashioning, of the body as meaningful to its representation and meaning alongside fashion, adornment and cosmetics, whilst Elizabeth Wilson (1985) similarly analyses fashion and modernity, in terms of the centrality of both to women's lives and identity.

From a mass media or communications point of view, Leslie Steeves (1989) analyses gender and mass communication, highlighting the influence exerted by the West on images of gender in the media in the wake of growing cultural imperialism. Significantly Steeves (1989) indicates the prime role of multinationals in the media in terms of advertising representations of women, compounded by women's minor positions in media and large commercial organisations, translating into an effective lack of influence over media content and organisational strategy. According to Steeves, women's centrality as private consumption decision-makers in most cultures, on the contrary, leads to women's magazines reinforcing 'the capitalist and consumerist orientation of the Western agencies that create most of the advertisements and of the transnational corporations that make the products' (1989, p.89). The attention afforded such issues underlies the central role of multinational organisations in creating and using images of women, a fact also highlighted by Juliann Sivulka (1998). The concept of contemporary Western media, and advertising influences infiltrating Third World countries, as indicated by Steeves (1989), may also be usefully considered over a longer time frame, and with relevance to specific media, where the interplay between women's magazines, multinational corporations and advertisement places the woman at the epicentre of evolving concepts of self.

Finally, a number of international advertising studies, and manuals permit an overview of techniques and socio-cultural perspectives to be gained (Rijkens, 1992; De Mooij, 1994; Kotler, 1997) whilst from a more historical perspective, analysis of American advertising by Juliann Sivulka (1998) provides a historical continuum from which to view advertising in the American context, as much from the point of view of advertising agencies, as from that of the client companies. In providing an overview of methods and

stereotypes utilised by the agencies, gender-based advertisements, especially those targeting the middle-class female consumer, are aptly contextualised in socio-economic and cultural terms. Similarly, specific studies on advertising and women's magazines in the American context (Davis, 2000; Walker, 1998, 2000) provide relevant interpretations. In terms of the analysis of particular periods, the variety of studies conducted in Italy, and discussed in the literature review, provide some useful insights, although a more recent contribution by Karen Pinkus (1995) provides a number of interesting interpretations on the body and its advertising in fascist Italy.

2.6 ANALYTICAL TOOLS FOR AN ANALYSIS OF ADVERTISING IMAGES AND LANGUAGE IN MIDDLE-CLASS ITALIAN WOMEN'S MAGAZINES

The analytical tools used in the analysis of the advertisements in Italian women's magazines entail the adoption of a number of components that constitute an approach based on the application of some of the methods and forms of analysis examined above in the Italian context. The principal focus in this study is on the use of a number of those verbal and visual tools that provide a coherent framework for analysing advertisements within Italian women's magazines and the Italian context. The presence of few, if any, coherent models requires a detailed consideration of those verbal and visual tools used.

Torben Vestergaard and Kim Schroder's (1985) approach to 'the language of advertising' forms the basis of a substantial portion of the analytical method utilised in the analysis of the advertisements. The tools proposed by Vestergaard and Schroder to aid the dissection of the textual and image elements of an advertisement are various, and have been used selectively. As far as the textual structure is concerned, the authors consider both implicit and explicit content as important, where elements like entailment, presupposition and expectation play a fundamental role in text construction and meaning. Similarly, awareness of the three participant roles of addresser/advertiser, addressee/prospective buyer, and product, centralise the analysis on inter-connected factors, and on the structure of the advertisement, where most advertisements consist of

a headline, body copy and slogan. The authors consider the function of the text in providing a link between the image and the situation, and in selecting one of several possible interpretations of the image, given the essentially ambiguous, or polysemic, nature of images (Barthes, 1977). Functions of anchorage and relay thus become essential in limiting possible interpretations of the image, especially where the use of signs in the advertising image is less iconic (typically featuring the product as a stand-alone object), and more indexical (an object or situation that carries favourable connotations for the product), or symbolic (where the connection between sign and object is based on convention). Indeed, the use of signs in the advertisement permits the researcher to go beyond a denotative interpretation of the constituent parts of the advertisement, to a connotative interpretation based on the shared culture of a social group in a particular time and place.

Vestergaard and Schroder (1985) provide a number of specific analytical tools for an in-depth understanding of the advertiser's objectives. Among these, techniques of visual emphasis, such as positioning or optical dimensions, are fundamental in allowing the advertisement to attract the addressee's attention, and stimulate interest in the product. The illustration therefore forms an essential part of the overall advertisement, as much as the headline, body copy and slogan, allowing the further processes of inciting desire for the product, conviction as to its benefits (tangible and intangible), and action through purchase, to occur. Vestergaard and Schroder (1985) analyse the nature of these elements, as of those cited above, by recourse to a 1977 advertising sample of various British magazines, including women's magazines with high circulation levels. As a result, analysis of factors relating to the language of the body copy is highlighted by means of case studies, where the poetic, informational and directive nature of a body copy may reflect such linguistic functions as the expressive, directive, informational, metalingual, interactional, contextual and poetic. The advertiser's ability to use language to stimulate attention/ interest is fundamental to all parts of the advertisement, and through use of rhetorical devices in the headline or slogan, the aim of making the advertisement much more memorable is fulfilled.

More problematic are the markers for identifying sex and class-based strategies of address, as indicated by the authors. They point out that in 'its visual and verbal representation of the sexes, advertising comes to function as an ideological apparatus for the reproduction of our gender identities (Vestergaard, and Schroder, 1985, p.73/74). In considering the advertisements targeted at women, and relative to the period in question, the authors identify the use of a number of ideals that reflect advertisers' belief 'that women will succumb to an ideal which contradicts their consciously held views on 'the new woman'' (Vestergaard, and Schroder, 1985, p.88). First and foremost of these are domesticity and beauty as 'strait-jacket' ideals, where household chores vie with what the authors label as the 'new' beauty and fashion products needed to maintain the required physical appearance. As indicated by the authors, use of various techniques centre on exploitation of envy, fear of malignant gossip, self-irony and humour, to communicate the product's potential in bringing women closer to an ideal version of themselves. As a result, the authors hold that other ideals relating to masculinity, and the independent woman, are rarely portrayed in advertisements, and only from particular perspectives. Although this section of Vestergaard and Schroder's (1985) book provides some interesting and useful insights into the advertising targeted at women, especially by means of women's magazines, some limitations relating to the sample used, the period in question, and a vision of advertising and advertisers that sees women confined within certain ideals, perceived as essentially negative, are identifiable.

Above all, a certain lack of consideration of factors relating to the content of advertisements and to the role played by contextual factors in fashioning advertisers' notions of language and image, lead to the incorporation of a number of tools from other sources. A slightly earlier contribution by Richard Allen (1983) provides an accessible means of analysing women's magazines and the advertising contained. Although parts of the analysis are not directly related to advertising, the discussion of technical features that are also utilised in advertisements, and the consideration of the elements constituting the magazine provide a comprehensive approach to analysing an

advertisement, its woman's magazine vehicle, and the wider socio-economic context, as later discussed by Allen as far as British magazines are concerned. In terms of the magazine, emphasis is attributed to the notion of the magazine cover as an 'advertisement' for the whole product, a fact of relevance for women's magazines in ensuring its successful long-term survival. By analysing such factors as paper quality, cover photo shoot, use of colour, style and artistic subtlety, strategic use is made of 'the posed female model who is evenly lit to eliminate any atmosphere, character or individuality from both the photo and, by association, from the nearly-always, young, smiling (white) woman represented there' (Allen, 1983, p.8). Also of relevance in terms of the cover and the resulting identification by the reader with the magazine, and its advertising content, is the use of the title, print type, feature leads, and methods of address. The emphasis on the verbal and visual representation of the cover as advertisement allows the same sort of issues to be subsequently projected onto the advertisements within the magazine, as the advertisements are linked to the identity of the magazine, and the addressee's resulting interpretation of the advertisement. Aware of this fact, advertisers select within media genres, varying images and messages for the same advertisement in different magazines.

Allen (1983) pays relatively limited attention to advertising, in terms of commercial advertisements, compared to editorial and other features, although he does note the centrality of consumption in the magazines, alongside the 'work of beauty' and the 'work of domesticity'. As far as the advertisements are concerned, visual styles are considered in terms of the use of colour and particular use of artistic impressions to create cultural associations of 'leisure, pleasure and lavish spending' (Allen, 1983, p.21), fantasy or ordinariness. Verbal styles also reflect the attempt at establishing more or less intimate forms of communication, through use of mode of address, typeface and use of language that registers as the conversational. Significantly, in evaluating the verbal and visual registers of various elements of women's magazines, Allen (1983) contextualises the British women's magazines within those developments that are seen to define women's consumerism in the post-war period. In this respect, the tools come together

with the context providing a perspective of the post-war years that sees advertising taking on increasing importance in terms of consumption and portrayal of women. Such is the importance of developing advertising techniques that as Allen shows: 'It was the photographic advertising image which perfected this sleight of capitalism's hand: women as the commodity, who herself could be consumed' (Allen, 1983, p.31).

Allen's (1983) emphasis on representations of women as basically sexualised, within and outside advertising, where although apparently gazing at a man, the real object of the gaze is a woman, results in the face frequently suggesting the presence of a sexual body, with body posture, dress, accessories, and the use of facial features and expressions, effectively characterising the advertising targeted at women, but also at men, despite the different interpretations attached by both genders. Encouraged to prefer a dominant meaning by virtue of the language and image utilised, the reader is encouraged to identify with message and stereotype, and practically to expect that content, despite changing social, behavioural and economic factors.

The role of culture and ideology are seen to imbue all aspects of the woman's magazine by authors like Richard Allen (1983) and Myra MacDonald (1995), transmitting cultural notions of femininity symbolised by the perennially smiling woman, whose mask-like features encapsulate 'the coy pose, the averted gaze and the wax-like absence of facial expression' (MacDonald, 1995, p.106). The denial of individuality allows the woman's face and body to become the sign for something else, as identified by Myra MacDonald in the common use of narcissistic, self-contemplating poses in the advertising of a range of products to women, where the use of particular photographic techniques such as close-ups, tight-framing, and the soft-focusing of facial features, typically provide the advertisement, and the woman, with an air of mystery and sensuality. Diametrically opposite utilisation of text is seen to perpetuate the woman's enigma, where according to MacDonald (1995), these advertisements effectively use this technique to draw the addressee into the discourse. Given the post-modern emphasis on the use of such

advertising techniques in communicating enigma, their application in earlier advertising in women's magazines is indeed open to exploration.

In terms of the more linguistically specific devices utilised in advertisements, more recent contributions of a generic (Grundy, 2000) or specific nature (Goddard, 1998) identify some of the most common language tools. From Angela Goddard's contribution, a number of these devices are utilised within the analysis of advertisements in Italian women's magazines. These include the use of paralinguistics, the use of typographical representation in text to suggest spoken intonation patterns, lexis and repetition. The presupposition of 'given' information as a culturally specific aspect of the language is a further device of relevance, as much as use of reality to reduce the addressee's awareness of the 'artificial nature' of the advertisement. Goddard also identifies stereotyping, through use of language, to target a particular social group, whilst the use of intertextuality, allows the text, and/or image, of one advertisement to base itself on another, thereby feeding off, and elaborating, the message used in the original for an incremental addressee response. Finally, Goddard's review of 'tricks of the trade' provides practical application of use of the slogan, hook, norm deviation and word play in advertising, as essential initial linguistic elements in capturing attention.

The contribution by Guy Cook (1992) allows the elements of advertising discourse based particularly on the use of paralinguistics, and the situation, to be understood within the context. Cook's emphasis on the importance of paralinguistics, and on such elements as behaviour, body posture and gesturing, that, do not carry meaning in themselves, yet are instrumental in reinforcing, or contradicting, the language, may be regarded as particularly significant in the advertisements in women's magazines, where advertisers transfer meaning by means of these factors. Meaning, thus, emerges not uniquely from the signs and symbols used in advertisements, but also from the model used in the image, as one that women attach meaning to in their interpretation of the advertisement, and of the product's benefits. The model's body, clothes, behaviour, and positioning transfer a particular message to the addressee at a particular moment in time, a fact of

prime relevance in advertisements for women through time, where the female reader is actively invited to participate in the message and empathise with the model. Indeed, Cook identifies a particular neglect of the study of paralanguage given the influence of Saussurean semiology, where the notion of communication as a simple decoding process dominates and results in 'hasty equivalences' The dominance of semiotic analysis is such that: 'This leads it to jettison all consideration of what is particular to the surface of discourse, or of a particular signifier, and thus, miss much of the complexity, skill and humour' (Cook, 1992, p.64). As a result, such approaches focus on the text of the message, ignoring much of the psychological and physical features that also make up the advertisement, despite the accepted relevance of such elements, and their integration into the study of advertisements in Italian women's magazines.

The centrality of the substance of the advertisement is also considered in the analysis in terms of its ability to reinforce, or contradict, the linguistically meaningful signs created by the advertisement, as much as the centrality of the interaction between linguistic and extra-linguistic elements, as indicated by Cook (1992). These include: para-linguistic features; the way text is positioned and displayed; the nature of the signification of paralanguage elements in the advertisements; the use of metaphor, where there is transfer of the field of reference, and puns, where ambiguity is created by means of a polysemous word. Also significant is the use of metonymy, where as 'an indexical sign: there is a directly or logically contiguous relationship between the substituted word and its referent' (Wales, 1989, p.297), synecdoche, 'in which 'part' of a referent is named and stands for the 'whole'; or vice versa' (Wales, 1989, p.448), and symbol, a visual or verbal sign standing for something else within a 'speech community' (Wales, 1989, p.445). The importance of culture and subsequent 'copy adaptation' in international advertising campaigns is particularly relevant for advertising in women's magazines, given the centrality of language and paralanguage as social phenomena.

The importance of linguistic features, and other non-linguistic ones, such as graphology and paralanguage, as indicated by Cook (1992), lie in their ability to make an

advertisement memorable, and allow it to be personalised by the reader, in terms of its verbal and pleasurable associations. As a result, a number of graphological features of advertisements may also be identified as central to their analysis: iconicity achieved through use of words with imitation of the object or image; iconicity by means of letter shape; use of connected icons and symbols, or arbitrary signs, that are, nevertheless, central to the desired meaning; the strategic use of writing to cause, what Cook terms 'iconic behaviour'; the use of writing to imitate the writing of the writing system of another alphabet or country in order to evoke notions of that culture; and, the use of particular typeface to provoke emotion. More questionably, Cook links the use of puns, metaphors, symbolism and endorsements principally to contemporary advertising, where the 'fusion' achieved imbues a product without character with particular qualities. Although such techniques are identifiable in contemporary advertisements, the use of these and other techniques, that venture beyond the direct appeal, are open to identification and discussion from bygone decades, and particularly, in this case, as far as advertisements in Italian women's magazines are concerned. As a result, various techniques as outlined by Cook have been incorporated into the analysis. These include: prosody, where the patterning of sound conditions linguistic meaning; parallelism; deviation from external norms or internal textual elements; coherence, or lack of it, in the text and meaning, achieved by means of such linguistic devices as conjunctions, ellipsis, repetition and referring expressions.

The use and interpretation of language has also been investigated in particular gender-based case study applications that have provided a certain input into consideration of the tools used in analysing advertisements in Italian women's magazines. Pavia and Costa (1994) specifically analyse the use of the alphabet in branding, with phonetic symbolism, also investigated by the authors with reference to word appearance features pertinent to any analysis of advertising. Of significance for the verbal and visual registers of branding, and of advertisements, are the personality characteristics generally associated with masculine ('aggressive, analytical, competitive, forceful, independent, individualistic and self-sufficient') and feminine ('cheerful, child-like, does not use

harsh language, gentle, soft-spoken, sympathetic, understanding, warm, and yielding') (Pavia and Costa, 1994, p.185), translated, in terms of design, into angular, minimalist masculine designs and rounder, softer, refined feminine designs. The use of letters or words similarly tend to be associated more with certain characteristics than with others, thus projecting, graphical, typographical, product and brand features into a deeper level of meaning. Stern and Holbrook (1994) adopt a gender-based advertisement interpretation approach in analysing gender differences in interpreting the advertiser's meaning. The addressee becomes more of an active than a passive receiver, for Stern and Holbrook, where the use of models, story lines and notions, appealing more to one gender than another (typically, romance and relationships, for women), do not necessarily limit interpretations of the advertisement, nor conceptualisations of the product, for that gender. Importantly, the authors' readings highlight the tendency of female readers to incorporate empathy, and their own experiences when making sense of an advertisement. The role of context comes into play once more, as life experiences are linked to social class and period for women.

In terms of the extra-linguistic, contextual information to be found in the interrelationship between image and text, and inherent in pragmatics, the notion of context has been incorporated without any of the restricting sets of rules typically associated with pragmatics (Tanaka, 1994). In so doing, a vision of context emerges, partially inspired by the contribution of Keiko Tanaka (1994), whose analysis of images of women in British and Japanese advertisements introduces contextual notions into the analysis, albeit from a pragmatic point of view, discussing the use of devices like puns, metaphors and covert communication, that make use of substantial cultural knowledge on the part of the addressee. Although schematic, consideration of wider ideological and social factors influencing the portrayal of women in advertisements, or in terms of the language and image targeted at them makes Tanaka's approach informative. Nevertheless, the limitations of the approach in terms of the relevant contextual information analysed, imply that research into the advertising in Italian women's magazines must explore further a number of contextual issues linking interpretation of

the text and image of advertisements to emergent ideological, socio-cultural and economic factors.

In conclusion, it may be noted that, although the methods of analysis utilised by authors like Williamson (1985) and Dyer (1982), as considered in the previous section, are more structured and semiological, compared to the more unstructured, and spontaneous, interpretation suggested by Goffman (1985), the very fact that Goffman's view is more akin to that of the advertiser's, makes an approach based on the flexibility of the advertiser's vision feasible. Furthermore, given the voluminous body of advertising material available, and the extended historical time frame, approaches based on the analysis of the manifest characteristics of media output, such as content analysis, may be eliminated in favour of an in-depth analysis of a limited number of advertising texts. Although the recognised centrality of woman as a sign and provider of meaning within advertising requires recognition of the undeniable influence of semiotic analytical perspectives, the very lack of a clear methodology of semiotics, as indicated by van Zoonen (1994), leads to an integration and consideration of various visual, and linguistic elements in the analysis of the advertisements, as suggested by such authors as Vestergaard and Schroder (1985), Cook (1992), Tanaka (1994) and Goddard (1998). Consequently, a number of advertisement specific and contextual elements may be usefully integrated into an analysis that sees the advertisement as the point of departure of a wider contextual tapestry composed of historically progressive advertisements of specific companies, and product categories, within the vehicle of the Italian woman's magazine, and the overt or hidden ideological dimension (Butler, 1986), cultural, and socio-economic contexts of the relevant period.

2.7 CONCLUSION

The objective of this chapter is to explain the various steps involved in the research process in terms of an emergent methodology and conceptual orientation of the research to be conducted. The phases of initial research investigation into the field of advertising

in Italian women's magazines elicit a research process based on the use of primary and secondary data sources that revealed a number of other avenues open to further investigation. The research confirmed that there was an inherent lack of data relating to the advertising in women's magazines for the early decades of the century and the immediate post-war years, whilst also indicating that no historically continuous investigation into the advertising contained in Italian women's magazines, whether of the consumerist middle-class variety or of other categories, has been conducted. Investigation into specific company-related sources, by means of primary and secondary research reveals a useful base of company data to orient a research topic based on the dominance of organisational advertising in middle-class consumption-oriented Italian women's magazines. Indeed, the centrality of advertising in the magazines targeted at the middle-class reader lies in this reader's greater purchasing power, compared to her working-class counterpart, established role in managing the household budget, yet expansion of this role in various periods of time and in various magazines, greater propensity to consume, and consequently, be influenced by advertising. The particular consumption-oriented nature of the middle-class Italian woman's magazine is consequently confirmed by advertising content oriented towards an increasing consumerism in Italy throughout the twentieth century, and in the 1915 to 1980 period considered. As a result, the dominance of a number of advertised product categories in different periods emerges first and foremost from an investigation of the middle-class magazines selected, and then from a selection of company-specific advertisements based on a number of pre-established criteria.

The investigation of studies informing the analytical approach used in the analysis of the language and image of the specific advertisements, allow a number of useful tools and perspectives to emerge. Above all, the approaches confirm the inclination to investigate the advertisements from the point of view of the advertiser, given the dominance of advertisements by large national and multinational companies, and the way these companies propose images of womanhood through the language and image of the advertisements in the specific context of women's magazines in Italy. The tools are used

as a guide to inform subsequent linguistic and extra-linguistic analyses of the advertisements, bringing to light such factors as the nature of the different periods in question, the role played by different middle-class women's magazines in determining issues regarding the nature of the substance, and the emphasis attributed to contextual information relating to producer companies and to the advertised products in various categories. Finally, research into such wider contextual issues relating to the socio-economic, cultural and ideological influences of the various pre and post-war periods in Italy and from abroad, allows for a detailed, incremental and holistic approach to the analysis of the advertising in Italian middle-class women's magazines.

The inherently qualitative nature of the research process undertaken reflects the difficulty in obtaining strictly quantitative data, and the various limitations linked to a quantitative approach relating to distant historical periods. Furthermore, the emergent, and largely explorative nature of the research process highlights the lack of previous work undertaken in the field, and the historically fragmented, or somewhat isolated aspects of most of the preceding studies relating to the analysis of advertising in Italian women's magazines. Above all, the link between the nature of the advertising in women's magazines over an extended historical period and the nature of the advertising discourse, not simply in terms of visual and verbal registers, but also in terms of the centrality of large corporations to the advertising utilised, has not always been granted due recognition in studies relating to advertising, women's magazines and the use of advertising image and language. Indeed, consideration of wider contextual issues rarely venture beyond investigation of the media vehicle and socio-economic factors, thereby giving a wide berth to decisive, yet more complex perspectives relating to the visions of advertisers and client companies. In considering the advertisements in Italian middle-class women's magazines, this link is provided in the Italian context, by exploring a number of research avenues and sources, culminating in the analysis of a selective sample of advertisements.

Finally, the importance of advertising language and image in socially constructing gender identity may be seen in terms of the capacity of advertising to build meaning and reality into different socio-historical contexts. Awareness of the fundamental nature of this role, as displayed by advertising throughout some of the most important decades of the twentieth century, in moulding, reflecting and contrasting notions of womanhood in Italy, guides the analysis of advertisements in Italian women's magazines.

ENDNOTES TO CHAPTER 2

¹ According to Eco, semiotics involves the study of all cultural phenomena as if they were systems of signs, and therefore forms of communication. Given the centrality of the visual message, visual codes are articulated on various levels: (1) perceptual codes: establish conditions for adequate perception; (2) recognition codes: structure perception into blocks of meaning with which we can classify objects; (3) transmission codes: structure conditions to allow a particular perception of images; (4) tonal codes: are systems of freely chosen variants that are already conventionalised and form an additional message; (5) iconic codes: are signs, symbols and images, based on perceived elements formed in transmission codes; (6) iconographic codes: visual signs of recognition that give rise to immediately recognisable signs; (7) taste and sensibility codes: establish (variable) connotations caused by the signs of previous codes; (8) rhetoric codes: spring from the conventionalisation of new iconic solutions, assimilated by the social system to become models or norms of communication; (9) stylistic codes: original, unique or rhetorically codified solutions; (10) unconscious codes: provide a structure that produces particular reactions or expresses certain psychological situations. Within these overall codes, advertising discourse tends to contain six aspects: emotive, referential (denotes real things), contact, metalinguistic (use of another message as the object), aesthetic (attention is drawn to the ad's specific form) and imperative. As a result, rhetoric advertising is a form of advertising that utilises previously codified forms of expression and solutions that have become part of the culture and, therefore, of the communication process. Indeed, consumers are well aware of this, and consequently, accept forms of persuasion for objects already desired.

² 'Lines of appeal' are factors noticeable throughout different historical periods in women's magazines, and vary according to the period, prevailing social conditions, the target audience, and so forth. Description of an advertisement is inextricably linked to the three levels of interpretation of an advertisement: (1) the denotative level, where the primary subject matter, contents, people and expressions are investigated; (2) the connotative level, that considers how the combination of elements in the ad are linked to prevailing themes and concepts, and that relies on the reader's cultural knowledge; (3) the denotative or objective level, where the intrinsic meaning or content, the basic principles of a class, nation, period and so on, are considered. As a result, the advertisements may be analysed in terms of their 'fit' into wider social systems and specific historical periods, as well as for their use of rhetoric, means of persuasion and concepts of reality. According to Dyer, the 'specific discourses or structures of signs' that make up advertisements, lead to the viewer actively participating in reading them in accordance with his/her social position. Indeed, the link that advertisements form between the product and the viewer is the 'essence' of most advertising, emotions becoming 'the key to unlocking the link'.

**PART B: DOMESTIC APPLIANCES, FOOD, CARS,
COSMETICS, AND TOILETRIES: THE DEVELOPMENT
OF ITALIAN WOMEN'S IDENTITY IN TWENTIETH
CENTURY WOMEN'S MAGAZINES**

INTRODUCTION: ADVERTISING IMAGES

The focus of Part B, as the central section of the thesis, is to analyse a sample of advertisements from Italian middle-class women's magazines, by applying a number of analytical tools and approaches as discussed in Part A Chapter 2. Given the broader aim of this thesis to consider wider contextual factors, analysis also concentrates on the nature of the Italian middle-class women's magazines as advertising vehicles, on the relevant socio-historical features of the companies' advertising strategies, and on the role of social, economic and cultural factors in moulding the advertising conducted, and the possible interpretations attached to them by the middle-class addressees at whom they were aimed. In bringing together a number of contextual, vehicle, organisational, socio-economic and cultural elements in the relevant historical periods related to each advertisement, the analysis attempts to go beyond an inward-looking, limiting approach that is based solely on the language and image of the advertisement. As a result, the analytical tools applied, as well as the incorporation of contextual factors, vary from one advertisement to another, and from one period to another, due to various factors. These include the diverse nature of the advertising conducted, changes in the Italian women's magazine sector, and in the advertising conducted by organisations in the wake of the socio-economic, political and cultural developments of the inter-war, post-war and economic boom periods. Indeed, the analysis concentrates on those wider contextual elements that are seen to relate to the nature of the advertisements, to advertisers' perceptions of women's evolving identities and social roles, and to the main consumption and cultural vehicle available to both women and advertisers: the middle-class Italian woman's magazine.

A significant general contextual factor permeating the chapter regards the specific historical nature of the development of both the Italian women's magazine sector, the advertising content of the magazines and their predominant consumerist orientation. A dominant feature of the production of the woman's consumerist magazine in Italy throughout the twentieth century is the heavy concentration of publishing activities in the

Lombardy Region, and particularly in the city of Milan. Although some of the publications utilised in the analysis originate in Rome, Florence or Turin, the gradual concentration of much publishing activity in the Milan area may be seen as much in terms of the historical development of the industry, as of the strategic economic evolution of the area. By becoming an industrial and commercial pole of attraction to other industries and sectors, Milan has continually strengthened its economic position, whilst ensuring the simultaneous development and survival of sectors like those of the women's magazines, and the advertising agencies, that complement the consumption side to the production equation. Although the specific nature of such links are beyond the scope of this research, the impact of magazines published in the Lombardy Region by large concerns like Mondadori, from the 1930s to this day, cannot but confirm the long-term significance of the advertising contained in Italian women's magazines.

In considering the contents of this main part of the thesis, five chapters form the backbone of an analysis based on the sample advertisements in a number of Italian middle-class women's magazines. All the chapters contain contextual information relating to the vehicle of the woman's magazine considered, although a significant amount of contextual information is concentrated in the two earlier chapters. The chapters are also oriented towards the advertisements of one or more of the large national and international producers, in order to provide an adequate focus for the analysis, not simply in terms of the vehicle and wider socio-economic context, but also in terms of the product, client company and advertiser's outlook. As a result, the nature of the advertising language and image utilised by companies, operating in sectors as diverse as domestic appliances and cosmetics, finally emerges from the overall analysis.

Chapter 3 investigates the advertising of domestic appliances in Italian women's magazines without setting a limit on the brands considered, given the lack of advertising continuity over time. Similarly, the advertisements analysed relate to a number of different appliances due to the evolving technological nature of the sector from the

manually operated machines of the pre and post World War One years to the sophisticated modern 'white goods' of the 1970s.

Chapter 4 considers the advertising conducted by the food sector, where the developments in the advertising of food products, and in particular in pasta and tinned foods, result in a varied use of advertising language and image in women's magazines. The advertising conducted by two large producers, Cirio and Barilla, form the focus of a chapter that does, however, make use of advertisements by other companies such as Buitoni. The framing of women within a discourse, which is based on a number of functions and appearance characteristics, is investigated within this chapter in the light of the centrality of food and notions regarding the modern home and concepts of the 'self'. As a result, Chapter 4 finds various points of contact with Chapter 3, whilst being quite distinct in other ways, given the varied nature of the language and image utilised in the advertisements.

Chapter 5 focuses on the automobile advertising conducted in women's magazines by the Fiat company. The increasing role played by this producer in the national economy is reflected in advertising campaigns targeting both genders as vehicle users. Although differences exist in the nature of the advertising targeting men and women that fall outside the scope of this thesis, the targeting of women as users and consumers of vehicles throughout the century is significant in women's magazines. The nature of the advertising for such a product requires a particular investment and decision-making process, when compared to other categories of goods advertised in women's magazines. This is investigated as revealing conflicting ideologies of womanhood that emerge in different periods with a more or less marked presence. As a result, the advertising provides perspectives of a 'good' that, despite a lower advertising frequency in women's magazines compared to the advertising of the other products examined, is an undeniable historical presence and, it may be argued, shows the promise of the future changes involving women.

In returning to the more regularly advertised product categories, Chapters 6 and 7 analyse the advertising of cosmetics and toiletries in Italian women's magazines. Chapter 6 focuses on the advertising of cosmetics by the Elizabeth Arden company, where the use of particular language and image from the 1920s in Italian women's magazine advertising campaigns saw the use of particular notions targeting Italian middle-class women's supposed desire for beauty. The regularity of the Elizabeth Arden advertisements and the use of a number of striking techniques makes the cosmetic advertisements in women's magazines by such international producers all the more pertinent to globalisation and homogenisation influences even in periods like the fascist one.

Chapter 7 analyses advertising of toiletries produced by large multinational corporations like Colgate-Palmolive and Unilever that in their quest for foreign markets utilise important advertising techniques to target the female consumer. In Italy, the Italian woman's magazine becomes a vehicle, particularly in the post-war years, for a host of products with strategically varying advertising discourses. The predominance of these toiletries in women's magazines, later alongside those of an increasing variety of other products, is testament to the particular brand-building strategies that significantly also result in the construction of images of Italian women.

Finally, the chapters all draw upon related contextual information in terms of the advertising for other brands or products in various periods, where the presence of conflicting language and image in advertisements for different, or similar, goods within the same time period permits a much more multidimensional analysis of the ideologies and visions permeating advertisements to take place.

CHAPTER 3: DOMESTIC APPLIANCES

3.1 INTRODUCTION: INITIAL DOMESTIC APPLIANCE ADVERTISING IN ITALIAN WOMEN'S MAGAZINES

Domestic appliances have a long history in Western countries, evolving rapidly in the nineteenth century and developing in the twentieth century into a variety of forms that most households are familiar with today. Domestic appliances are analysed in this section in terms of their evolution from the late 1880s onwards, albeit with a focus on the decades following World War One, when the most significant developments in the sector and in advertising took place. The concept of domestic appliance that forms the cornerstone of the analysis, lies in the fact that these goods are principally targeted at the 'keepers of the hearth', and are initially seen as assisting women in the efficient completion of their duties, and later in terms of their time saving potential. As a result, the range of products used for entertainment purposes in the home, traditionally known as 'brown goods', such as televisions, radios and record players, are excluded, even although they might be targeted at women. Indeed, these goods begin appearing in women's magazines, such as *La Donna* from 1905, and in *Lidel* from the 1920s, the most important manufacturers being those of 'La Voce del Padrone', Phillips and 'Radio Marelli' radios and gramophones. By the late 1950s, advertising in women's magazines is supplemented by the increased use as an advertising medium of the television set, as the economic boom touches the lives of many families, who become united for the first time around their common family T.V. set. Although this too would provide much material for an interesting and fruitful analysis, the specificity of the domestic appliance 'white goods' category requires a singular, in-depth approach as taken in this chapter, given its relevance to women's lives and the way certain ideologies and messages are shaped by advertising discourse in women's magazines. The domestic appliances considered in this analytical chapter have also not been limited to a single brand, given a lack of advertising continuity over time with regard to the women's magazines sampled. Where manufacturers are present in the Italian market, the difficulty is linked to the

problem of obtaining a sufficient sample of historically continuous advertisements pertaining to the one producer. As a result, the sample advertisements utilised in terms of the continuity of the chapter is a reflection of this situation. Indeed, the notion of domestic appliance initiates with a consideration of the small household goods prevalent in the period before World War One. They remain the main labour-saving devices for many households up to the period of economic boom. This leads to an analysis of those brands termed 'white goods' in later twentieth century advertising.

In Italy, the advertising of a wide range of small appliances for everyday household use was already widespread by the late 1880s, meeting the needs of the middle-class family, and especially of the 'housewife', perhaps more appropriately named the 'home manager'. This is so given the diverse number, range and complexity of tasks involved in the running of a home, and a lack of modern conveniences usually used by the 'modern' housewife as substitutes for domestic physical labour. The advertising page from an 1885 issue of the magazine *Scena Illustrata* (Villani, 1957) indicates a number of the appliances used for home use: juice extractor, water purifier, automatic salt dispenser, pasta maker, meat grinder and apple peeler. Although considered a magazine for a predominantly female readership, *Scena Illustrata*, like other magazines of the late nineteenth century, contains an undifferentiated advertising page, usually located at the end of the issue, with products suitable for the home, and for one or both sexes. Recognition of the middle-class woman's access to various sources of information is evident, as much as is her purchasing power and participation in family finances. Also, most advertisements require the customer to place orders directly with the firm for home delivery, a custom that continues after World War I, given the limited presence of large urban department stores. As noted by Ceserani (1980), the particular significance of these advertisements in the magazines read by women, even where men are generally considered the main reading public, such as in the case of *Domenica del Corriere*, lies in the advertisements' targeting of literate consumers at a time of high illiteracy. Thus, the middle-class woman consumer is targeted, as much as her male counterpart, by

manufacturers attempting to overcome the still relatively limited market represented by the middle-classes in the period preceding the decade of the 1920s.

The year 1905 heralds the first issue of a new woman's magazine, whose advertising content promises to cater to all needs and desires. *La Donna* attempts to cover all areas of women's lives from fashion and short stories to the lives and experiences of well-known women writers, intellectuals, poets, and professionals. Although the monopoly of 'small' advertisements for a vast range of domestic machines continues into the new century in the press, their presence is significantly more limited in such magazines as *La Donna*, targeted exclusively at the middle to upper-middle-class reader. In *La Donna* the advertising focus is on beauty, fashion, food, liqueurs, gramophones and typewriters for aspiring female writers, whose only form of personal and professional expression frequently lies in their ability to wield their pen. This magazine does, however, provide a taste of things to come. The 1905 issues advertise a range of products that, whilst used for such aesthetic purposes such as bust lifts and body hair removal, function with the new and rapidly expanding electricity power source. A mere two years later, advertisements for various machines, from ventilators to ice-makers make their appearance, as does an advertisement by 'Dott. B. N. Maclaughlin' for 'electro-vigor' therapy, said to be ideal for weak, suffering women. A focus on technical expertise in this magazine is combined with the endless search for beauty by means of domestically utilised, commercial products that, notably, do not extend towards advertising household appliances. Signalling a form of product and market-oriented advertising selection on the part of producers, the magazine's lack of advertising of household products in this period may be linked to the upper-middle class reader's access to domestic servants, invalidating a need for appliances, which might be more associated with the lower-middle and middle class housewife, whose restricted financial ability to afford such domestic help would result in a necessity for the personal completion of most household tasks.

3.2 DOMESTIC APPLIANCE ADVERTISING IN WORLD WAR ONE: THE EMERGENCE OF HEDONISM AND THE MODERN WOMAN

The selective advertising of machines, whether electrical or manual, in magazines like *La Donna*, sees the use of an advertising message based on the concept of investment of time and money in personal pleasure, entertainment and self-enhancement. A particular case may be considered in the quarter-page advertisement for the 'Orso' coffee machine (see Figure 3.1), located in the advertising-based, attention-seeking, inside front cover of a 1917 issue (*La Donna*, 15th February). The advertisement is part of an increasing trend of that period that sees the use of the female image in advertising, and is particularly eye-catching, given the location of the image within a mass of written advertisements, abundant war themes in articles, and government propaganda for war bonds. The script directs the addressee's attention to the speed and efficiency of the appliance, denoted by the word 'Expres', whilst the use of the French language descriptors 'Caffetiere Expres' indicates the superiority inherent in foreign design, and provides the product with an aura of sophistication, and exclusiveness, generally associated with French clothing manufacturers. Recall of the notion of 'avant-garde' technical prowess is further emphasised by two facts: the patent held by the product acts as an official, public recognition of exclusiveness and quality, whilst the absence of rubber gaskets reassures the customer as to the superior market quality of a product that has, by implication, surpassed those of other manufacturers in terms of the technical precision that is obtained. The emphasis attributed to this second feature may also be seen as indicative of the company's attempt at communicating its real consideration of customer requirements linked to the housewife's easy maintenance and cleaning of the product.

The centrality of the superlative 'la migliore' functions to denote the incomparable technical and performance characteristics of the coffee maker. This is so much so that, although it may be found in all stores, these stores are deemed to be the most important and, by clear implication, the most exclusive. The adjective 'primari' qualifying 'negozi', appears to add an effect of implying an increased exclusiveness of this product.



La migliore
delle **CAFFETTIERE EXPRES**

senza alcuna garanzia in gamma *(BREVETTATA)*

SI TROVA IN TUTTI I PRIMARI NEGOZI

ingrosso presso la Ditta fabbricante
IGLI di SILVIO SANTINI - FERRARA

3.1 ORSO. Caffetiere Expres - *La Donna*, 1917

(on previous page)

This is given its restricted availability to, presumably, the most important large department stores in urban centres. The perceived rules of expectation lead the addressee to deduce that competing products do not have the same technical and performance characteristics, are not readily available for purchase, lack the necessary quality guarantees, and finally, are inefficient or difficult to maintain due to their rubber gaskets. This is the build-up to a process of involving deduction in the addressee.

It is further based on a reading of the headline 'La migliore delle Caffetiere Expres', that transcends the function of headline to embrace that of ready-made slogan for the brand. This feature is indicative of the increasing propensity of producers to utilise modern concepts linked to brand differentiation at a time of awakening market demand and supply. The location of the bear brand logo and distinctive brand name, in the upper left-hand corner of the advertisement, symbolic of the product's resilience, strength, and capacity, is symptomatic of such developments. The reader is encouraged to acquire a mental picture of the product, logo and message, linked to a strong sense of modernity and innovation.

The use of these criteria indicate the attempt at defining a specific brand identity in terms of language and image, where in the case of the latter, a strong indexical relationship is established between an as yet singular version of womanhood, seen as carrying favourable connotations for the product, and the specific brand. The use of the image is particularly significant given its concentration on the woman's act of holding up her coffee cup to the coffee maker. The woman is depicted in a relaxed sitting position, knees crossed and ankles drawn together, as she delicately places the cup below the spout of the machine. The calf-length, figure-hugging skirt, and fashionable blouse, indicate a modern woman, who becomes all the more noticeable by the made-up facial features, and bobbed hair-cut. These elements are all the more significant as the 1920s 'garçonne' style makes an appearance as early as the First World War. Reinforced by changing concepts of female beauty, no longer based on a Rubenesque ideal but oriented towards perennial youth, represented by a slim figure, increasing use of make-up, and a

fashion of free-flowing, looser clothes, the female figure in this advertisement is highly indicative of the changes occurring in society and the changes occurring in the perception of young womanhood. The use of a contrasting effect between the white figure and the black armchair, also leads to the greater visual impact on the addressee of a female figure that, shown in a markedly relaxed posture, is also emblematic of the increasing time dedicated by middle-class women to personal care, entertainment and even relaxation. Furthermore, the use of less rounded and more angular lines in the advertisement highlight the use of graphic features associated to a greater degree with more masculine traits, such as independence and dedication of time to one's own activities, that are effectively now transmitted onto the model of womanhood portrayed in the advertisement.

The very notions of hedonism and pleasure, deemed absent in much 'belle époque' advertising by the author Ceserani (1980b), on the contrary appear to dominate in women's magazines, even for the simple coffee maker. Such a lack of detailed analysis of advertising in women's magazines is indicative of the limited importance attributed to the fact that women's roles as consumers are influenced by a number of social and cultural messages contained in advertising as early as the First World War. Analysis of political propaganda abounds to the detriment of the advertising that most conditions women's socio-cultural roles, and the development of their identity as consumers on the part of both self and others in the family. Indeed, the presence of 'hedonism' becomes an increasingly prominent feature of advertising in women's magazines as the middle-class expands, and the woman's role as 'keeper of the family budget' no longer excludes goods for personal pleasure and physical enhancement. In fact, in the case of this advertisement, the function of the coffee maker is that of providing a point of reference for entertaining others, and in this case, for dedicating time to oneself, as middle-class women become a target for products symbolising increased leisure and pleasure. The move from the message based on functional, labour-saving characteristics of the previous years, to a message oriented towards the product as the means by which time

could be given over to personal needs, is an element of this early advertising, and one that was to become dominant in the post economic-boom years.

The advertisement significantly appears at a time of social change, with the war wreaking havoc on pre-established notions of gender roles and functions. In Italy, as elsewhere at the time, the importance of women to the war effort is reflected in the numbers employed in armaments factories that, according to Ministry of War data, increase from 23,000 in 1915 to 200,000 in 1918 (Chianese, 1980, p.51). Although concentrated among the working-class, this increase is the tip of an iceberg represented by women of all classes who participate in the war effort and engage in different roles and functions. Red Cross nurses and administrative and clerical aides are but the most commonly cited positions occupied by the middle-class female workforce. The myth of female fragility is destroyed by war work involving the consequent increasing participation on the part of middle-class women, who begin to enjoy greater freedom from social constraints, and greater responsibility and earning power. All this proves a welcome burden for many. The above advertisement may be seen to reflect many of these changes. Advertisements can be seen to be emblematic in their use of a particular version of womanhood. Women's greater freedom from social and behavioural constraints is featured in the physical pose, clothing and demeanour demonstrated in the advertisements. Post-war problems of exclusion from the labour force, and unemployment, seen as inevitable in the face of men's return from the war, are, nevertheless, viewed ambiguously by women, reluctant to re-adopt certain behavioural modes of the past. The result is the division of opinion between those willing to return to domesticity, and those reluctant to do so, whilst the official rhetoric encouraged women to hand over their jobs to the returning heroes (Thébaud, 1992). Under the barrage of anti-female employment propaganda, both implicit and explicit, the women's movement, as the collection of groups fighting for women's social and political rights, begins to succumb and progressively capitulate to a society forcefully obliging middle-class women back into domesticity.¹

It is important to recall that this post-war period is not merely characterised by the employment versus the 'ritorno al focolare' debate. Indeed, middle-class women are pulled by other contrasting forces, compared to the leisurely lives of the upper class or the survival problems of working-class women (Noce, 1978). Searching for a place in a transformed society, middle-class women are influenced by factors as diverse as political propaganda, literary circles, education, cultural notions of self, and evolving concepts of financial and emotional independence. Among the conceptions of womanhood influencing this class of women are strong nationalist and futurist currents of opinion in this period. Although particularly anti-feminist, and as noted by Santarelli (1979), essentially a male, anti-democratic and individualistic concept, intellectual futurism appears to be aimed at eliminating traditional social and moral taboos, advocating more natural behaviour that transcends the formality and mores of pre-war Giolittian society. The dominating elements of the futurist perspective, to be subsequently adopted and warped by fascism, are male virility, violence and the concept of the woman as 'Donna' with a capital 'D'. These concepts, reiterated in one of the widespread futurist journals of the period, *Roma Futurista*, and based on a combination of literary and social elements, viewed violence as an 'internal' battle to be fought against socialists, the middle-class, the new rich and the government, in order to achieve a 'democrazia futurista' (Salaris, 1982) based on a new, non-provincial, non-petty bourgeois nation. As a result, the futurist vision of women, grounded on contrasting views, recognises women's contribution, intelligence and energy, on the one hand, with a female equivalent of the 'Ardito' combatant, whilst on the other, heaps contempt on a vision of womanhood as '... quella in cui la donna è creatura fatale, intrigante, mondana, oggetto di desiderio, oppure, ancella del focolare ...' (Salaris, 1982, p.134). In the heated post-war debate on the 'questione femminile', middle-class women continue to be co-opted as a social force, and encouraged to refuse traditionalist, mild, passive models of the 'bambola' or the mother, to not return to their previous existence, but to vindicate their rights. Significantly, however, under the influence of Marinetti, the more widespread futurist vision of women holds that despite their participation in social revolutionary actions, women are physiologically destined to provide for male pleasure, belonging to the nation

at large, as the biological provider for the future development of the race. Notably, these elements are used and developed by the fascist regime in its vision of women's role, by protecting the maternal function for the good of the State and the race. Women's future thus appears open to personal possibilities for change on the one hand, and yet is framed within a culturally conservative climate on the other.

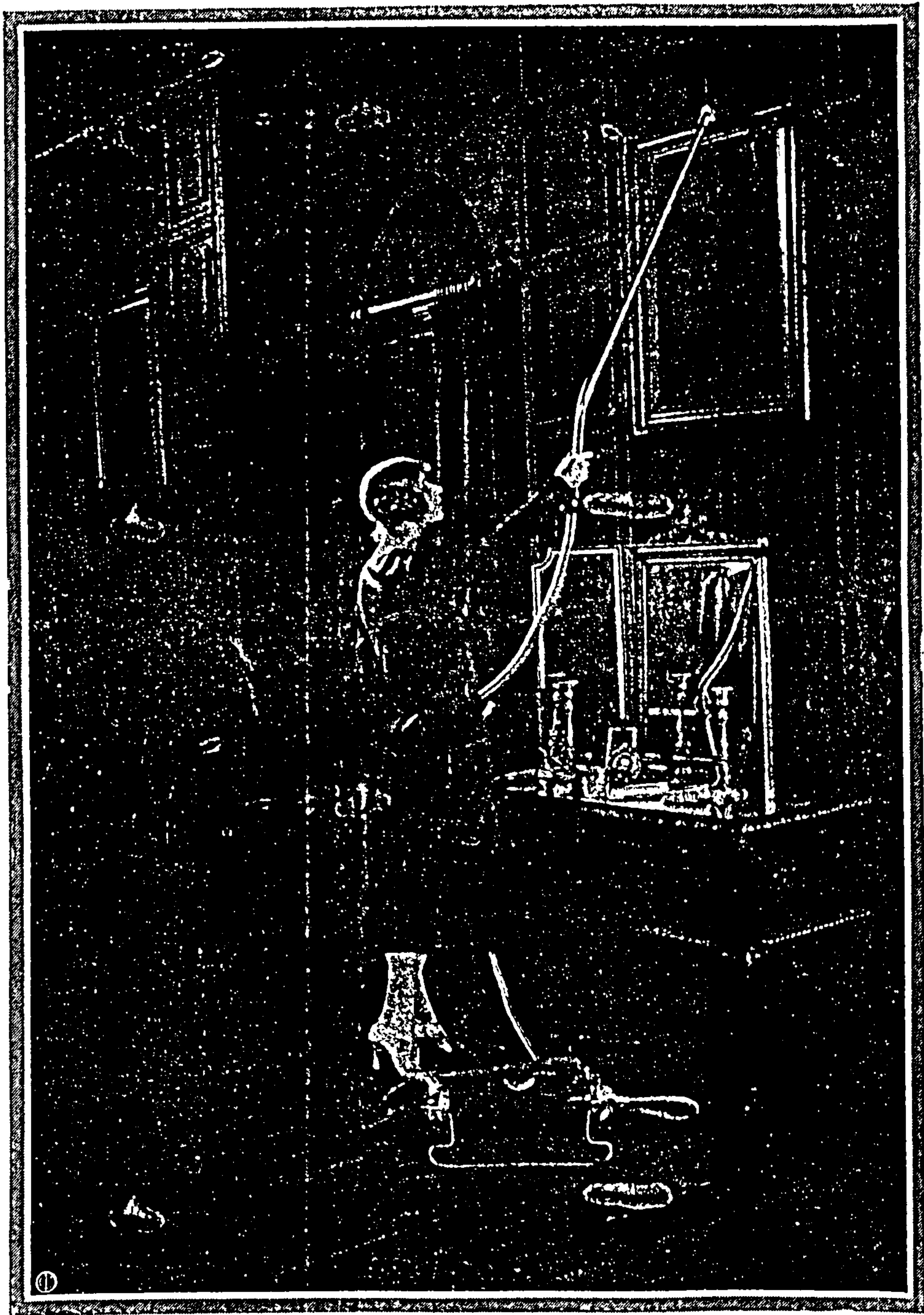
3.3 THE DOMESTIC APPLIANCE IN THE 1920s AND 1930s: ITALIAN WOMEN BETWEEN MODERNITY AND DOMESTICITY

As the 1920s progress, middle-class magazines like *Lidel*, and *Almanacco della donna italiana*, walk a fine line between exuberant modernity, expressive womanhood and official rhetoric. In particular, the post-World War One period sees the birth of the middle to upper-middle-class magazine *Lidel* in 1919, notable for its modern, diverse and ample advertising content, reflecting this social category's purchasing power with high quality paper, and colourful, detailed advertisements. Although targeted at the middle to upper-middle-class consumer, the magazine is also a means of identifying women's continued liberation from certain codes of behaviour and dress, whilst acknowledging the importance of the traditional, domestic-based roles assigned to them by society. The mix of images characterising the early years of publication in this magazine is symptomatic of the multiple forces acting on middle-class women's perception of themselves, and their potential. The magazine becomes an inestimable advertising media for national and international producers, eager to reach the well-heeled woman, seen as free to spend money on a wide variety of products and services, according to her lifestyle and greater inclination in following fashion, change and innovation. The decisive tone of modernity that characterises *Lidel* is also reflected in the advertising for the home, from regular advertisements for linoleum floors in the unmistakably modern home, to early advertisements for radios, gramophones, and for the electric Singer sewing machine, generally regarded as a domestic appliance for the housewife meeting her own linen and clothing needs. Domestic appliances are also regularly featured, especially in the 1920s by the Electrolux producer, whose

advertisements represent an initial attempt at penetrating the Italian market with new, modern, electrical appliances. The advertising is also indicative of the exclusive nature of electricity demand and supply, with the various attempts at increasing consumption and distribution levels in the 1930s (Barca, 1997) aptly reflected in the fact that Electrolux products are luxury electricity appliances for the well-off. The significance of these advertisements also lies in the fact that by the beginning of the 1930s, in accordance with regime's ideology, advertising of domestic appliances was drastically reduced within this magazine almost to disappearing point.

An issue of *Lidel*, published on the 15th February 1926 is emblematic of the advertising for Electrolux products (see Figure 3.2). A full-page advertisement sees the framed image of a young woman in the process of using a vacuum cleaner. A reading of the image is both clear but at the same time somewhat ambiguous, as the model's simple dress and hair in wound-up braids contrast sharply with the elegant shoes and her somewhat artificial pose.

Cleaning in a wealthy, yet traditional domestic environment, as denoted by the wood panelling, pictures, dressing table, winged mirror, candlesticks, and table-top objects, is but a simple affair with the aid of the modern appliance. So simple, in fact, is the task that even the young mistress of the house is capable of operating it. Indeed, 'mistress of the house' is a probable interpretation of the figure, given the elegant shoes and the general custom of using housecoats to protect clothes. Despite the prevalence of the 'maschietta' in advertisements for various products of the period, the advertising of a domestic appliance evidently requires the use of a more traditional image, particularly revealed in a hairstyle dictated by the possession of long locks compared to the bobbed 'maschietta', where the would-be consumer is pictured in the act of utilising the product, a feature of much post-war appliance advertising. The model is, therefore, a carrier of meaning, in that, although the company advertises to women who would rarely carry out cleaning chores personally, the need to portray female behaviour and domesticity in a socially defined and acceptable manner is a distinct fore-runner of things to come.



L'Arte e l'Igiene

I cultori della bellezza sono dei ferventi dell'Igiene. L'arte decorativa crea un interno, l'igiene moderna ne conserva tutta la bellezza e tutta la freschezza. Le cose più belle vengono scippate dalla polvere che si posa sui rilievi dei mobili, sulle cornici dei quadri, ecc., e li corrode:

DOMANDATE UNA DIMOSTRAZIONE
GRATUITA A DOMICILIO

ELECTRO LUX

MILANO (105)
Via Rugabella N. 9
Espos.: Via Montenapoleone N. 38
Telefono 70722

quando si tenta di toglierla con una spazzola, si può guastare irrimediabilmente la doratura o la vernice. Questo inconveniente è ormai evitato completamente coll'impiego di un apparecchio... il "LUX", che toglie completamente la polvere ovunque. Il "LUX" è l'unico mezzo per la pulizia razionale, e che assicura la perfetta conservazione dei mobili, tappezzerie, tessuti, ecc.

ROMA (4) Via del Tritone, 111 Tel. 4734	GENOVA (4) Via XX Settembre, 26-I. D Tel. 19-91	NAPOLI (67) Via dei Mille, 16 Tel. 51-50	BOLOGNA (28) Via Indipendenza, 70 Tel. 5431	TORINO (1) Via S. Franc. d'Assisi, 28bis già via Genova - Tel. 47892	FIRENZE (7) Via Valfonda, 35 A. Tel. 48-54
Esposizione a ROMA Hotel Plaza Corso Umberto I - Tel. 10979			PALERMO (51) Via Cavour, 84 Tel. 1875		TRIESTE Via Muratti, 8

· AGENTI SU TUTTE LE PRINCIPALI PLAZZE ·

3.2 ELECTROLUX. L'Arte e l'Igiene - *Lidel*, 1926

(on previous page)

The advertisement's headline 'L'Arte e l'Igiene' allows the reader to interpret the situation, given that the two concepts of art as beauty, and hygiene as beauty, become intertwined in the link established between the model, the machine, and the symbolic cleaning of a work of art. The link between art and hygiene is represented by the notion of beauty, a feature of the art world, and of cleanliness, and perfected in the advertisement by a machine that acts almost as an extension of the model's arm in dispensing beauty. A further emphasis is, thus, attributed to the model's physical attractiveness that, matched by the elegant environment, allows the machine to be inserted within a traditional context seemingly alien to it. Indeed, the very contrast between the appliance's overt modernity and the traditional environment, are mediated once more by the model, whose mixed appearance denotes conservatism on the one hand, and an acceptance of some elements of modernity on the other.

The advertisement has a visual format that, whilst similar to other advertisements of the period, utilises typographical distribution to define the language content and message. The concept of beauty underlies the image in all its components, as well as the notions of art and hygiene by means of the headline. It is also asserted in the introductory section of the body copy in order to cement the link previously established between the two notions. The concept of art utilised in the advertisement is more akin to that of interior design ('arte decorativa') than to other forms, although the centrality of the picture frame effectively allows for an expansion of meaning. Indeed, by reminding the addressee that those who promote beauty, and therefore art, are also 'keen' on hygiene, she is encouraged to associate the act of cleaning with that of maintaining a beautiful domestic environment. Desire for the product is consequently achieved in this highly poetic section by use of the nouns 'bellezza', 'arte', and 'freschezza', that communicate the effects of product use. Although establishing an indexical relationship between the generic concept of beauty and the product would appear overly vague, the indexical relationship is, in fact, established with the specific idea of internal domestic beauty, as understood by the target class. Social standing is represented by the interior of the home, thus allowing cleanliness to be associated with social acceptability, and a desire not to

see 'le cose più belle' ruined by dust. An indexical relationship is also established in this advertisement, like others, between the product and a particular version of womanhood relying on youth and beauty for its completeness. However, tradition enshrines youth. This allows an expression of womanly virtues aided by modernity, in line with a concept of the judicious 'padrona di casa' prevalent among the middle classes of the period.

The addressee is targeted for persuasion in the second information-based section that initially refutes traditional cleaning methods in order to incite a process of comparison within the reader. The adverbs 'completamente' and 'ovunque' are used to reinforce the claim of product superiority. In particular, the use of the adjective 'razionale' to describe the cleaning process, carries notions of engineering and mechanical performance, associated in the public mind with efficiency, and the rational use of physical and mechanical work. As a result, the headline and ensuing body copy effectively anchor the addressee's interpretation to a defined reading of the overall advertisement, reinforced by the optical correspondence between model and machine in the photograph, and the brand name in the text. Furthermore, this category of consumer is never exhorted to buy, but merely reminded of the brand's nationwide availability, and the opportunity of obtaining a free, personalised product demonstration in the comfort of her own home.

Personal selling techniques combined with unlimited access to technical expertise are two features of a campaign that, by 1928, is supplemented by an increasing number of advertisements for the vacuum cleaner and refrigerators. Minimum consumption of electricity is promised for a range of refrigerators priced from 4650 Lire at a time when a lower middle-class family considered itself very well-off on the frequently cited 'mille lire al mese'. In the advertisement, the initial investment is balanced by substantial energy consumption savings, in order to appeal to the cost-conscious consumer, within and outside the targeted class, although the image of a luxury product remains firmly anchored in the addressee's mind, allowing her to effectively reaffirm her social standing through purchase of the product. Speed and efficiency of Electrolux products remain central to the message, with the female figure becoming the conveyor of meaning in the

advertisements, so much so that a female model sitting astride a flying vacuum cleaner is used in a later advertisement (*Lidel*, 15th March, 1928) to indicate the machine's magic touch, speed in cleaning and its ability to provide women with freedom and take them away from domestic chores.

As the 1930s progress, advertising for domestic appliances does not increase in women's magazines, despite concerted attempts nationally at increasing consumption of electricity by means of a rise in the purchase of appliances. The ideological stance adopted by the regime towards women is influential in this respect. In fact, as noted by Stefania Barca (1997) in a study of electricity appliance consumption, and the spread of the American market-based model in the 1930s, the process of transforming a luxury good into a mass consumer good is deemed never to completely succeed in a society characterised by contrasting forces.

In discussione è il modello di sviluppo economico del paese, in forte contrasto con i piani programmatici, ma soprattutto ideologici, del regime, fondati sull'autosufficienza energetica ed economica in genere, e sulla diffusione di un modello di vita austero, nel quale un ruolo di primo piano riveste la subordinazione del lavoro femminile alle funzioni domestiche e riproduttive (il che, come si può immaginare, si pone in netto contrasto con la diffusione degli elettrodomestici) (1997, p.510).

Limitations on the advertising conducted in women's magazines may consequently stem from an imposed ideology based on dedication to the family. Thus, personal identification and gratification are deemed to be obtained from serving the family. This leads to a social rejection of devices saving on labour that could be deemed to be distracting from this pre-destined role. In *Lidel*, the pro-fascist stance adopted by the magazine's editors probably resulted in a selective elimination of particular types of advertisements, and not of others, such as the perennially present and controversial images relating to a form of beauty that remained far from the fascist ideal. Despite the

lack of advertising, other promotional instruments appear to be widely used in reaching a middle-class feminine public whose personal views, in all probability, diverged somewhat from regime visions about the nature of their domestic labour. Showrooms, personal selling and other advertising media are used (Barca, 1997), whilst an analysis of the woman's magazine *La massaia*, published in the industrial hub of Milan, demonstrates a continued, if limited, presence of advertisements for domestic appliances. Sponsored by the milk industry, the magazine's advertising content naturally contains advertisements oriented towards encouraging the consumption of milk and derivatives, whilst a lack of domestic appliance advertisements is also indicative of the secondary nature of this sector, its limitations at the hands of the regime, and the difficulty in dealing with an as yet inefficient electricity supply. Other factors influencing advertising and consumption relate to the abundant advice provided to readers about small electricity repairs in magazines such as *Almanacco della donna italiana*, signalling the difficulties faced by housewives in dealing with electrical appliances, whilst the habits of buying food daily, and the use of the baker's oven for special or Sunday meals, that could not be easily cooked at home, also prevented further expansion of the electric cooker and refrigerator into the middle class home.

La massaia does contain quarter page advertisements for 'Grandiosi magazzini casalinghi' encouraging housewives to visit department stores able to meet all their domestic needs, whilst references to the 'donna di servizio', both within and without advertisements, reiterate a middle-class world characterised by faithful household help in the heavier chores of washing and daily food shopping. With the maid effectively substituting the need for a fridge and clothes washing machine, the classless society desired by the regime seems far from reality. In fact, having a maid becomes synonymous with having attained middle-class status, and is cheaper compared to the purchase, maintenance and electricity/gas consumption costs associated with modern domestic appliances. The additional benefits of having a flexible maid of-all-work are also not lost on the lower-middle and middle-middle classes who make up the main readership of magazines like *La massaia*, and are in any case a viable target for domestic

appliance advertising. The advertising of the occasional appliance sees use of persuasion to convince this housewife that the significant degree of manual labour required in the use of traditional coal or wood stoves may be alleviated, both for her maid and for herself, by purchasing a Robur cooker (15th February, 1933). Providing 'economia', 'praticità' and 'sicurezza', the cooker meets her exacting standards. Similarly, throughout the early 1930s, the 'massaia' is encouraged to resort to mechanical assistance in performing the strenuous 'clothes washing' chore:

Massaie !!!

Volete fare un ottimo bucato??

Perfetto??

Usate solamente il prodotto

"FRANCO" 4/A

Insuperabile!!!

Per fare il bucato servitevi della

liscivatrice automatica

LA FRANCHINA

Economica - Igienica

Pratica sotto ogni aspetto

Available directly from the Milanese company, this text only quarter page advertisement, features regularly with the housewife encouraged to perform her duties to perfection, while presenting a physically agreeable appearance and acting as ideal wife and mother. Unlike other magazines of the period that mould the addressee within advertising criteria based on cosmetics, fashion and a limited range of household goods, this magazine is oriented towards the last category of goods to a greater extent, according to its target market and sponsorship. The result is a particular mix of advertising messages that sees the idealised 'moglie-madre' of the period cast within a middle-class category of social success and personal refinement. The advertisements for basic domestic appliances sit uneasily within the ideal, yet meld with the opposing forces which operate on women.

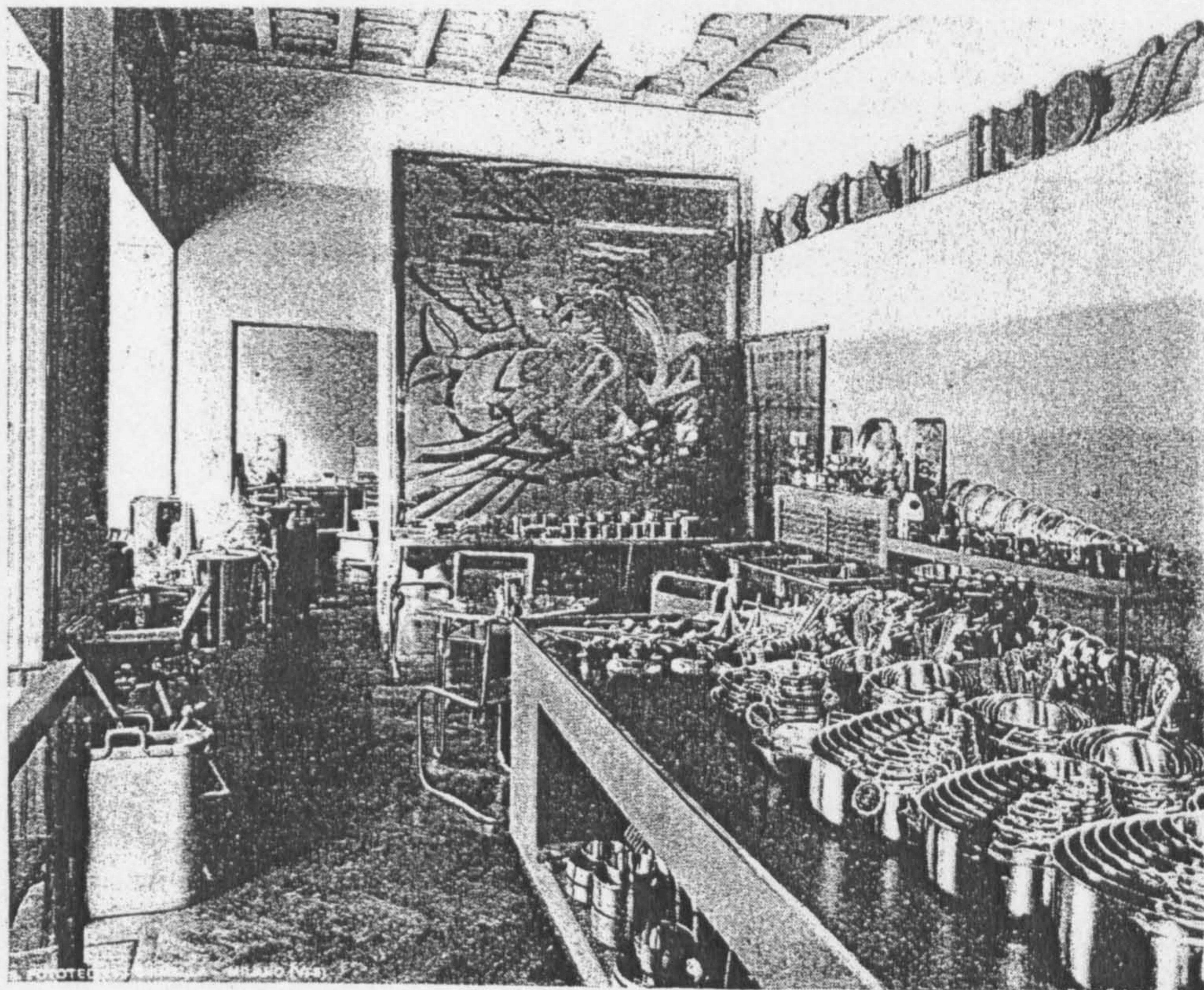
Copious use of exclamation and question marks draws the reader's attention, allowing her to participate in an exchange of information, as the use of different typeface and punctuation suggest intonation patterns of spoken language that the addressee mentally recreates. By establishing a form of participation in the message, the advertisement introduces the notion of desired housewifery objectives, with the adjectives 'ottimo' and 'perfetto' denoting the well-worn strategy of future years where soap powder and machine combine in the ultimate domestic feat of 'whiter than white' washing. The advertisement uses the technique of advertising two complementing products, given that use of the first precedes, but does not necessarily require use of the second. The similar brand names facilitate recall and association of both, particularly significant given the provision of detailed address, phone number and tram services in the advertisement, to encourage customers to visit the company. The secondary importance of the appliance in the advertisement is indicative of the machine's reduced sales potential, as well as the fact that the addressee is assured of its cost-saving, hygiene and practical characteristics in order to overcome widespread resistance associated with cost and problematic utilisation. Indicative of the 'inertia' characterising the Italian middle-class consumer, purchase of electrical and non-electrical household appliances is exhorted in a climate steeped in tradition, a rapidly evolving ideology regarding women, budget constraints, cheaper, manual forms of labour, and the 1928-33 economic crisis that leads to a general fall in consumption levels, including fuel for domestic use.

The availability of relatively cheap manual forms of labour leads to a particularly relevant substitution effect where, compared to the general decline in domestic service in other European countries characterised by the greater penetration of the domestic appliance, the numbers of domestic servants actually rise in Italy from 445,631 in 1921 to 660,725 in 1936 (De Grazia, 1992), with even those middle-class families of relatively modest means increasingly able to obtain domestic help. A symptom of women's need to find employment and, in particular, of the number of peasant women sent from the countryside to work in the towns, the result is that, although electrical

appliances remain generally limited to the wealthy élite, the attempt at spreading a pro-electricity mentality leads to rising electricity consumption from 1.99 billion lire in 1925 to 4.13 billion in 1940 (Barca, 1997, p.507). This was undoubtedly caused to a significant degree by increased appliance purchases by the middle-class household. Indeed, with women considered decisive in the purchase of electrical appliances, given their propensity to accept innovations and developments in line with family finances, and so to improve lifestyle, the advertising of 'labour-saving devices' in women's magazines is reassessed in the post-war period.

Middle-class women's functions in these modernising processes appear to be fundamental, as much as their later ability to circumvent autocratic restrictions, despite an ideology centred on the formulation of a progressively limited vision of women's role in society, hedged in by the sublimation of male virility and women's maternal functions. At home, women are framed ideologically as at the centre of family life, placed on a pedestal as mothers and wives, embodying the hopes of the nation, the 'Italian race' and the Duce. Although the implications of this ideology are contradictory, both in terms of the legislation pursued and the results obtained, with legislation and social policy centred on the family, employment and sexual behaviour, and containing an unprecedented degree of control and assistance, attempts at limiting women's role to the family effectively lead to this same role becoming a wider social one.² Women, and in particular middle-class women, become the mainstay of fascist policies aimed at providing child-care advice and assistance, either as givers or receivers of the services, whilst the myth of the 'angelo del focolare', and fascist legislation limiting employment, more for professional, white collar middle-class than for working-class women, reinforce the general trend of returning women to domesticity. The period from 1921 to 1931, for example, sees a significant increase in the number of housewives from 9.3 to 11.3 million (Meldini, 1975, p.73). Although many women were engaged in other forms of activity, or in supplementing family income through forms of undeclared labour, advertising was increasingly geared towards involving this army of housewives purchasing goods to meet their family's needs. Nowhere was this more the case than for

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S. A. SMALTERIA E METALLURGICA VENETA
BASSANO DEL GRAPPA

Utensili da cucina
di acciaio inossidabile.

Cosa sono i Radiatori d'acciaio **Aequator**?

I radiatori in lamiera d'acciaio « Aequator », sono stati ideati e sono costruiti su larghissima scala, per le loro prerogative speciali: *maggior rendimento con minor peso possibile.*

Nell'impianto di riscaldamento vi sono, come parte importantissima, le tubazioni di acciaio: è stato scientificamente studiato il modo di costruire il radiatore con l'acciaio, dandogli naturalmente tutti i requisiti del normale radiatore di ghisa e possibilmente superarlo.

Con la lamiera d'acciaio Martin Siemens vengono costruiti tutti i nostri materiali. *I radiatori « Aequator » in acciaio stampato, brevettati, rappresentano l'ultima parola nella parte più importante e visibile dell'impianto di riscaldamento.*

Fermamente stabiliti: la robustezza sorprendente e la tenuta assoluta, possiamo subito far cadere anche l'obiezione di un ipotetico arrugginimento dell'acciaio perchè le deduzioni tecniche e scientifiche, e principalmente l'esperienza fatta in *migliaia di impianti sin dal principio di questo secolo in funzione*, hanno dimostrati infondati e non più sostenibili i pregiudizi e le accuse contro l'ossidazione dei radiatori in lamiera d'acciaio stampata.

In Italia e all'estero gli impianti di riscaldamento con i nostri radiatori d'ac-

ciaio funzionano in modo ineccepibile ed a completa soddisfazione delle ditte. Vantaggi dei nostri radiatori: rendimento maggiore dei radiatori di ghisa; peso assai minore rispetto agli altri radiatori (un terzo del peso dei radiatori di ghisa); essendo i radiatori « Aequator » di minore capacità ottengono quindi una circolazione d'acqua più energica e attiva.

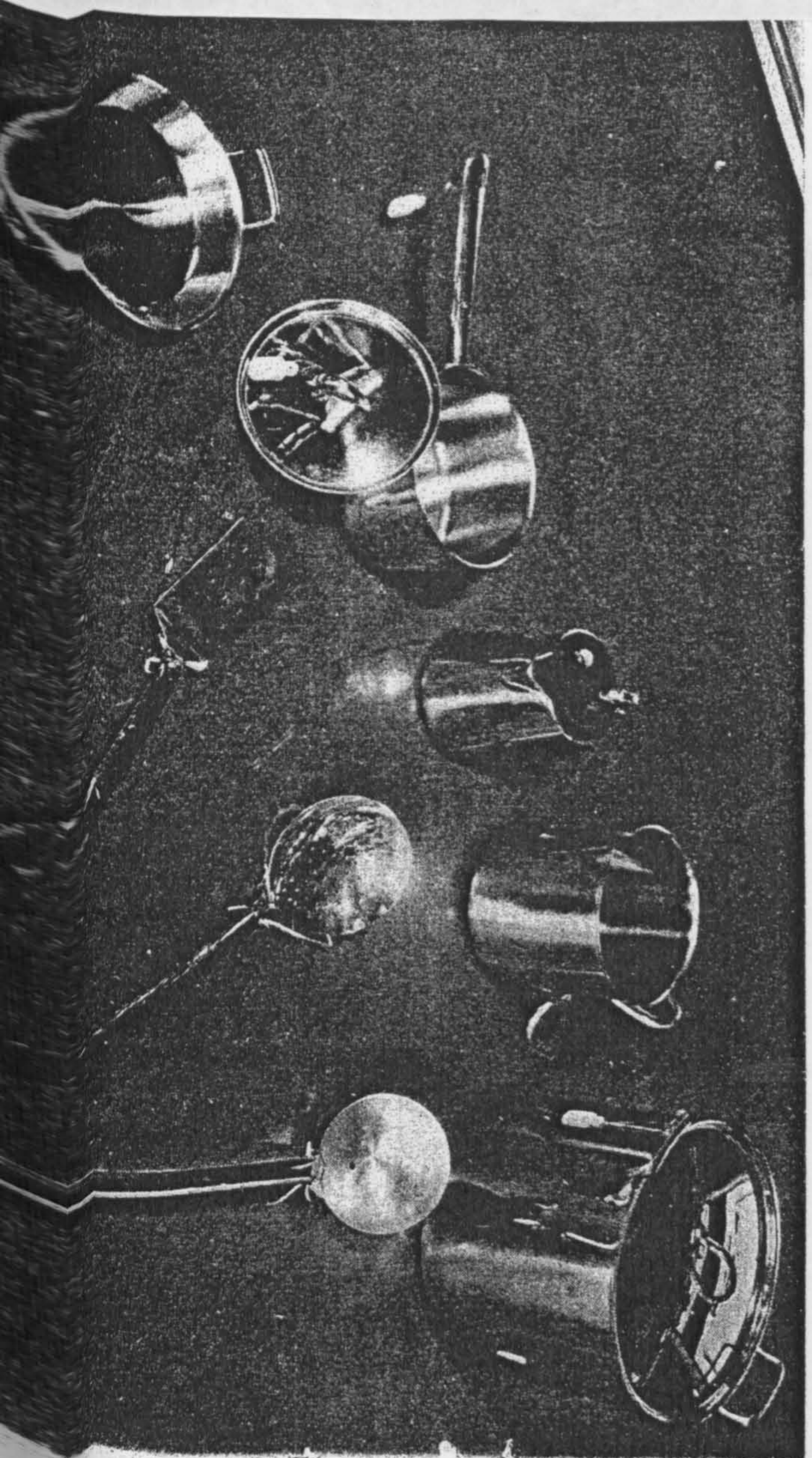
Una resistenza maggiore garantisce i radiatori « Aequator » a tutte le pressioni interne (enorme resistenza al gelo).

Basta dare uno sguardo ai radiatori « Aequator » per convincersi che la loro forma a linee di poco rilievo e perfettamente ricordate, insieme alla grande leggerezza del materiale impiegato nella costruzione, non permettono il ricovero della polvere. Il grande interspazio fra elemento ed elemento consente il passaggio della mano fra gli stessi, rendendo possibile l'impiego degli strofinacci umidi ed anche il lavaggio senza dover ricorrere, come avviene per altri tipi di radiatori, a spazzole speciali che sollevano la polvere e lo sporco rimane al posto di prima.

Per le camere da letto, uffici, ospedali, navi, case di cura, asili, scuole, collegi, teatri, cinematografi, chiese, stazioni ferroviarie ecc. sono assolutamente indispensabili perchè voluti dall'igiene. La speciale forma triangolare del mozzo conferisce ai nostri radiatori una *grande resistenza alla flessione ed agli allungamenti* ed aumenta notevolmente la sezione del passaggio interno fra gli elementi facilitando di molto la circolazione dell'acqua nell'impianto.

I radiatori d'acciaio « Aequator » a piastra, nei suoi modelli perfezionati, sono costruiti con materiali e con procedimenti analoghi a quelli dei radiatori d'acciaio

Utensili da cucina di
acciaio inossidabile Saeculum.



« Aequator » normali e conservano inoltre tutti i vantaggi e tutte le caratteristiche che abbiamo elencato nelle prime pagine del presente catalogo.

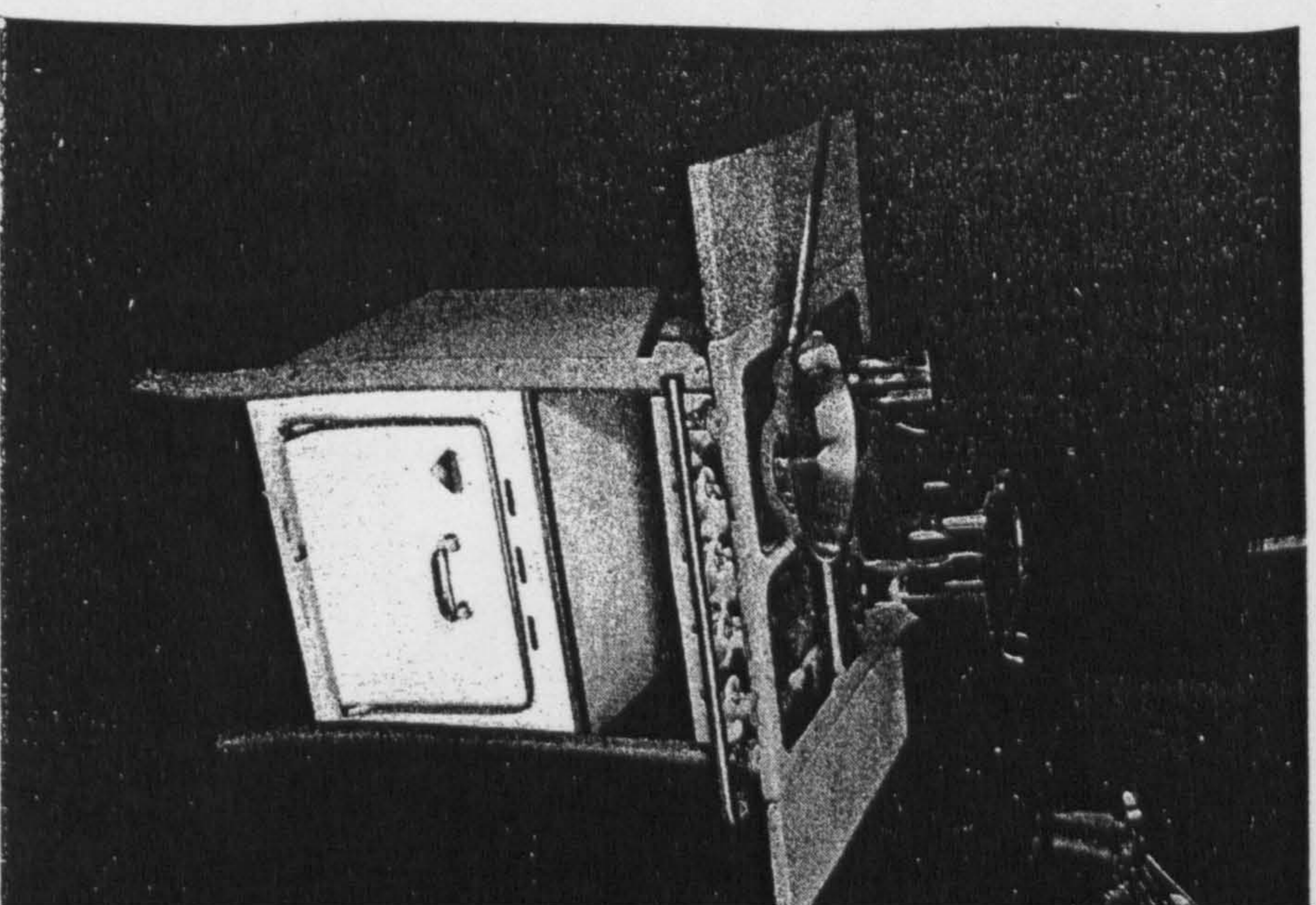
Fra le qualità specifiche molto evidenti devesi principalmente rilevare che il loro piccolo peso li rende maneggevoli e facilmente applicabili alle pareti, anche se queste sono sottili o comunque deboli, e che permettono una eventuale rimozione senza incontrare delle difficoltà.

Pur conservando l'estetica e la più grande armonia di linee, per la forma molto liscia e semplice ad essi data, viene assicurata una pulizia molto severa e facilissima ed evita il formarsi del più piccolo deposito di polvere. Il piccolo contenuto d'acqua, l'energica circolazione e l'elevato rendimento termico, contribuiscono ad ottenere una rapida messa a regime dell'impianto. Di questo loro valore ne consegue un enorme vantaggio, in modo particolare, il gabinetto da bagno.

I radiatori « Aequator » a piastra vengono fabbricati in otto differenti misure e l'installatore ha perciò larga scelta del tipo adatto ad ogni esigenza d'impianto.

Questi radiatori rispondono meglio di qualsiasi altro tipo in quei casi in cui la ristrettezza del locale non permetta la sporgenza dal muro richiesta dai radiatori normali, come nei corridoi, gabinetti da bagno, ecc. ed ove il calore raggiante risulti più vantaggioso ed opportuno del calore convettivo.

Per gli architetti, per i proprietari di case, per i costruttori o per le signore che in modo particolare vigilano sul buon funzionamento della casa queste segnalazioni saranno preziosissime.



Cucina a Gas Aequator.

3.3 AEQUATOR - Almanacco della donna italiana, 1938 (on previous pages)

VENDITA A RATE

Con uno stipendio fisso — che non consente grandi spese o con una piccola rendita modesta che non permette troppe cose, o anche con una rendita e uno stipendio che pur arrivando a cifra discreta, tra le spese quotidiane per la famiglia numerosa, e le necessità della vita, sempre più vaste — come si fa ad avere un gioiello, un po' d'argenteria nuova, una bella macchina, come si può fare un bel viaggio, o una lunga crociera ?

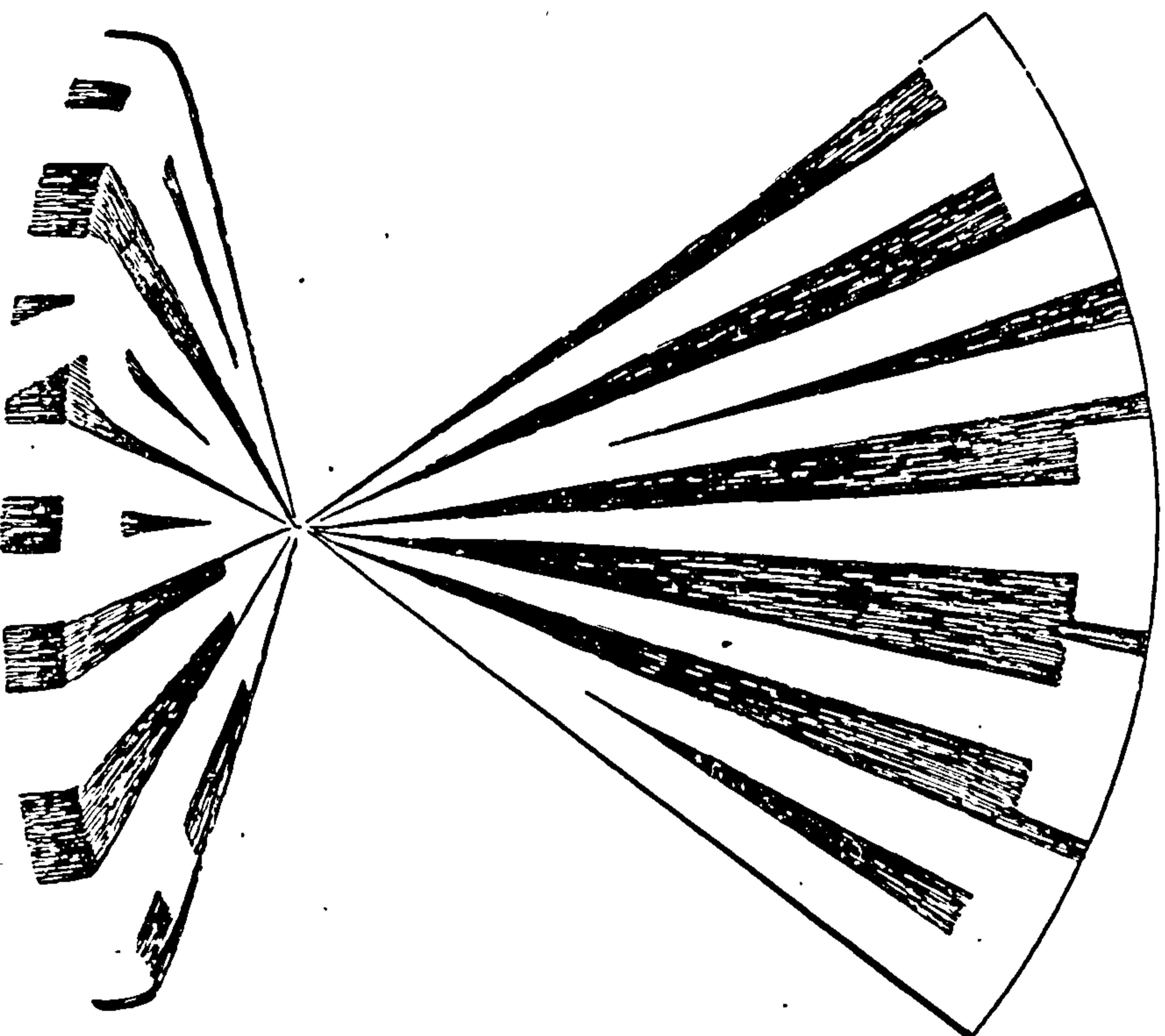
In altri tempi, in altro clima, la gente si ragomitava nella sospirata rinunzia — rimpiccoliva i desideri sino a vederli sparire, raggrinziva la vita in breve spazio denso di cose noiose, eguali, malinconiche. Oggi non più. Nel rinnovato clima, la vita si dilata; abolite le rinunzie, ogni fatica giornaliera tende ad una conquista nuova — nuovi bisogni, nuovi desideri, nuove possibilità.

Per tutti, a portata di tutti, i viaggi, le crociere, le macchine, i gioielli, le belle cose per la casa.

Con una minima spesa ogni mese, per tutti è possibile fare un bel regalo, comprarsi qualche cosa desiderata da tanto tempo, abbellire la casa, senza per nulla alterare il bilancio domestico — a questo prodigio pensa la Casa di Vendite a rate L. Buzzacchi, Via Dante, 15, Milano) che funziona dal 1905. È la Ditta che per prima in Italia, ha istituito la vendita rateale di qualsiasi articolo, eccezion fatta degli indumenti e prodotti speciali. Dal 1922 è di proprietà di Lina Buzzacchi e il numero dei Clienti attuale, che oltrepassa i cinquemila, dimostra in quale considerazione tale Ditta è tenuta dal pubblico.

La Casa di Vendite a rate si è particolarmente specializzata nella vendita degli oggetti preziosi — in argento e oro — degli orologi di primissime marche svizzere e di gioie in genere, la casa fabbrica articoli speciali dietro commissione.

La Casa di Vendite a rate pubblica, trimestralmente, un catalogo nel quale sono elencati parte degli articoli che sono messi in vendita con pagamenti entro dieci e anche dodici mesi.



CASA DI VENDITE A RATE
L. BUZZACCHI

- 3.4 L. BUZZACCHI. Casa di vendite a rate
- *Almanacco della donna italiana*, 1938
(on previous page)

3.4 THE DOMESTIC APPLIANCE IN POST-WAR ADVERTISING

The general focus by weekly women's magazines on these issues, and on escapism and fashion, sees limited reference to the war, despite the recognition of less pleasant aspects such as over-work and under-nutrition, revealed almost exclusively by a few advertisements.³ The lack of advertising of household appliances is a reflection of a fascist policy that is aimed at restricting advertisements of this nature, considered in all likelihood reductive of women's primary caring role. It is also a reflection, however, of a general lack of spending power in many middle-class families, and an important limitation on women's purchasing activities. The immediate post-war period is, likewise, characterised by limited consumption possibilities and difficulties in obtaining goods, a fact that is reflected in women's magazines, and in a lack of advertising for appliances. Located in an as yet pre-consumerist period, goods are meant to last, and as such the existence of pre-war appliances in households would effectively reign in any limited inclination towards purchase, as well as does the required focus on 'making do' on a tight budget. By the mid 1950s, with recovery well under way, the situation undergoes rapid change, with the urban female consumer becoming the focus of an increasing barrage of advertisements. Rural consumers increasingly are moving into the expanding urban centres. Those who do not move, still desire the products that are being defined as synonymous with modernity, despite a common lack of basic infrastructure. The prolific advertising of washing powder brands such as 'Omo', 'Trim', 'Olà', 'Lauril', 'Persil', 'Tot' and 'Vel', frequently advertised for washing both clothes and dishes, sees a slow but increasing integration, through language and image, of the domestic appliance into the advertising for these products. Images of rolled-up sleeves, and graphically depicted uses of a particular product without an appliance in sight, are matched by a lexis that, nevertheless, is aimed at suggesting a magical limitation on women's domestic physical labour. Emphasis on reduced effort, ease of product use, visibly cleaner clothes/dishes, and assurance of immediate results in product-focused advertisements, is matched by a low visibility of appliances in advertisements, indicative of quite low purchasing levels. Yet, there is a clear formation of a 'woman and home' ideal, albeit bereft of appliances.

The period does see an initial stirring in the use of women's magazines for advertising home electrical products, whether directly, or indirectly under the form of prize draws. By 1954, the floor polish product 'Overlay', for example, offers prize draws of electrical polishers to participating consumers, despite the fact that domestic appliances still feature in only a limited way in prize draws compared to television and radio sets, scooters and cars. An exception may be seen in a 1955 advertisement for 'Trim' washing powder (*Grazia*, 1st May) where the producer's prize draw places a washing machine and dishwasher within the lucky consumer's reach (see Figure 3.5). The joint advertising of the 'Fiat' washing machine and 'American Kitchens' dishwasher allows for the brands to be closely associated with the powder brand, thus permitting a brand association effect to be established for those consumers already in possession of one or both appliances. The soap powder's reliability and performance characteristics are reinforced by its association with two well-known producers and with two Italian housewives 'par excellence'. The use of what may be called the 'housewife look' in advertisements for certain products like detergents allows a definite link to be established between this category of products, and a particular version of womanhood, that with the increasingly abundant advertising rapidly becomes cemented in a public mentality molded by multiple advertising media.

The images of two ideal housewives see a younger, more fashionable version in the first case, with an unmistakable apron tied at the waist to denote modernity, yet with housewife status still. The baby corroborates the machine's centrality in meeting new family needs. There is also the 'fact' that any new mother's desire should be to receive a machine worth 210,000 lire. The use of the younger housewife in the image is, therefore, also indicative of an advertising strategy aimed at encouraging the purchase of a machine that is viewed as within the budget constraints of a newly formed family, in a deliberate attempt at transforming a mentality based on consideration of such products as 'extras' to be bought at a later stage of greater economic security in the family.

ottimo il **TRIM** stupendo il dono

una **Lavabiancheria FIAT**
da 210 mila lire
a chi usa il **TRIM NEVE**

Busta
65 lire



Astuccio 130 lire
(partecipa con
doppia probabilità)

Basta acquistare una busta di TRIM NEVE
e sabato prossimo questa Lavabiancheria
può essere vostra.

Esigete dal Negoziante
la Cartolina Concorso TRIM NEVE
e speditela subito senza francobollo.

il detersivo
che non corrode
la biancheria



una **Lavapiatti "American Kitchens"**
da 420 mila lire
a chi usa il **TRIM CASA**

Busta
50 lire



Astuccio 100 lire
(partecipa con
doppia probabilità)

il detersivo che lava
i piatti in un attimo
e lascia le mani
morbide e candide

Basta acquistare
una busta di TRIM CASA
e sabato prossimo questa Lavapiatti
può essere vostra.
Esigete dal Negoziante
la Cartolina Concorso TRIM CASA
e speditela subito senza francobollo.



sabato può toccare a voi

Estrazioni
26 Marzo 1955
2 Aprile 1955

Hanno vinto la Lavabiancheria
Giovanna Polli, Lomazzo (Como)
Erminia Montessori, Nogara (Verona)

Hanno vinto la Lavapiatti
Anna Di Gerolamo, Trapani
Antonio Scelsà, Foggia

3.5 TRIM - *Grazia*, 1955

(on previous page)

The second image is of an older, more 'professional' housewife, as denoted by her full-length apron and rolled-up sleeves, whose dishwasher merely complements her professional status as household manager to a grown-up, numerous and needy family. The emphasis given to such factors as product, price, and the surrounding 'soap suds effect' in the image, are synonymous with an advertising message functioning more as an advertisement for multiple products, than as one for the various prize draws of the period, that in any case contained visual or verbal reference to the prize. Although the 'Trim' powder brand retains its centrality throughout the advertisement, the link by means of text and visual effects is reinforced by the second model's direct reference to product performance. In the text, the adjectives 'ottimo' and 'stupendo' perform a 'trickle-down' effect from referring first to the brand and then to the appliances, as the results to be obtained from the first are reinforced by use of the second.

Other points worthy of note are the assurances regarding the non-corrosive nature of the detergent in the first section of the advertisement, assuaging fears relating to damaged laundry, symptomatic of the excessive presence of chemical agents in products of the period, and of the consumers' reluctance to purchase untried and unknown brands. Significantly, the second brand version is characterised by a persuasive format often utilised in advertisements and relating to the speed of execution, and positive skin effect on hands, revealed as a constant worry to housewives irrespective of the decade and their nationality. Use of this lexis in the advertisement is indicative of the dishwasher's luxurious and foreign status, where reference to 'le mani morbide e candide' is revealing of the manual nature of dishwashing, unlike the greater familiarity of households with the washing machine. The use of larger and darker typographical script allows the appliances to be emphasised within the overall advertisement, reinforcing their visual impact on the addressee, whilst the reference to soap suds, a linguistic feature of most advertisements of the period, is avoided by means of a pictorial effect. Considered an essential indicator of a product's cleaning prowess by housewives, associating the amount of soap suds produced by powder detergents with those of traditional bars of

soap, advertisements seem at pains to emphasise the brand's ability to provide the much desired soapy bubbles.

The attempt to relay a sense of real performance continues in terms of the behaviour of the models, who are in the process of unloading a finished wash or exhibiting the final results. The performance effect sees a focus on powder brand, stimulating the addressee to peruse the advertisement further, in order to identify with the message, the housework tasks communicated and the models' pride in their accomplishments. Use of testimonials representing a 'typical' next door neighbour allows further identification, and the use of colour, typographical variation, and participation in point collection schemes.

By the mid 1960s, the centrality of the domestic appliance, and in particular of the washing machine, for the Italian housewife, sees women's magazines characterised by the international 'Matic', 'Dixan' and 'Skip' powder brands, marketed by multinationals such as Unilever and Colgate-Palmolive, that feature the washing machine (branded or non-branded in the advertisements) as a necessary domestic pre-requisite towards obtaining the perennially unobtainable perfect wash. The 'Dixan' advertisement featured in *Grazia* in 1964 (see Figure 3.6), for example, shows the delighted housewife holding up a dazzlingly white sheet with the enlarged letters above her clearly stating 'Ecco perche le grandi marche di lavatrici raccomandano Dixan'. In the right hand bottom corner is a washing machine with a packet of 'Dixan' in front of it also with the picture of a washing machine and drier on the packet. The complementarity between the soap brand and the machine's cleaning ability is ultimately affirmed by the undisputed experts involved in installing and maintaining the machine when it is stated:

**'HANNO RAGIONE I TECNICI,
la schiuma frenata di DIXAN è veramente unica!**

**Ecco perché
le grandi marche
di lavatrici
raccomandano
DIXAN**

HANNO RAGIONE I TECNICI:

la schiuma frenata di DIXAN è veramente unica! È vero, DIXAN ha cura della biancheria e della lavatrice e che splendido bucato grazie alla schiuma frenata di DIXAN!



La schiuma di DIXAN è "frenata" cioè si libera a poco a poco e l'azione lavante è continua...



...l'azione lavante di DIXAN è continua e i panni si muovono meglio nella lavatrice...



...i panni si muovono meglio e il lavaggio è più accurato e più a fondo con DIXAN.



LA SCHIUMA FRENATA DI DIXAN È UNICA!

3.6 DIXAN - *Grazia*, 1964
(on previous page)

The advertising of electrical domestic appliances, independently of complementing products, only really becomes an increasing feature of women's magazines by the second half of the 1950s, as the economy gains momentum, and the domestic appliance sector increases in importance, with products like the refrigerator witnessing a leap in production from 18,500 units in 1951 to 370,000 in 1957 (Lepre, 1995, p.170). Indicative of this fact is that although the 'Trim' advertisement analysed previously is one of few advertisements to feature domestic appliances, it is located in the initial attention-seeking advertising-oriented pages of a seventy-five page issue. Similarly, by 1954, Hoover increases advertising in magazines such as *Grazia* and *Annabella* with its 'famous' washing machine (see Figure 3.7). As one of few such advertisements at the time, 'il segreto della Hoover' is based on a patented, and therefore unique, lateral pulsating device. It features in quarter page or less advertisements. The attempt by this producer at providing a financially accessible machine sees the availability of various models at different prices. Speed and washing prowess dominate in advertisements promising a four minute gentle wash from the machine and undamaged laundry ('...agita l'acqua senza neppure toccare i panni').

An issue of *Grazia* dated 15th January 1955 also features a half page advertisement for Westinghouse refrigerators (see Figure 3.8), significant in terms of the detailed product advertising to take place in ensuing years. Lacking in female image, like the early Hoover advertisements, the product is located in the upper half of the vertical half page advertisement, with a focus on internal features and capacity as highlighted by the image of a food-filled refrigerator. This focus is significant at a time when cost of advertising space, and the need to convince consumers of the product's performance characteristics, dominated over utilising a female model in the act of exhibiting or using the product.

**Chiedetelo a chi
ha già una Hoover!**

Le vostre amiche che hanno già una Hoover
ve ne potranno enumerare i vantaggi.
La Hoover lava meglio e più delicatamente,
perchè il suo meccanismo è
estremamente efficiente e agita l'acqua
senza toccare la biancheria.

le due famose HOOVER

*La nuova Hoover
mod. 0319 lava 3 Kg.
di panni in 4 minuti.
Scarico automatico.
Costa solo L. 87.000*

*La Hoover
mod. 0307 lava
1½ Kg. di panni
in 4 minuti.
Costa solo L. 67.000*

**il segreto
della
HOOVER
(pulsatore
laterale
brevettato)**

HOOVER

lavatrici elettriche

informazioni
ed assistenza.

Servizio Hoover Milano: C.so Monforte 4, tel. 795.578

3.7 HOOVER. Lavatrici Elettriche







- *Annabella*, 1954

(on previous page)

perché
Westinghouse



Solo il frigorifero della
Westinghouse
vi offre tutti questi vantaggi

-  **UN GIUSTO FREDDO PER OGNI ALIMENTO.** Una doppia regolazione di temperatura permette di dosare il freddo più adatto ad ogni alimento conservandone interi il gusto e la fragranza.
-  **CUBETTI DI GHIACCIO IN ABBONDANZA.** In meno di una ora, un rifornimento completo ed in quantità ideale per soddisfare anche la famiglia più esigente.
-  **SBRINAMENTO AUTOMATICO.** Le inevitabili incrostazioni di ghiaccio vengono eliminate senza la noia di dover periodicamente scrostare, sciacquare, asciugare il frigorifero.
-  **PORTIERA A DISPOSITIVO ELETTROMAGNETICO.** Consente l'apertura automatica della portiera anche con le mani occupate.
-  **TUTTO È SUBITO A PORTATA DI MANO** grazie allo studio ed all'isolamento più razionale di ripiani scorrevoli, scomparti, cassetti e mensole.
-  **GARANTITO PER I PRIMI 5 ANNI...** vi durerà tutta la vita.

ecco...

i decisivi "perché" che fanno del frigorifero Westinghouse il vostro frigorifero.

più un regalo

un magnifico Toastsandwich Westinghouse del valore di L. 29.500 a chi acquista un frigorifero Westinghouse entro il 31 gennaio 1955.



Concessionario esclusivo:

A-MANGINI - Milano - Via Lovanio 5 - Tel. 635.218 - 635.240

3.8 WESTINGHOUSE - *Grazia*, 1955

(on previous page)

The Westinghouse advertisement is worthy of comment despite its lack of direct use of this figure, given that product superiority is linked to the manufacturer, as 'only' Westinghouse provides the six quality features listed. Use of the 'W' brand logo beside each advantage further emphasises exclusivity, as much as the lack of pricing in the advertisement. This compares to an added frequency of washing machine advertisements.

The advertisements for refrigerators are conditioned by a socio-economic and cultural situation characterised by a number of factors. First and foremost, the custom inherited by housewives of conducting the food shopping chore on a daily basis, as dictated by tradition, the habit of establishing a regular social contact with the outside world, and by the need to obtain fresh produce available at local shops and markets. The fridge is, therefore, also seen as an expense, perhaps of secondary importance to the washing machine. The latter's ability to diminish significantly back-breaking hand washing in bathtubs, at laundry sinks, or even at the local wash-house or stream, could not be underestimated. This latter activity was indeed still performed in many small urban and rural areas even in the years following the economic boom. Indeed, as noted by Aurelio Lepre (1995), women do in fact appreciate the greater freedom provided by domestic appliances, which, at the same time, as part of the baggage of increasingly available modern conveniences, they stimulate change in terms of their impact on the general mentality and attitudes in the country.

In advertising terms, the use of female models appears to an increasing extent by the late 1950s, as women come to be seen as a viable means by which to establish a favourable indexical relationship with domestic appliances, and in particular in the form of the housewife, and the rapidly developing concepts of the 'regina di casa' or 'padrona di casa', accessible to ever wider socio-economic groups.⁴ Encouraged to immerse themselves in such role models, their importance is, undoubtedly, further emphasised in this period by advertising. Typically, young girls are encouraged to conform to pre-established and approved models of personal expression, as the rigid codes and morality

of the period, apparently accepted by women of all ages, are inexorably chipped away below the surface in attempts at striving for real self-expression (Piccone Stella, 1981). Models of behaviour, nevertheless, prevail and determine acceptability. The 'padrona di casa' is a much vaunted status, especially by young married women, who aspire to the management of their own home. Much of the advertising recalls this social model, with the management of the home and family pictured as the ultimate social conquest for the woman, and the ability to keep her in that position as the achievement for the 'breadwinner' husband.⁵

The fluctuation between aspirations to the role of perfect housewife inherent in the social prestige attached to this model of womanhood, perfected by the abandonment of employment, and the reality of the daily living conditions of much of the lower middle-class, is underlined by two washing powder advertisements in a 1957 edition of *Gioia* (10th March), where reference to the washing machine is notably absent. The 'Olà' advertisement pictures a young woman in the housewife's housecoat uniform exhibiting her whiter than white sheet, compared to the sophisticated back cover 'Omo' advertisement with woman in burnished gold dress, not new despite appearances, but washed in the product. The reality of the daily drudgery of the former contrasts with the greater free time and sophistication implied for the latter. This is further substantiated by the same age range yet different social category, with the former targeting the professional 'massaia', and the latter the non-vocational housewife. The use of the free time, and sophistication, binomial is reflected in another advertisement from the same issue: a young woman in short dress, high-heels and pearls caresses her newly-hung 'teritar' curtain: 'Levo, lavo, monto e non stiro'. The product is emblematic of the time-saving, fatigue-reducing, advanced-technology options available in expanding product categories. They appeal to the consumer groups concentrated in the home, but desiring free time away from chores, and a life-style associated with higher-income categories.

In fact, *Gioia* is notably classed, along with the very Catholic *Alba*, as an illustrated woman's magazine, containing a definite 'Azione Cattolica' ideology in this period

(Ravera, 1978). It is, as a result, considered amongst 'le più squallide riviste oggi in commercio' in an analysis of the time (Dal Pozzo, 1961, p.279), given the Catholic press's ideological strategy of moulding these magazines to the perceived needs of the 'more modern' woman. Other magazines like *Grazia* and *Annabella* belong to a more ephemeral category in terms of articles, features and advertising content, given the aura of sophistication exuded by the former, and the fashionable elegance of the latter, even though containing the standard range of issues common to most middle-class, consumption-oriented women's magazines. Reflected in the perfect housewife, mother and carer, devoted to the family and home, but with free time to dedicate to good works and, significantly, to the Church, the vision of 'buona e bella' (Portaccio, 1982) that permeates Catholic women's magazines, *Gioia* included, is a rather more complex model of behaviour than would appear at first glance. The 'queen of the home' ideology is seen to permeate *Gioia* throughout the period, with domestic appliances afforded more advertising space by the end of the decade, compared to the various foods, household and personal products of earlier years, maintaining women within the confines of domesticity. Greater time for self is continually hinted at, but gainful employment is constantly avoided as an option. Nevertheless, the paradox inherent in the increasing availability and affordability of convenience goods providing the time to ponder personal life courses, leads many vocational housewives to broach the job market in later years.

The Italian situation of the time is, therefore, characterised by the strong pull of the Catholic model of female behaviour, where the sense of sacrifice previously attached to marriage and mothering comes to be replaced by a more modern, consumer oriented, educational imperative. Indeed, the woman is seen as responsible for family needs, care and upbringing, as an efficient administrator, nurse and cook, to the extent that all personal characteristics become marginal. Other social models like the emancipated woman of the period, the worker, or the student, are not central to advertising, to avoid rupturing the static nature of the dominant ideology. So too are the masses of young women dreaming of the promised self-realisation to be found in the 'new' service-centred professions, and largely ignored in all but the women's magazines. The emphasis

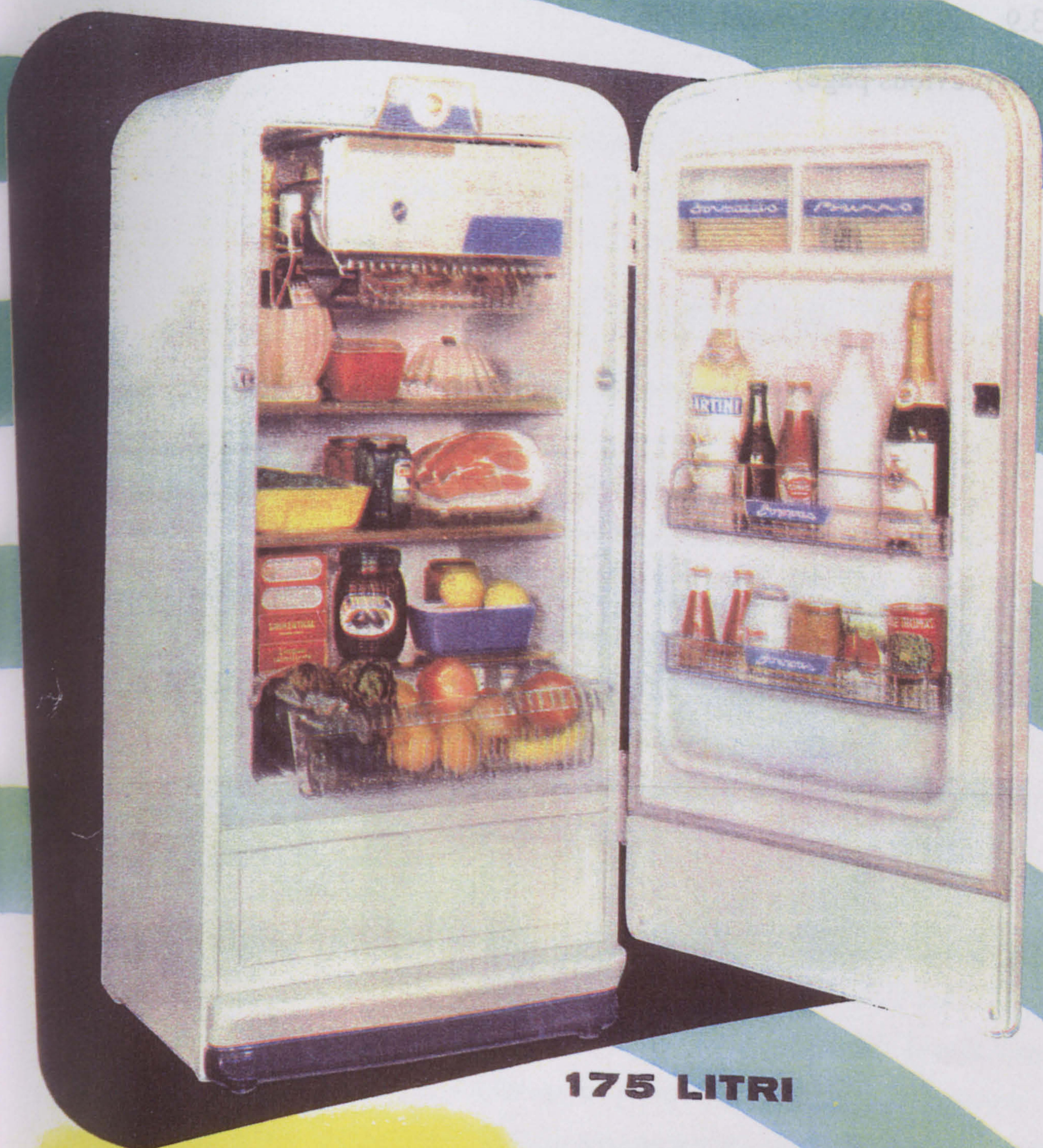
by women's magazines on these professions is matched by social refusal and religious scorn for the importance attributed to physical features by these jobs, also considered anathema by the emancipated, female élite, striving for social recognition based exclusively on intellectual merit. Nevertheless, the very attraction of these professions reveals a disproportionate desire for change, and the search for new avenues of self-fulfilment, in a society closed in by rigid behavioural and social codes. As a result, the image that prevails, expands and multiplies, in the fevered atmosphere of the build-up to the economic boom, undoubtedly reflects the pressing wishes and hopes of many women for economic betterment, whilst also channelling unsatisfied needs for novelty, change and self-expression into the one role allowed to them, that of the modern 'massaia'.

The period sees growing sectors of society beginning to glimpse the benefits of economic expansion and develop a desire to possess many of the advertised goods, as the media channels and fuels growth, consumption and the emergence of the mass market consumer. The 'cambiale' rapidly becomes synonymous of dilated payment schedules, available to anyone with enough cash to make an initial down-payment on the desired goods, as opportunity created by the economic boom appears to knock on every consumer's door. As a result, the late 1950s see an increase in the advertising of goods that previously receive limited coverage like the refrigerator, albeit remaining secondary to that of the washing machine, as a wider range of white and brown goods come within the reach of the expanding middle-class ranks, armed with regular instalment payments. The Veneto-based Zoppas firm offers refrigerators that are 'moderni' and 'razionali' to suit various family budgets with colourful, back cover advertisements in *Grazia* demonstrating the appliance's content capacity (see Figure 3.9). However, in terms of the advertising content in women's magazines, the post mid-1950s boom, is probably most represented in *Grazia*, where the inexorable increase in the number of pages, typically from 76 in 1955 to 164 in 1964, sees an intensive use of advertising space by cosmetics, and by domestic appliances only in the next decade. The range of products advertised in women's magazines throughout the early 1950s as much as the advice dispensed change with *Grazia* emerging as an advertising industry in its own right, with

a delicate equilibrium between cosmetics, washing powders and domestic appliances in the eternal game of contradictory messages.

Changes in the socio-economic climate results in more than a million women entering the job market from 1954 to 1960, a water-shed period of women's increasing employment, leading to a rise in the male employment index of a mere 9.72 points compared to 32.37 in the female index (Cinciari Rodano, 1961, p.167) ⁶. The vision of the Church also mutates. In December 1960, Pope John XXIII refers to 'due centri di attrazione, due nuclei sui quali è imperniata la vita della donna: famiglia e lavoro' (Cinciari Rodano, 1961, p.177). This is the first explicit recognition of the importance of employment in women's lives. They are no longer condemned for working outside the home, as marriage, children and work begin to be seen as increasingly compatible by more and more women driven to work through need or self-fulfilment, as Italy hurtles towards an unprecedented economic boom. Women, thus, begin to be targeted for goods requiring a substantial degree of decision-making, from Standard bathroom suites to Lambretta motor scooters, from home furnishing to domestic appliances, given the specific role in establishing purchase criteria in the decision-making process that appears to be attributed to them.

Despite these changes, the focus of a concentrated advertising strategy in women's magazines, remains the figure of the middle-class, and not so middle-class housewife, to a significant extent. This figure becomes synonymous, once more, with that of a household manager, who able to devolve physically taxing tasks to the ever-ready appliance, may perfect her house-keeping, hostess and personal presentation skills, as defined by the myriad other categories of advertisements. Indeed, by 1958, the 'Hoovermatic' (*Grazia*, 19th January) offers a timer, delicate wash cycle, rinse and spin functions to meet the housewife's 3kg wash requirements in a mere four minutes, as the representative housewife model proudly smiles over 'la migliore lavatrice del mondo!'



175 LITRI

i moderni e razionali
FRIGORIFERI ZOPPAS
da 140 - 175 - 220 litri
si distinguono
per qualità, robustezza,
funzionalità e
convenienza nel prezzo.

Zoppas

il marchio che dà maggior garanzia

3.9 ZOPPAS - *Grazia*, 1956

(on previous page)

3.5 BEYOND THE ECONOMIC BOOM: THE EMERGENCE OF LIFESTYLE ASPIRATIONS IN APPLIANCE ADVERTISING

The emphasis attributed to the role of housework for the middle-class housewife is notable in the appliance and detergent categories, as her whole persona remains associated with this function, almost to the exclusion of all else. Despite use of concepts relating to reduced effort and greater time available, in the advertising message for appliances, the modern housewife model underlies most advertising in the magazines well into the 1970s. Unlike the occasional articles dealing with age, employment or social concerns, the eternally youthful homebody is rarely seen to use this greater free time in ways other than in more housework. Message and image retain women in a product-related function that may be regarded as inevitable, given the nature of the product and the attempt by manufacturers to portray the product at work. Ample feminist criticism of advertisements that severely limit women to the domestic function in this way, is reflected in the intertwined appliance and detergent sectors that are seen to exclude any sense of self-realisation or personal fulfilment for women. This univocal stance, however, does not take into account the women's reading of the advertisements in the magazines, according to their socio-cultural background and personal situations.

A particular case may be considered in the 1964 advertisement in *Grazia* (23rd February) for the Candy washing machine (see Figure 3.10), where a certain ambiguity may be interpreted in the reading of some appliance advertisements that appeared to define the women less within this type of advertising. The full-page advertisement sees use of the image in four-fifths of the advertising space, the text relegated to the lower part of the advertisement. The use of contrasting white for the machine and red for the surrounding image, combined with the product's location in the centre of the page leads the reader's attention to be focused on the product. This effect is highlighted further by the machine's location in a spotlight and by the subsequent shadow cast over the model. The model is located to the left of the product, reinforcing her clear link with the product in the addressee's culturally conditioned reading of text and image going left to right.

un'amica così
intelligente



**laureata in "bel bucato"
con programmi automatici
per tutti i tipi di tessuto**

La biancheria dovete dividerla voi; candy non ha mani. Ma ha cervello: sa come lavare a regola d'arte, con programmi precisi, differenti e completamente automatici, sia i capi più fini che la biancheria grossa. Nessun calcolo complicato da parte vostra. Un giro di manopola e... lasciatela fare! Vi ritroverete un bucato di sogno!

Ricordate: per la sua perfezione tecnica, candy è garantita dal Marchio di Qualità.

E il prezzo? La 5 chili, 115.800 lire; la 3 chili e mezzo, 99.800.

Sì, poco. Perché? Perché anche oggi, come ogni giorno, migliaia di candy entrano in migliaia di case. Quando sarà vostra, scoprirete un'amica così abile e intelligente che direte anche voi:

grazie, **Candy**

3.10 CANDY. Un'amica così intelligente

- *Grazia*, 1964

(on previous page)

The link between model and product is also established through the strategic use of light falling on her facial features and on the objects held by her, without totally casting her body into shadow, given the essential middle-class connotations of simplicity and refinement attached to her appearance.

In the advertisement, the headline performs the function of anchor, allowing a desired and directed reading of the image. The model's benign expression is directed towards a 'friend', with the appliance no longer considered a mechanical means for lightening household chores, but an integral part of a specific lifestyle. The sort of lifestyle imparted frenetically by women's magazines in page after page is reflected in advertising for goods that allow the consumer to climb the middle-class social ladder. Indeed, the importance of lifestyle is mirrored and heightened to some significant degree by the magazine's contents.

According to a sociologist analysing women's magazines at the time:

Con molta o poca pubblicità, con orientamenti retriivi o con una posizione sanamente illuminata, i rotocalchi femminili non insegnano al loro pubblico soltanto l' "arte" di consumare meglio; si fanno anche maestri di uno stile di vita più evoluto, più disinvolto (Forte, 1966, p.83).

The market strategy of magazines like *Grazia* based on supplying an exhaustive range of 'bon ton' advice is reflected in the advertisement's offering of a product that is very 'intelligente', thus allowing it to 'fit' into any domestic environment, and prove an invaluable 'amica' in providing assistance. The out-stretched hands offering the graduate's cap and certificate are symbolic of the product's superiority, and of the addressee's consequential recognition of this superiority, given that she is encouraged to identify with the advertisement and with the domestic success resulting from product use. The model's simple, yet elegant, clothing, jewellery and make-up hint at a form of success that extends beyond the domestic environment, but that is intricately linked to possessing the appropriate consumer goods in that very environment. As a result, the

out-stretched hands in the advertisement stand for a particular notion of lifestyle that the product adheres to, in that the objects held may be considered symbols for middle-class, white-collar occupation, and professional employment. The addressee is, thus, encouraged to imagine the resulting real or desired standard of living sparked off by the objects and the model. Although attached to the whole body in the advertisement, and, therefore, unmistakably gendered, as indicated by Janice Winship (1987a; 1987b), the woman's hand carries ideological inflections in advertisements that are nearly always class specific. The ideology of women's specific social roles is reinforced by such specific class-based connotations.

The indexical relationship established between the product and the symbolic cap balanced on the rolled parchment allows the former to benefit from the favourable socio-cultural connotations carried by the latter. In particular, the objects may be widely considered symbols of professional success and social advancement in Western societies, becoming symbols over time of a particularly exclusive form of professional status by iconographic convention. Indeed, exclusiveness is linked to the fact that the symbols are representative of an as yet restricted professional middle-class in Italy by the mid 1960s. The 'boom' in university education and the access guaranteed to ever greater numbers of students are still in the offing, as the use of professional titles originating from a university degree, or even from a secondary school finishing diploma, signal attainment of a particular social status recognised by the community at large. The cap and parchment, therefore, communicate a definite form of social and cultural recognition that the product draws on, although notably, the foreign nature of the cap may also be considered a decisive element, as it recalls the U.S. diploma and Anglo-Saxon degree ceremonies. Modernity conceived as foreign in nature attracts the aspiring middle-class searching for lifestyle denominators.

The visual element of the hand is verbally repeated in the initial introductory piece of text, with use of 'laureata' to denote the highest form of intellectual recognition available. Significantly, the 'intelligent' machine obtains a 'degree' in the ability to

produce the perfect results, denoted paradoxically as 'bel bucato', with use of the adjective 'bello' to also denote the machine's external quality characteristics. By combining the concepts of beauty and brains, the advertisement establishes a sense of empathy in the addressee who is seen to possess similar qualities, particularly given the use of the unconventional play on words 'bel bucato', that brings the culturally renowned, and specifically gendered 'bella presenza' to mind. A woman considered intelligent and of 'bella presenza' is deemed, to this day, complete, as this concept refers to physical attributes that reach beyond mere beauty, to include notions relating to grace, elegance, politeness, and the ability to relate to others. The resulting effect may be considered one of a double indexical relationship, where the product's association is established not merely with the two objects, but also with the particular form of womanhood communicated by the image and by the text. The middle-class woman portrayed is not totally absorbed by the 'housewife look' and concept, but is more complete in demonstrating a version of middle-class womanhood that goes beyond that of housewife to include other aspects associated with her daily role. Endowed with 'bella presenza' and brains, she carries favourable connotations for the product, representing the ideal consumer and one that the potential addressee may identify with, where she belongs to this middle-class category, or may otherwise aspire to by purchasing the product.

The model is seen to partially bask in the machine's limelight, as her social standing, and consequentially that of the addressee, is confirmed by the purchase of an appliance that allows her to fully realise her domestic, and personal, potential. The contrasting lighting reinforces the advertisement's attraction potential for women by setting a scene that the addressee is invited to identify with, despite its evident lack of reality. Use of the cap and parchment symbols, as well as the resulting concepts outlined above, including intelligence and an appropriate physical and behavioural countenance, may provide an alternative interpretation no longer simply based on a single, feminist-type vision of the woman's role in the house and home. In a different interpretation of the advertisement, as read by an employed, middle-class woman of the period, the machine may be seen as

an invaluable ally in helping her meet her many domestic and employment responsibilities and manage her time. Indeed, such interpretations are rarely attached to advertisements whose target market is largely considered that of the housewife by feminist authors (Ravaioli, 1969, 1978; Saraceno, 1971; Rava, 1972; Nozzoli, 1973; Buonanno, 1975; Pezzuoli, 1975; Dal Pozzo and Rava, 1977), although these advertisements are aimed as much at the working middle-class woman possessing a degree or high school diploma, as at the full-time housewife. As a result, recognition of the changes taking place in Italian society may be identified in advertisements utilising a more complex message of this nature, particularly significant in view of the fact that although the majority of readers of women's magazines are generally considered to be housewives, other categories of the female population also form part of the reading public. Typically, according to a 1963 Doxa survey commissioned by Mondadori, the publisher of *Grazia* and *Confidenze*, 43.3% and 47.1% respectively of readers belong to the category of housewives, whilst 25.1% and 20.5% to that of white collar technical and office workers. This second category may be regarded as influential on the type of advertising conducted, especially given future tendencies towards entering employment for women with older children or in their pre-marriage years. Women's greater flexibility in combining different aspects of employment and domesticity in different periods of their lives is also a factor that is rarely revealed in statistics. The partial emergence of a different type of woman, employed and with multiple responsibilities, may, therefore, be considered as emerging in advertisements, albeit rarely in appliance and detergent advertisements that generally utilise the woman as housewife, in order to add greater value to a product seemingly destined for a woman whose image is increasingly based on the concept of home-based, semi-professional carer, cleaner and nurse.

In considering the text, the main body copy is relegated to the lower fifth of the page. In small, yet legible print, the text immediately establishes a link with the image by referring to the manual task of separating laundry before the wash. The first line is significant, as the intelligence linked to the model and her selection of the appliance is

aptly transferred onto the machine. Intelligence is also possessed by the machine, 'ha cervello', a fact subsequently reiterated in a variety of ways, with copious use of adjectives - 'precisi', 'differenti', 'automatici', 'fini', 'grossi', 'complicato' - to indicate ease of use and performance characteristics, whilst perfection of an artistic and dream-like quality is communicated by the expressions 'a regola d'arte' and 'di sogno'. Although partial, the displacement of the woman from the washing function is such that her participation is limited to turning a knob - 'un giro di manopola e lasciatela fare!'. The consumer is assured of technical perfection, with the quality seal guarantee compensating an apparently low price caused by elevated market demand.

The addressee is, thus, drawn into a message that goes from the poetic to the informational, persuasive to the extent that the concluding line of the body copy establishes the essential verbal link with the headline and image, through repetition of the noun 'amica' and the adjectives 'abile' and 'intelligente'. This concluding line also suggests to the addressee that the machine is much like the friend, or perhaps more appropriately, the home help, every woman wants, thereby doubly enforcing the notion of alleviating the housework burden, one that women with less time for domestic chores would undoubtedly find convincing. The advertisement is, therefore, completely self-contained, as the addressee is effectively guided back to the image and its full socio-cultural connotations. Finally, it may be noted that the decidedly poetic nature of the three lines introducing the text below the image, is persuasively reinforced by the informational nature of the main body copy, despite a lack of directive speech in the concluding part of the text. The addressee is instead confronted with a slogan that presumes purchase, emblematic in the use of the interjection 'Grazie', functioning as a short and memorable formula by which to recall the advertising message and the company's products. The slogan also stimulates a sense of after-purchase satisfaction in those addressees who already own a Candy, whether or not it is the advertised product, and is meant to induce a particular curiosity in terms of the product's performance characteristics in those who do not possess a Candy, or are unaware of the brand.

The 1960s increasingly see advertising in women's magazines targeting women as active decision-makers in the acquisition of more expensive products like the domestic appliance. Nevertheless, the advertisements appear to construct an implicit scenario of responsibility devolved to wives by husbands with little wish to become involved in time-consuming, but expensive purchases and having a less stringent hold on family finances based on higher income levels. Although a typically middle-class view of the role of women that would only partly correspond to reality, women's greater decision-making ability in the acquisition of a product is also based on their use, familiarity and liking of the brand. Low-key or small print advertising gives way to full-page, large-print advertisements with detailed technical features and overt pricing to catch the consumer's eye. The 'Castor' washing machine is advertised as 'perfetta' in every way at only 89,000 lire (*Confidenze*, 9th May, 1965), whilst 'Rex' priced at 79,900 lire and above, offers an automatic system that can 'candeggiare' in an eternal search for perfection by the Americanised housewife aiming for a 'whiter than white' washing like that of her English-speaking counterpart.

3.6 DOMESTIC APPLIANCE ADVERTISING IN THE 1970s: INDEPENDENCE AND NEW FAMILIES

The combination of these advertisements in 1960s women's magazines may, in many ways, be regarded as normal where these products enter the normal spending power, and housekeeping budgets available to many middle-class women, given that women's prime responsibility, whether working or not, remains shopping, cleaning, cooking, and managing the household budget within certain financial constraints. Unlike other advertising, such as for insurance, vehicles and the service sector, that are still far from representative of women's budding financial and employment independence, appliance advertisements probably represent the most significant targeting of middle-class women in spending terms. By 1968, the modern 'massaia' is targeted for the Zoppas dishwasher in pre-Christmas issues, encouraged to choose her own 'regalo': 'un sogno da adulti' in order to have a 'Natale più' (*Grazia*, 15th December, 1968).

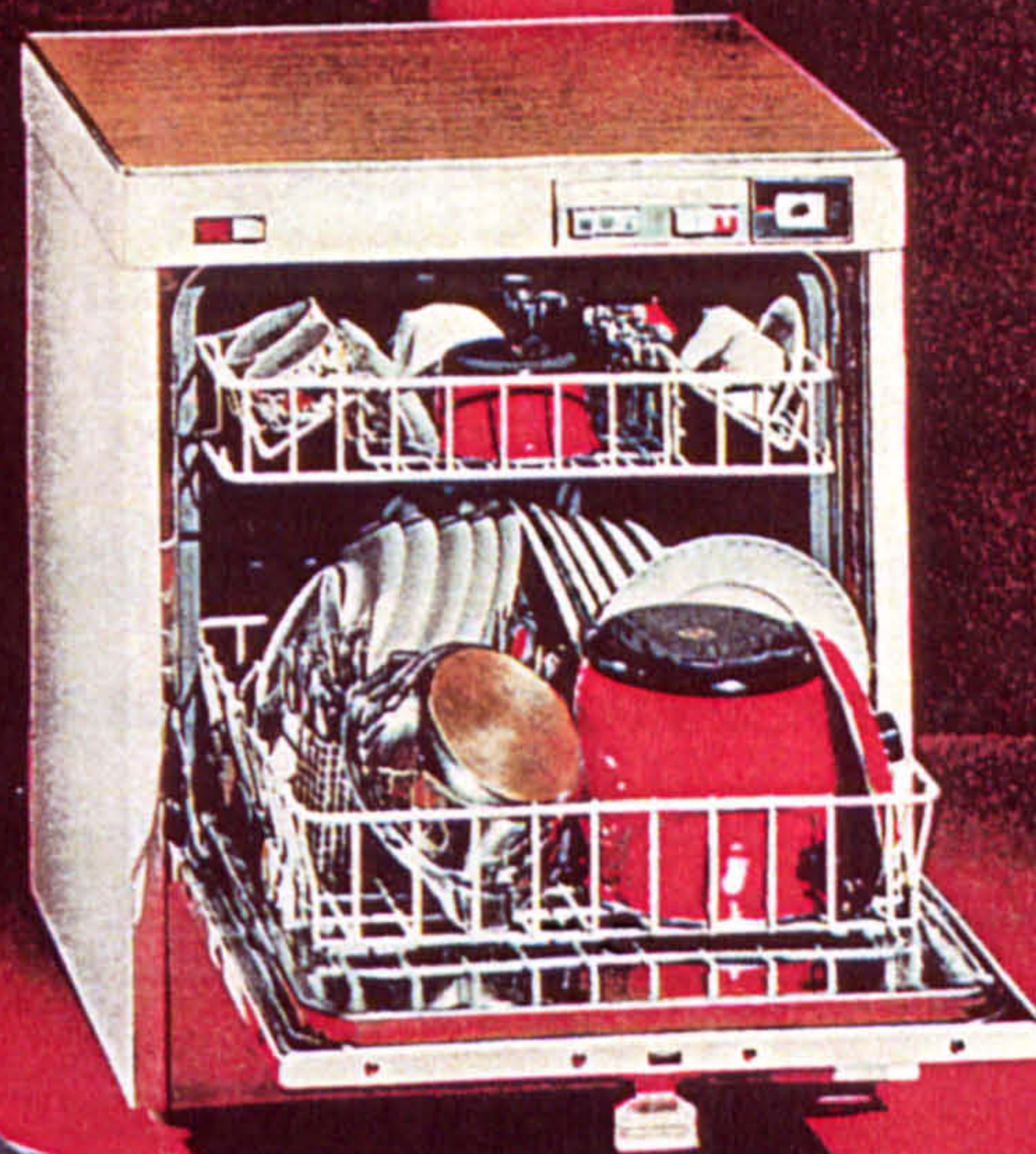
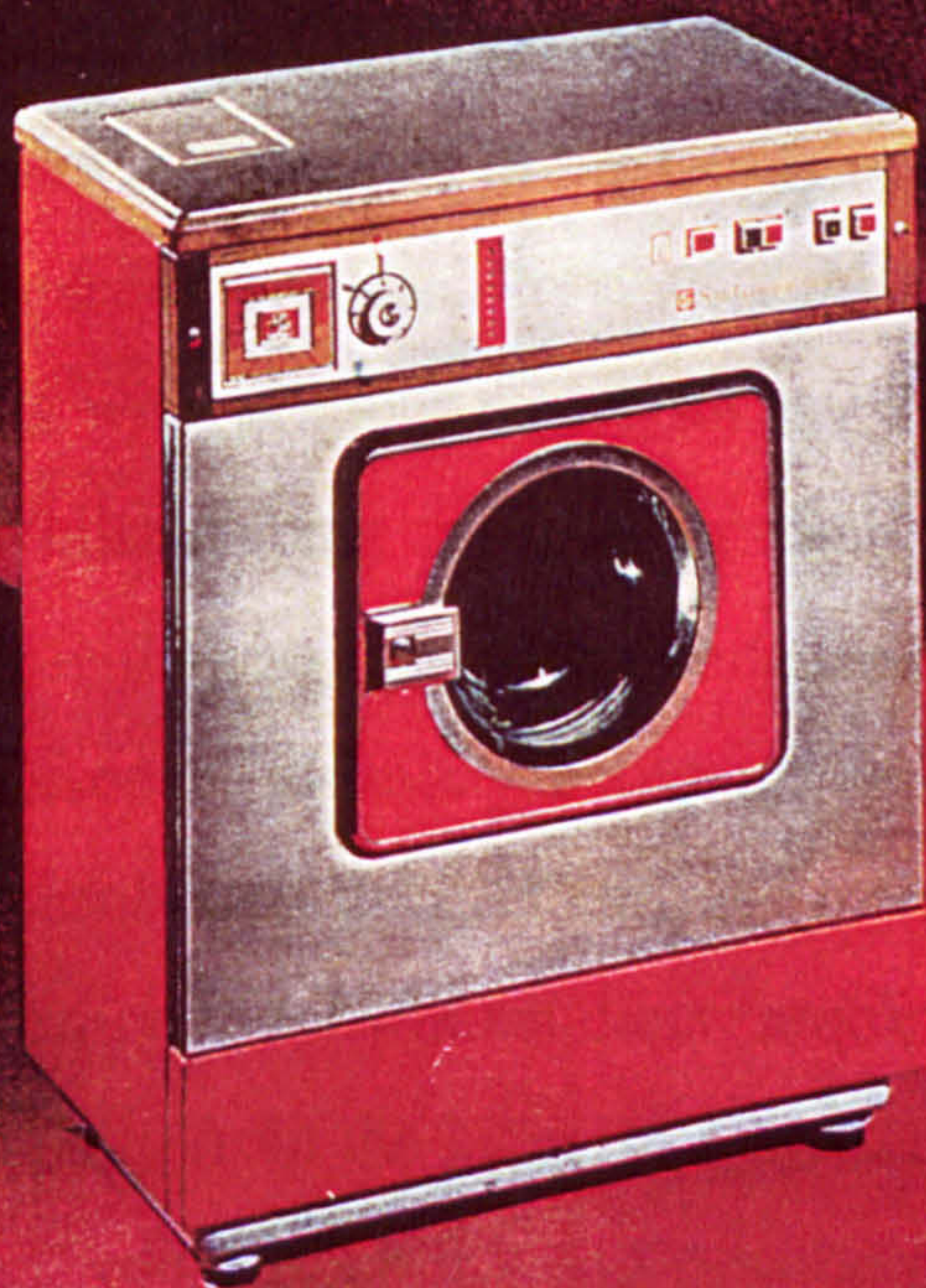
At the same time, San Giorgio provides similar 'Elettro ... Addomesticati' products that are shown in Figure 3.11. These products are intended to be shown in the advertisement as allowing her to dedicate more time not only to herself, but above all to her demanding husband and son, whose laments 'Ma allora contiamo meno di una pentola?' encourage her to rush out to her nearest dealer (*Grazia*, 22nd September, 1968). The use of the adjective 'addomesticati' is also very significant, where the double meaning encourages women to feel that the domestic appliance is not the only thing that is 'domesticated', but that they have achieved the ultimate feat of 'taming' their husband to their needs, even if such needs are limited to a new appliance, and the time saved is still dedicated to the family. The most marked contrast to previous years, and a certain recognition of the importance of middle-class women's real, increased and independent purchasing power is, therefore, evident in advertisements involving women as active, purse-wielding decision-makers, albeit linked to the home. In this sense, the 1970s developments are seen as negative for the growing sense of achievement and independence among women, as a virtual backlash was seen to take place. This backlash undoubtedly permeates the advertising in women's magazines, with more space dedicated to less costly household goods and food. Also, more expensive cosmetics are advertised in one category of women's magazines, while more financially accessible ranges are in other categories.

Much of the backlash, also evident in roadside advertisements and particularly in advertisements appropriating feminist concepts and terminology⁷, results from a number of developments culminating in the 1975 family reform law, the result of a dawning awareness of the discriminatory position held by women in custom, tradition, and in the vision of the legal establishment. These many developments combined to provide women with a sense of progress that, nevertheless, often appears as a mirage in a society and culture dominated by conservative forces. Emblematic of change is the family, regarded as the centre of the middle-class woman's life experience, yet appearing to lose its hierarchical structure, with spouses having similar rights and duties in the interests of the family and with the specific obligation of co-operation to best meet family needs.



MA ALLORA, NOI
CONTIAMO
MENO DI UNA
PENTOLA?

ORA
NON
PIU'!



Perchè ora non ho più l'assillo dei piatti da lavare, mi basta premere un bottone e tutto si lava da sé: la lavastoviglie SUPERAUTOMATICA San Giorgio è elettro...addomesticata. Ha tre diversi cicli di lavaggio, un'ampia vasca in acciaio inossidabile, dosa da sola l'acqua (opportunamente dolcificata) e il detersivo, controlla le temperature, sterilizza tutto a vapore e, alla fine, asciuga le stoviglie. Soprattutto, non occorre sorvegliarla: è superautomatica, è sicura. Così, finalmente, ho più tempo da dedicare a "loro" e un po' anche a me stessa. Ecco perchè questa lavastoviglie SUPERAUTOMATICA è uno fra i tanti ELETTR...ADDOMESTICATI San Giorgio.

ELETTR... ADDOMESTICATI San Giorgio



UNA QUALITÀ CHE VUOL DIRE SICUREZZA

Lavabiancheria - Lavastoviglie - Lucidatrici aspiranti - Aspirapolvere - Frigoriferi - Ventilatori - Estrattori d'aria - Apparecchi da riscaldamento.

3.11 SAN GIORGIO. Elettro ... Addomesticati
- *Grazia*, 1968
(on previous page)

Although women keep their maiden surname, with the husband's added on, and children taking the latter's, according to Lesley Caldwell, this case highlights the Constitution's apparent assertion of equal rights, whilst demonstrating the continued discrimination of women in post-war Italy, given the propagated vision of the family as the basic social unit and women's role within that vision:

The Constitutional aspirations were a continuing assertion of a certain familial organisation and its naturalness; in this they underwrote the anachronistic norms of the Civil Code by making a potential biological capacity and its cultural location the basis for the most clear-cut relation between women and State law. At the same time they offered a vision of equality which was the opposite of this (Caldwell, 1991, p.67).

The family unit, thus, continues to be placed at the pinnacle of a system based on a rigid hierarchy of laws within the Italian legal system, and the predominance given to quasi-immutable Constitutional laws. Nevertheless, a revision of women's social and private roles as contained in the family reform law, is evident in various issues such as spouse's financial position. Previously the husband's duty centred on protecting and maintaining his wife, without regard for her financial standing, or contribution to family expenses. Whilst placing the onus of family maintenance squarely on the man's shoulders, and providing women with a certain degree of financial protection in troubled times, as their personal patrimony could not be touched by their husbands, the view of women's contribution to the family as marginal is reinforced. This traditional, binary vision of man-provider/woman-carer requires security from the former, and obedience with fidelity from the latter. In a revised situation based on both contributing to family needs according to ability and possibility ('lavoro professionale o casalingo'), housework is essentially equated to paid work in terms of the importance held by both partners vis-à-vis the family (Di Majo, 1996, p.199).

The period is also characterised by women's fluctuating presence in the labour market, with housework, therefore, retaining its centrality in their lives, and in particular of those of middle-class women, whose position in a society undergoing economic recession is once more centred on the home as never before. As if to reinforce the centrality of the home in women's lives, other influences based on availability of greater free time, combine with the notions of entertainment to filter through Italian society to an increasing extent, by means of the media, as the lower middle and working classes increasingly aspire to the leisure time that prosperity brings to some, along with unemployment to others. Middle-class families, satisfied with the attainment of a certain level of 'benessere' represented by the possession of one or more cars, motor scooters, TVs, washing machines, refrigerators, and smaller domestic appliances, see leisure and personal enjoyment as the next goal. The number of television licenses is indicative of this well-being: rising from 2,123,545 in 1960 to 12,102,654 in 1975 (ISTAT, 1976, p.59). As advertising gradually moves to new terrain exhibiting goods or activities previously regarded as luxuries for the truly well-off, shopping and consumption become hobbies worthy of a day's outing. The levels of consumption previously aspired to in American films, and programmes, become a reality for the middle-class family turning to symbols, high-technology and lifestyle, as the means of distinguishing itself from others.

Much of this status seeking is reflected in the advertising targeted at men in such magazines as *Panorama*, that in dealing with socio-political issues are read by men to a much higher degree. For middle-class women, much status-seeking remains firmly anchored to the home and presentation of self, albeit innovated by a touch of feminism, and awareness of the world at large. The increased free time available to many middle-class women is seen as a double-edged sword, where although domestic appliances reduce the time required to carry out household chores, and household managers, especially those with older children, do have more time, this is matched by the realisation that the role they have been brought up to fill, as middle-class or aspiring middle-class housewives, is the prerogative of the versatile domestic appliance. A return to working life entails a realisation by many of the lack of fulfilment, or even

redundancy, of their domestic and employment roles, compounded by the ensuing part-time, or lowly-paid, jobs resulting from a lack of education, experience or social and professional contacts (Saraceno, 1988).

Nevertheless, the domestic haven is increasingly invaded by mixed messages in women's magazines, from the more innovative *Amica*, to the more traditional *Grazia*. In advertising terms, message and text begin to integrate the role of the male, that effectively results, it may be argued, in a change in perception regarding male roles and behaviour. Domestic appliance advertisements are emblematic of both the magazines' and advertisers' attempts at being innovative, without foregoing the 'housewife look' or recall of much advertising. Appliance advertisements become increasingly varied, as producers vary message content and image in accordance with the perceived target market, leading to the inevitable result of making ever more blurred the concise housewife concept of preceding years. The presence of mixed messages is notable, from the traditional to the tempered 'avant-garde', reflecting and coinciding with the many changes that a society in transformation experiences. The women portrayed in these advertisements may be viewed differently with the entrance of the male onto the advertising scenario. Roles of technical expert and holder of the family purse-strings increasingly emerge in advertising for these goods, as advertisers attach greater credibility to the man in these roles, and women's subsequent favourable reading of the advertisements. Other roles also emerge, however, according to magazine income and age target, as does advertising with a reduced female gendered basis in language or image terms.

Issues of *Grazia* (1968-70), and the younger woman's magazine *Confidenze* (27th August 1970) illustrate a pensive husband, in early middle-age, mulling over the pros and cons of the ideal features of a new fridge for his wife. The advertisement's convincing message is that 'Naonis' (a Zanussi brand) provides the woman with 'her own' food shop at home. Indeed 'Lui per lei vuole Naonis'. The superiority of the brand is vouchsafed by a caring, yet 'expert', husband who holds the purse-strings, and the

solution to his wife's happiness in his hands. Although the man appears to be the target consumer, the use of a typical middle-class husband, is akin to that of using a testimonial whose recommendation of the product is not open to question, and whose qualities as male and technical are reflected onto the product. The general cultural predisposition of associating greater technical know-how with men, is relied on to convince the female buyer, especially as the advertisement appears in a woman's magazine whose readers are viewed predominantly as housewives, with the income-earning male head of household. The male buyer model, which is proposed by this type of advertisement, is seen to correspond to multiple scenarios: the domestic appliance bought with the man giving technical advice when a buying decision must be made, but with the woman's probable role as final decider and buyer, albeit within the constraints of family finances; or the appliance as a gift to his 'lei'. Notable is the fact that the female image is traded in for that of the pensive husband, mulling over the most appropriate refrigerator that will best please his wife and suit her food shopping needs.

Although the female image no longer dominates appliance advertisements, she retains her centrality in the discourse as main user of the appliance, a fact reiterated by appliance, detergent and related product advertisements directly aimed at the female consumer. Use of an alternative image underlines the fact that, although advertisements for other domestic appliances like washing machines are more overtly targeted at women, the nature of this product is such that it may be used by all the family. The message, thus, allows the man an active role in the purchase of a domestic product, a role previously negated, without compromising his masculinity, and allows more scope for alternative forms of advertising. The advertisement attempts to cross the boundaries of portraying a 'new' husband who takes an interest in his wife's needs at a time characterised by women's emerging awareness of their needs. Nevertheless the emphasis remains on the woman's domestic role with her place firmly located 'in the kitchen', as the basis of the advertisement. The role of the male as technical expert is a standard feature of certain categories of products, and of more staid middle-class magazines like *Confidenze* and *Grazia*, where male authority is matched by value for money. The role of

influencer, if not of actual buyer, in the acquisition of this type of product begins to emerge, despite its singularity, as two male laboratory technicians pore over a white tablecloth in a 1976 combined advertisement (*Confidenze*, 21st March) for 'Rex' washing machines and 'All' detergent. One recommends the other in the headline: 'All multigrado raccomandato da REX (come da 80 lavatrici su 100) per questo pulito insuperabile'. The recommendation of quality and performance comes above all from the technicians, however, whose presence is linked to notions of laboratory tested efficiency.

By the late 1970s, the sexual, rugged and comfort-seeking male begins to be matched by other images, as men are incorporated into the ranks of family man and loving partner. The social transformations that see the affirmation of women in terms of their political and personal rights, and the corresponding erosion of the patriarchal model, emblematic in the feared 'pater familias' begin to emerge to a greater degree in women's magazine advertising by the late 1970s. The time lag is a feature of the time required for social transformations to become integrated into existing cultural concepts to a partial, if not total, degree. The need for changes within existing systems is generally felt, as is the right to a sense of identity and self by younger generations of women, albeit combined with a wariness of radical stances. The changing conceptions of younger generations, and in particular of young men, as to a woman's 'place' are evident in society and begin to be reflected in advertising. A woman's wish to work for self-fulfilment and financial independence is considered increasingly legitimate, and apart from the necessity of supplementing the man's salary. Housework and bringing up children are seen more and more as the responsibility of both and no longer exclusively of the woman (Parca, 1977).

The new role played by the 1970s man, whether spontaneously adopted despite a more traditional upbringing, or forced through necessity, is revealed in the family scene of 'Quanto' fabric softener (*Grazia*, 1976), significantly different from advertisements for other detergent products (see Figure 3.12). Indeed, this advertisement is characterised by an absence of the machine, a notable feature of other advertisements, where its centrality to the product remained invariable in the language and image of such advertisements.



Morbidezza "Quanto" ...che felicità!

"Quanto" ammorbidente si prende cura del bucato nella fase piú delicata del lavaggio: il risciacquo. "Quanto" infatti, risciacquando restituisce ai tessuti la loro naturale morbidezza, rinnova le fibre, ravviva i colori, profuma delicatamente la biancheria e ne facilita la stiratura. "Quanto": una carezza profumata che porta nuova felicità in casa.

**"Quanto", molto piú
che ammorbidente.**

BENCKISER
impegno di qualità



3.12 QUANTO - *Grazia*, 1976

(on previous page)

The younger family man portrayed in a typical Sunday morning scene in the double bed with the children, is significant in terms of changing family member roles. The severity of the head of the household, and the children that were traditionally 'seen and not heard', appears to dissolve in the soft eiderdown of a family scene emblematic of the product's softening qualities. The freedom enjoyed by children guaranteed own identity and space, the abandoning of the punishing father figure used by desperate mothers to threaten unruly children, and the greater time spent by fathers with their offspring all come across in the image. A change in the perception of children's needs to spend time with the father is borne out in studies of the period, where according to a sample of two different generations of mothers and daughters from Milan, Rome and Palermo, 61% of fathers spent some of their free time with their children compared to just 10% of the previous generation (Harrison, 1972, p.156). Notably, however, the prominence of position afforded to the father at the centre of the advertisement is in contrast to the woman relegated to one side, as the father's new-found role provides the focus of attention in an advertisement for an otherwise unremarkable product.⁸ Indeed, the suspicion that advertisements using the male model as a novel means of attracting the attention of an otherwise advertising-weary reader surfaces, as the products in question have few distinguishing features, or sufficient brand awareness, to avoid using a strategy guaranteeing a greater degree of reader attention. Appliance advertisements continue to use an expanding number of other messages at a time of fervent advertising activity, as domestic appliance companies make every possible effort to attract the attention of middle-class purchasers in a market becoming increasingly saturated. Particularly significant is the role played by women's magazines in that period.

They allow advertisements to communicate a number of features not otherwise possible in other media, and readers to ponder the advertisements, where despite the lower life span that generally characterises the machines, ever more accessible prices, and distribution networks, purchase is not always a matter of lifestyle, or standard of living, but remains a price-quality issue, linked to reliability and income considerations at a time of a widespread economic downturn. The almost total absence of domestic

appliance advertisements in the far income/social class end of the spectrum of women's magazines is indicative of manufacturers' awareness of market potential, as revealed by an analysis of the romance-based *Intimità*. Typically, a 115 page issue of the magazine (6th June, 1975) contains 49 advertising pages, of which only one is for small electric appliances by 'Girmi (see Figure 3.13). *La grande industria dei piccoli elettrodomestici*'. Based on a romantic formula, advertising content reflects a world balanced between reality and dreams, where food, baby goods, low cost beauty and hygiene products, are typical of Milly Buonanno's vision (1975; 1978) of a woman whose class and education locks her into a particularly budget-conscious, home-family ideology.

In comparison, the appliance advertisements of *Confidenze* and *Gioia* reflect the relatively static model of the housewife addressee, whose slightly less restricted finances allow a choice that, in any case, remains linked to value for money and extended use. Hoover advertisements encapsulate this 'massaia', whose modernity waxes and wanes in accordance with product, period, and message. By 1971 (*Gioia*, 19th November), the young, modern 'massaia', careful of family finances, but also of her own needs, leans on her new, upright, machine, the perfect testimonial for the unadventurous 'donna di casa'. Headline, image, and memorable slogan concisely highlight the brand's main feature: 'Il battitappeto Hoover forse costa un po' di più però ... (image) ... quando è Hoover sono soldi spesi bene!'. The slogan is used time and again for older models of the same product, so much so that by 1976 (*Confidenze*, 21st March), the older 'massaia' embodies the reliability of the company's offering, and of the established, upright model: 'Adesso che lo usate da più di 14 anni, vi domandate ancora che cos'ha di speciale il vostro aspirapolvere Hoover?' They are no longer linguistically dated as 'battitappeto'. They are instead transformed into the modern 'aspirapolvere', the centrality of the female figure as a precise carrier of meaning over time, and for different generations, leaves the rest of the message unchanged.



A sentir parlare di Girmi
molte donne pensano solo al Gastronomo.

E dire che Girmi ha una serie di piccoli elettrodomestici
tutti da scoprire.
Per la cucina. Per il bagno. Per la casa.

Casco Europa CH 15.

Eccone alcuni per il bagno e la casa.

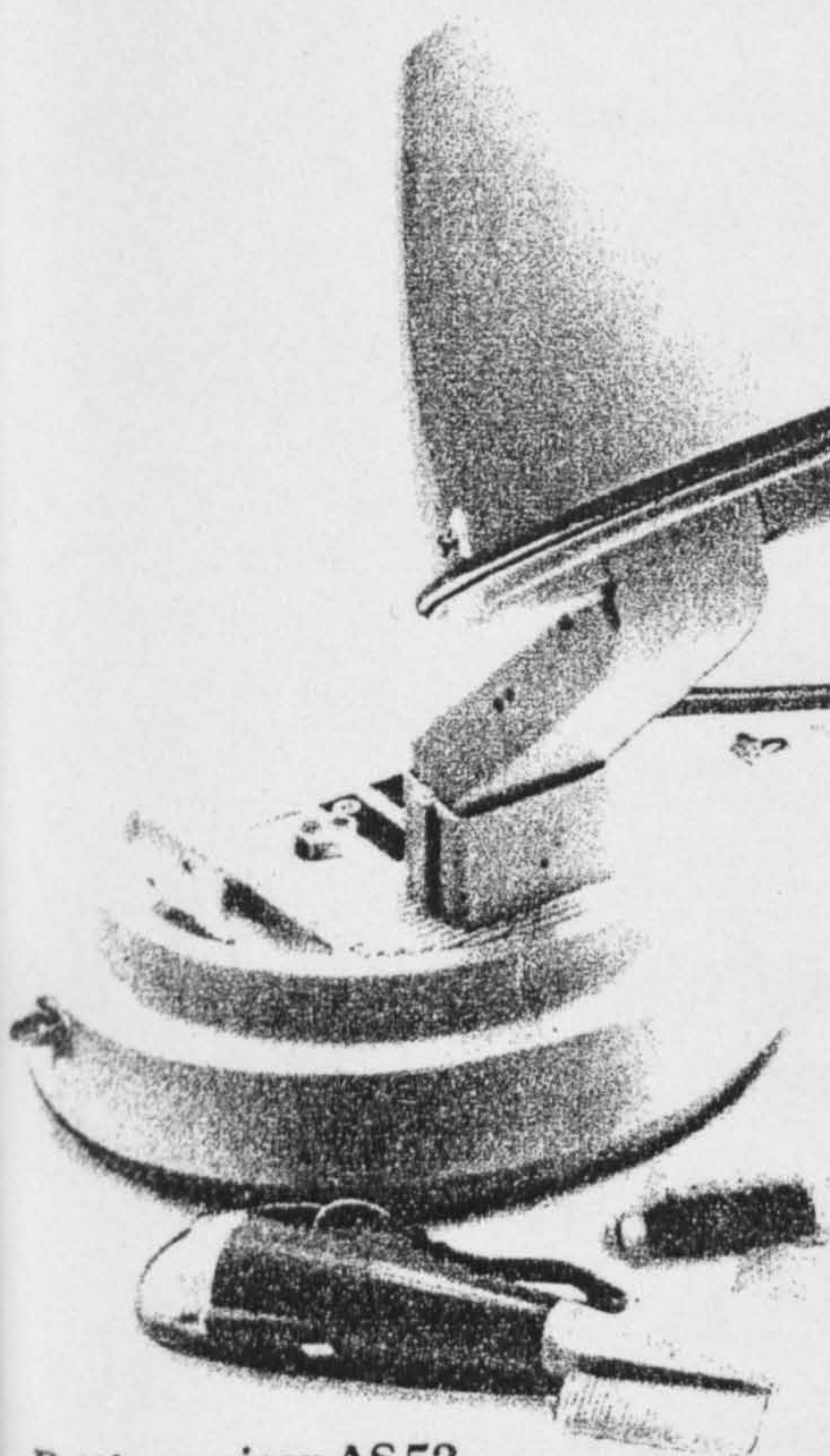
Girmi potrebbe raccontarvi la storia dei piccoli elettrodomestici, tale è la qualità e tanta è la varietà dei suoi prodotti. Non per niente è diventata una delle maggiori industrie europee del settore, in grado di offrire il prodotto più adatto per ogni necessità della cucina, della casa, del bagno.

Girmi offre una gamma ricchissima di prodotti: ognuno in differenti modelli, vari nel tipo e a volte nel colore, ma con una serie di prezzi alla

portata di tutti. E per avere le più ampie possibilità di scelta potete richiedere il catalogo generale con tutti i prodotti Girmi, presso quei negozi che espongono questo simbolo: "Centro Specializzato Girmi".



Casco Lady CH 26.



Pettine unisex AS 52.

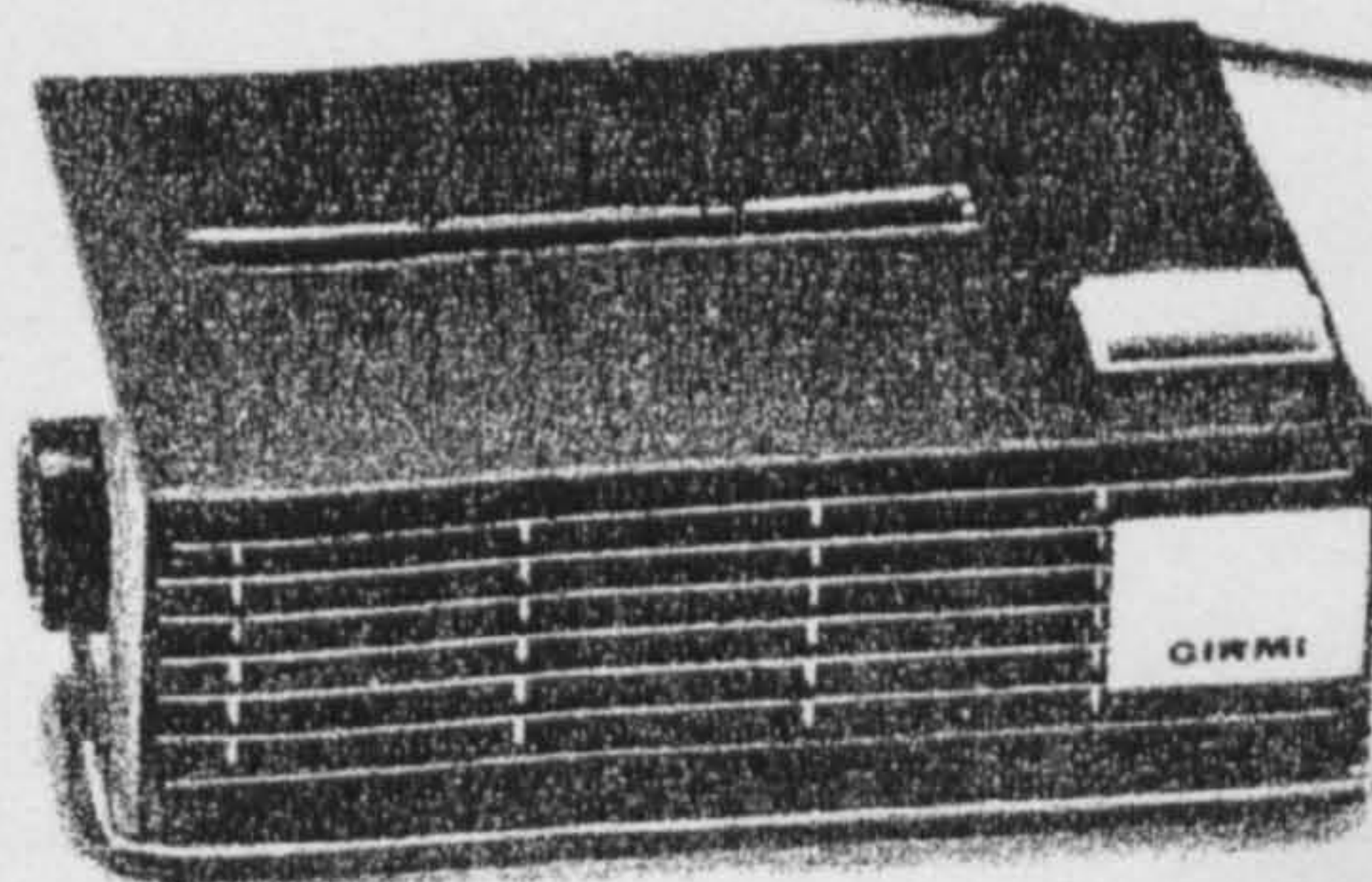
Asciugacapelli senior AS 17.



Lucidascarpe LS 10.



Aerotermino VT 13.



GIRMI

La grande industria dei piccoli elettrodomestici.

3.13 GIRMI - *Intimità*, 1975

(on previous page)

Finally, reinforcement advertising of this nature, making precise use of a middle-class cultural symbol as is that of the housewife, becomes increasingly negligible in the more income secure middle-class strata, where the addressee is exposed to a range of advertising discourse. Zanussi branded 'Rex' washing machines, dishwashers, and smaller appliances, establish a presence in magazines like *Grazia* and *Annabella*, communicating all required characteristics, and more. By 1980 (*Annabella*, 9th October), a double-page, black and white advertisement for the 'Cucina Rex 140 VE' cooker provides the means by which to mould readers' perception of product and company. Product image is followed by an upturned page corner inciting curiosity with the words: 'Non accontentarti mai della facciata, guarda cosa c'è dietro'. The half page factory complex in colour solves the enigma as much as the headline: 'Dietro la cucina Rex 140 VE c'è l'industria di elettrodomestici più grande d'Europa'. Focus on the company's Europeanism does not, however, eliminate concern for family, the individual, and middle-class values like hard work, and achievement: 'E i più grandi d'Europa non si nasce, si diventa ... quando si conquista la fiducia di 40 milioni di famiglie di nazionalità diversa'. Significant is the use of such a semi-slogan bringing to mind the statement from Simone De Beauvoir (1949) that 'on ne naît pas femme, on la devient' for this class of educated reader. This induces a heightened sense of empathy with a company whose women-orientated vision is seen as extending beyond that of the housewife.

3.7 DOMESTIC APPLIANCE ADVERTISING: FROM 'MASSAIA' TO 'NEW WOMAN'?

Discourse based on the family as a unit of consumption, the wider European community, the male, or feminist notions of self, may be seen as part of a trend that contributes towards shifting perceptions of the woman and her role, albeit spasmodically, and more so as the decade progresses. Although such discourse may strike an unrealistic chord for most addressees in a period characterised by socio-economic tensions, and changes that are far from smooth in terms of family roles and behaviour, these advertisements

attempting a new approach are instrumental in reaching into Italian homes, and to those legions of middle-class women whose experience of events is normally indirect, and mediated by mass media and daily routine, and therefore, more open to subtler rather than radically different advertising discourse that does not correspond to their reality. Nevertheless, the lack of real change in advertising discourse for the most 'liberating' of products, at a time of significant feminist activity, remains a constant of the sector, where addressees with greater interests and education remain framed within the home. The message of a 1970 Phillips advertisement (*Annabella*, 30th September) targets a woman who has definitively emerged from drudgery, to completely savour the freedom provided by the three appliances pictured in the upper half of the advertisement, and yet in doing so focuses on the concept of the lady of leisure.

The image of a young, fashionable woman on a long, modern, reclining chair, leafing through her woman's magazine communicates the free time available to be dedicated to personal leisure. Striking in terms of its similarity to the World War One advertisement analysed previously, the passage of time and technology become mere extras in the symbolic use of a reclining middle-class 'signora' that the addressee is encouraged to identify with. Absorbed in the act of leafing through her favourite fashion magazine, the addressee mentally associates with the activity, as the headline 'gran domestici per Signora' reminds her of her social position, related lifestyle, and the ever-present cultural notion of 'padrona di casa'. Emphasis is no longer on machines as perfect mechanical substitutes of chores, but as benign providers of leisure, whose ability to merge with lifestyle requirements is total, and are professionally 'pratici del mestiere', a fact reiterated by contrasting adjectives ('grandi', 'robusti', 'delicati', 'gentile') that link physical and psychological characteristics in a constant reminder of the bygone versatile maid.

The indexical relationship established between machine and a particular vision of the woman as 'massaia' undergoes a certain amount of change, as the housewife model reaches its peak at a time of significant diffusion of this model in advertising in women's

magazines. This idealised vision of the post war 'moglie e madre esemplare' sees the appliance as an invaluable aid in the perfect performance of her household chores. Despite developments in women's socio-economic position, change at an insidiously cultural level appears slow, as seen in terms of the advertisements in women's magazines. At the height of feminist activity, the middle-class woman appears firmly entrenched in a discourse centred on the home, as advertisements for household products establish an indexical relationship, time and again, with this paragon of domestic virtue. Her only concession is initially the greater free time for the family, then for herself, as appliance advertisements generally avoid the feminist discourse used elsewhere, and 'liberation' becomes synonymous with leisure time to be dedicated to reading a woman's magazine. Nevertheless, some important, and frequently underestimated developments, that make inroads into the static nature of the housewife model, relate to issues of lifestyle and financial management, where the middle-class woman is attributed increasing decision-making ability, inevitably confined principally to the home by advertisements, yet reflected in their influence over, or direct purchase of, goods requiring substantial spending power. This element varies in advertising, but is indicative of changing perceptions of women's decision-making, and family budgeting, skills in a post-war period that saw women attributed such abilities in few other areas, and for few other products.

Finally, as cultural and socio-economic change seeps through society by the mid 1970s, the discourse utilised by various advertisements in women's magazines begins to reflect changing attitudes and perceptions, family roles and social behaviour, albeit frequently by means of an appropriation of concepts implying a solid link to the past. Women's magazines fluctuate between ignoring or integrating social developments into their discourse in order to retain a hold over their readership, whilst advertising content relating to the home makes use of factors ranging from the male and age in terms of older female models, to greater freedom of choice, implied within and outside the home, that venture beyond the rigidity of the 'housewife look', and the one dimensional nature of the efficient household manager.

ENDNOTES TO CHAPTER 3

¹ Information on Italian women's contribution to the First World War is more schematic than for the Second, with a brief incursion into the period by various authors analysing the social and employment history of Italian women throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries (Puccini, 1979; Chianese, 1980). The semi-autobiographical novel by the Communist Party militant, Teresa Noce (1978), and Franca Pieroni Bortolotti's (1978) analysis of feminism in the post-World War One period make ample reference to the war years.

² The overall contradictory effect of regime policies regarding women is reflected in a number of social, employment and educational situations. Female education remains at pre-regime levels, home economics courses often take the place of other forms of education, as the concept of the 'woman's place' permeates all levels of society from recommended children's storybooks to an absence of female teachers in what are regarded as more demanding subjects, suitable principally for males, at school and university. Middle-class women are thus oriented towards the home if married, or in general towards maternal roles such as primary teaching and assistance, in attempts at limiting their overwhelming presence in the tertiary sector, whilst the continued female salary regression lead to increasing numbers of working-class women permeating industry as employers find it increasingly more advantageous to employ working-class women. For example, in the textile industry, source of employment to 75.6% of the 1,377,373 women employed in industry in 1936 (Macciocchi, 1976, p.69), wages are reduced by 65% between 1926 and 1929 (Macciocchi, 1976, p.65).

³ The relative exclusion of the war and political events is paradoxically further compounded by the advertising content and format of advertisements in magazines such as *Grazia*. By 1942 advertisements have changed minimally in terms of content. Nevertheless, despite the occasional concession to household products and necessity, *Grazia* does begin to acknowledge the difficulty of obtaining stockings or the holiday tan with an advertisement for the much-used colouring skin cream in the 27th August 1942 issue. In fact, 'CALDEA BRUNA sostituisce le calze' the reader is told by a girl on a bicycle. Other advertisements restore a more typically middle-class tone: 'Lital' digestive salts are to be added to drinking water, as the advertisement shows a maid carrying a tray, whilst the back cover sports the 'Sarti Cognac Gran Premio' medieval jousting tournament advertisement. Throughout the entire year the magazine contains the usual quarter-page health and beauty products, with the back cover remaining a middle-class prerogative, with advertisements ranging from San Giorgio raincoats to the German company Bayer's aspirin.

The importance of *Grazia* lies in its dual autarchic and commercial advertising function, reflected in terms of advertising content for branded, unbranded and do-it-yourself remedies. The presence of alternatives, usually referred to in columns and articles, play a significant substitution effect in terms of greater accessibility, and lower price, for the less well-to-do reader. The alternatives suggested seem to allow the same objective to be reached without the expense involved and generally regard cooking and cleaning solutions. The presence of an infant Italian industry in both the packaged food and chemical sectors undoubtedly influences the absence of advertising, as much as the lack of refrigeration in homes and limited use of preservation techniques. The magazine attempts to appeal to various income levels within its middle-class readership, by means of sewing patterns, use of cut-offs, regeneration, and recycling of clothes, suggested recipes for fruit and vegetables in a multitude of low-cost, ingenious ways, that initiate under autarchic restrictions and escalate with the war, as women are encouraged to maintain standards of family care, and hospitality, that become increasingly difficult as the war progresses.

The 1940s are unusual years as women retain this seemingly static position in a society awaiting the end of the 'lightning' war, to be subsequently exhorted to participate directly and indirectly in the war effort. The similarity between the First and the Second World Wars is striking (Bravo, 1990), calling upon women's sense of patriotism, solidarity, and contribution, in order to allow the men to be called to arms. The rapid transformation required is perhaps even more remarkable in a country like Italy, where women are steeped in fascist doctrine, willingly or unwillingly, based on the mother and wife figure which, in theory, permits little variation and limited participation in public life. Although more indicative of the condition of middle rather than working-class and peasant women, given the unrealistic nature of the regime's rhetoric for women required to work through economic necessity, and for the profitably low wages paid for female labour by industrial and agricultural employers (Wilson, 1993). In line with economic and war needs, necessity leads to a rapid reconceptualisation of women's social role and contribution, as dictated by the general incoherence of fascist ideology. Although issues of magazines like *Grazia* for the later war years are lacking, occasional advertisements in the early war years (1941-1942) are a tentative indication of things to come: regular advertising of 'Sanadon' sees use of women in employment, where painful legs are alleviated by use of the product - 'Sanadon fa la donna sana'. Likewise, 'Tonol' facilitates an increase in body weight.

⁴ This dominant ideology develops despite the formation of female resistance movements during the war, and the founding of the 'Unione Donne Italiane' (UDI), that participates in the post-war Constitutional battle for equality and the right to vote, given that women finally appear to become fully recognised members of society (Ascoli, 1979). Reality is soon in the offing, however, as the condition of the returning men induces a 'return to domesticity' campaign for women in a replay of the previous war, with the rapid elimination of any conception of liberation from social constraints. Particularly significant is Pope Pius

XII's 1945 call for 'il ritorno al focolare' (Ombra, 1961, p.227), forming the corner-stone of the Church's efforts at remodelling the role played by women in society, with the war viewed as a mere parenthesis in an otherwise static dedication to the family. Non-domestic employment is deemed evil in all but exceptional circumstances, with Catholic organisations across the country exercising considerable influence over women's choices. The capillary nature of these organisations, combined with the support of the 'Democrazia Cristiana's (DC) own female-based organisations, act as an important influencer, further corroborated by the Church's anti-communist stance, and subsequent alignment with the DC's policies. Furthermore, the widespread post-war expectation of a return to 'normal' family life is fuelled by the Church, stimulating women's fundamental consensus towards its visions, and by implication in those of the DC. As noted by Ravera (1978), the prevailing DC vision of woman as 'regina della casa' is totally compatible with the Church's vision, and results in renewed attempts at relegating women to that very role. So much so, that by the early 1950s, the levels of female employment continue decreasing with the onslaught of the 'professional housewife' status, only to see a dramatic reversal of tendency in the build-up to the economic boom in the second half of the 1950s.

⁵ It is worth noting, however, that although this ideology permeated women's conception of their future, women's magazines also feverishly propose the much longed-for 'rags to riches' dreams of success. The lack of market opportunity and advertising potential associated with the domestic appliance does not hinder the use of the sewing machine in persuasive advertising message. Seen as a domestic appliance by virtue of its role in substituting purchased garments, ability to provide domestic-based employment, and contribute to family finances, the sewing machine is rapidly inserted in advertising discourse that paradoxically minimises these homely product's characteristics. The 'rags to riches' scenario utilised reflected the aspiration of many young women and of their mothers, seen as increasingly achievable and portrayed in an advertisement for Necchi sewing machines (*Confidenze*, 17th January, 1954). Unlike the difficulties inherent in having the beauty and skills to win a beauty contest, or in marrying into the aristocracy, this advertisement portrays the more attainable situation of a photoromance actress endorsing the product. Seated at the machine, homeliness and 'star' qualities are aptly combined in the personal success story:

Prima di rivelarsi attrice in "Due soldi di speranza", Maria Fiore faceva la sartina e cuciva faticosamente a mano. Ora che è divenuta una vera "stella" con il film "Scampolo", ha finalmente esaudito il suo vecchio sogno: una magnifica macchina per cucire *Necchi B.U.*

⁶ Much of this data does not reflect the rapid increase in putting out, as many women work from home in order to meet both family and financial needs, whilst manufacturers demand the very form of labour that leaves women socially unprotected, but that allows costs to be minimised in a fiercely competitive market.

⁷ Lamberto Pignotti and Egidio Mucci's analysis (1978) of the appropriation of feminist and sadomasochistic elements in advertising is a particularly significant publication of the period, in highlighting the backlash against feminism, and the use of freer reference to sexual issues. Use of a particular language and image may be found in examples for '1p' sofas, also cited by the authors, and emblematic of a form of sexual linguistic exploitation. In an advertisement from *Annabella* (25th April 1972), the attractive model is draped over a '1p' sofa, surrounded by a group of trumpet players, heralding the fact that the product is resistant to any sort of treatment: '300,000 volte seviziate, un collaudo terribile ma le poltrone UNO PI rimangono belle, bellissime'. The sexual use of women, as much as the violence contained in the language and tone, is, according to the authors, merely another means of redimensioning women's social standing and real power, shown merely as objects to be used for male pleasure. The most remarkable feature of this advertisement is that it features in a woman's magazine, and one that appears to be attempting a new, more up-to-date approach to its higher-income, better educated readership. The power wielded by advertising revenue is, therefore, as strong as ever, where an advertisement with such a message may validly appear in a woman's magazine, seen as modern enough to welcome it.

⁸ Changing roles in advertisements also provide the means by which to attract the reader's attention, with use of non-static, unfamiliar, or radically different poses. The notion of physical placement of men and women in advertisements begins to vary, as women's subordinate physical position to the male in the advertisement becomes less marked. In some cases, the woman is pictured in a total reversal of pose, a rarely seen posture, and usually only with a male in an inferior position of power, or one carrying different socio-economic connotations for the addressee (Goffman, 1985). A 1976 advertisement in *Grazia* for ceramic floor tiling sees a modern sitting-room setting with a couple sipping pre or post-dinner drinks. The modernity of the flat and the couple's aura of sophistication provide the viewer with a mental vision of the product's features and setting. The striking element of the advertisement is the anomalous position of both models, where the woman is reclining on the sofa with the man sitting on the floor nearby at a lower level of head height. The man's position expresses the extent of his appreciation for the high quality of the flooring, thus relaying a sense of intimacy, and corresponding appreciation for the woman and for the product, in a pose characteristic in advertising of female subservience to the male (Dyer, 1982).

CHAPTER 4: CIRIO, BUITONI AND BARILLA - THE GROWTH OF THE MEDITERRANEAN DIET

4.1 INTRODUCTION: FROM PULSES TO PASTA

The growth of the modern distribution of food, and the advertising of food products, has characterised the Italian people and culture in the twentieth century, as developments have been driven by the business sector, society, the economy, the market and cultural influences. Women's social role and public image forms the basis of much advertising message in a sector that rapidly takes advantage of various concepts through time to make advertisements ever more meaningful and eye-catching for the army of women meeting family nutrition needs. The use of advertising message and image varies over time in the case of the companies analysed, whilst being by no means unique in different historical periods. The aims of this section are to consider the advertising conducted principally by Cirio, a Naples-based company, from the inter-war years, given the historical continuity of the advertisements, and the particular message utilised. The period following the 1960s launch of Barilla pasta in women's magazines is considered in terms of the advertising conducted, given the company's prolific advertising from this period of growth to the present day, and its high advertising profile in the marketing of a brand that has become one of the staples of the Italian diet. As a central issue in women's lives, the nature of food advertising, and in particular, of the advertisements analysed, reveal a use of advertising message and image principally based on Italian women's primary nurturing and caring functions, that undoubtedly play a role in shaping notions of diet, body image, and women's social presence over the century. As a result, this section also recalls information considered previously regarding women's developing social role, the ideologies that influence the construction of this role, and the implications for middle-class female consumers in their reading of women's magazines.

The concept of diet has regularly been interpreted in the Italian culture and language as a combination of typical foodstuffs, forming the basis of a somewhat unique

Mediterranean approach to eating. The wide variety, cultural differences, and regional dishes that make up the people's approach to food have been progressively channelled by twentieth century advertising into a rapidly less differentiated form of eating, with pasta rapidly taking over the role of a number of other staples previously used, especially by the poorer sections of the population. Pasta becomes an important staple mainly in post-World War Two advertising discourse, as this food comes within the reach of the urbanised masses, substituting the pulses of a bygone era. The relevance of this advertising watershed in Italian media, and significantly in women's magazines, sees a concentration of advertising for food products initially on foods that are easy to dry, pulverise, concentrate or otherwise preserve. Much initial advertising offers access to fresh products in daily/weekly newspaper advertising pages in the post-unification years. Stock cubes, olive oil and drinking chocolate suppliers become regular advertisers in magazines like *Margherita* by the end of the nineteenth century. Indeed, the new century reveals increasing advertising of food products, alongside the more familiar malted barley and chocolate drinks, medicinal oil and liquor-based reconstituting remedies.

Advertisements are mainly text-based, with Maggi stock cubes and Leibig meat extract, for example, featuring in informational advertisements based on product characteristics and point of purchase, well into the first decade of the twentieth century. Nevertheless, use of image becomes increasingly important, with Nestlé advertising its milk powder ('farina lattea') in half page advertisements, exhibiting the many quality medals won by the company in shows and exhibitions of the period (*La Donna*, 20th February, 1909). A significant advertiser is also Suchard for its chocolate products, where by 1912, the regular advertising strategy which features children (see Figure 4.1), allows the prevalently image-based advertisements to be associated with particular qualities of nutrition and pleasurable taste notions for the addressee. However, by the turn of the first decade of the new century, a further development in women's magazines, in terms of the consumption of food-based products, also becomes linked to the increasing advertising of slimming products, alongside and in contrast to the more culturally affirming fattening ones.

SUCHARD's



MILKA

VELMA

NOISETTINE

LES DÉLICIEUX CHOCOLATS POUR CROQUER

4.1 SUCHARD - *La Donna*, 1912

(on previous page)

An example of this type of advertising is the text-based advertisement that appeared in *La Donna* on 5th November 1912 (see Figure 4.2). This advertisement gives the reader detailed information about the slimming remedy, 'Thé Svelto', catching the eye of the reader with the exhortation to 'DIMAGRIRE' set out boldly in capitals. The progressive move towards viewing a reduction in female body weight as essential and desirable, becomes fundamental in the advertising of various food products of the post-World War One period, under the influence of the fashionable 'garçonne', and in view of women's seemingly newly discovered liberation in social, physical and economic terms. A similar product to 'Thé Svelto' is 'Thé Messicano', which becomes a regular feature in *Lidel* more than twenty years later (see Figure 4.3). This shows the continuity of this type of advertising in the inter-war years. However, there are some changes in 1934 when this advertisement reappears, as there is no need to give detailed information to the reader as before. It becomes enough to state that it is 'infallibile per dimagrire', while featuring both a fashionably slim figure in silhouette behind the steam from the tea and the headline that states clearly that to become fat means the renunciation of all youthful joys.

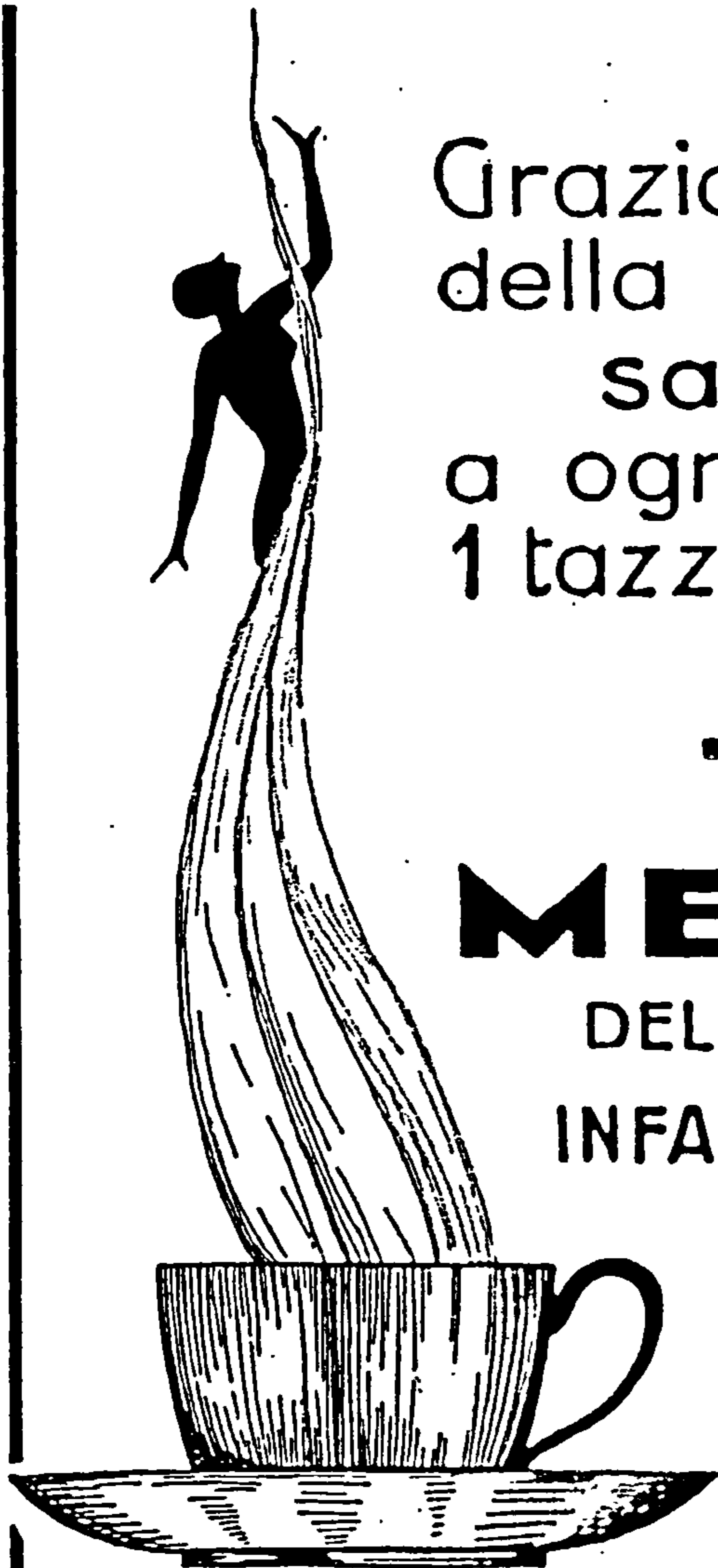
4.2 THE 1920s AND 1930s: THE DEVELOPMENT OF ADVERTISING FOOD DISCOURSES

Reviewing the 1920s advertisements for food products, they appear still relatively limited, given a continued lack of packaged, tinned and preserved foods, in a market dominated by the confined expansion of sales and distribution systems, the habit of purchasing fresh produce on a daily basis, restricted purchasing power, and the immediacy of producer to consumer networks. Food products are still relatively rarely advertised amongst those for the multiple beauty products, cars, radios and gramophones that dominate such magazines as *Lidel*, *La Donna*, and the yearly *Almanacco della donna italiana*. However, by the second half of the 1920s, more food and drink products appear in advertisements, albeit with varying messages and images, according to company strategy and the target market. Maggi stock cubes, for example, are featured with a very small text-based advertisement in quite a number of the issues of that period.

4.2 THÉ SVELTO - *La Donna*, 1912

(on previous page)

INGRASSARE E' RINUNCIARE ALLA GIOVINEZZA, ALLE SUE GIOIE



Grazia · linea · eleganza
della Moda moderna
salute perfetta
a ogni donna assicura
1 tazza mattina e sera
di

THÉ MESSICANO

DEL DOTT. JAWAS

INFALLIBILE PER DIMAGRIRE
SENZA NUOCERE
ALLA SALUTE
PERCHE' PRODOTTO
ESCLUSIVAMENTE
VEGETALE

*Si vende in tutte le farmacie
L. 9,50 la scatola.*

4.3 MESSICANO - *Lidel*, 1934

(on previous page)

In the later inter-war years of the 1930s, frequently reproducing poster advertisements, stock cubes and meat extracts, such as Maggi and 'Pisonis estratto di Carne', are advertised in women's magazines as versatile cooking products. Advertisements for chocolate also are a common feature. There are also general non-branded advertisements from sectors as diverse as those marketing fish and beer, actively encouraging women to purchase these products. Thus, Figure 4.4 shows an example of a 1930 advertisement for beer that begins to appear frequently in women's magazines of that period, such as *Lidel*. Women are definitely targeted by the beer industry with the exhortation 'Si Lasci tentare, Signora!' and a text persuading them of beer's goodness with the final slogan 'Chi beve birra ... Campa cent' anni'. Also from the 1920s, and continuing throughout the 1930s, advertisements for San Pellegrino mineral water and the liqueurs Aperol and Fernet Branca appear regularly, albeit in relation to the drinks sector. Indeed, they characterise the common advertising in women's magazines of that period, normally with definite health and slimming messages directed at their readers (see Figures 4.5 and 4.6).

The late 1920s see ever more detailed advertisements for food products, such as those of Cirio, as image and text are used to complement each other to rivet the reader's attention on a complex advertising discourse. The half page advertisement for Cirio jams (*Lidel*, 15th August, 1930) is notable in the late 1920s and early 1930s for being one of the few advertisements for food products to appear in the magazine *Lidel* (see Figure 4.7).

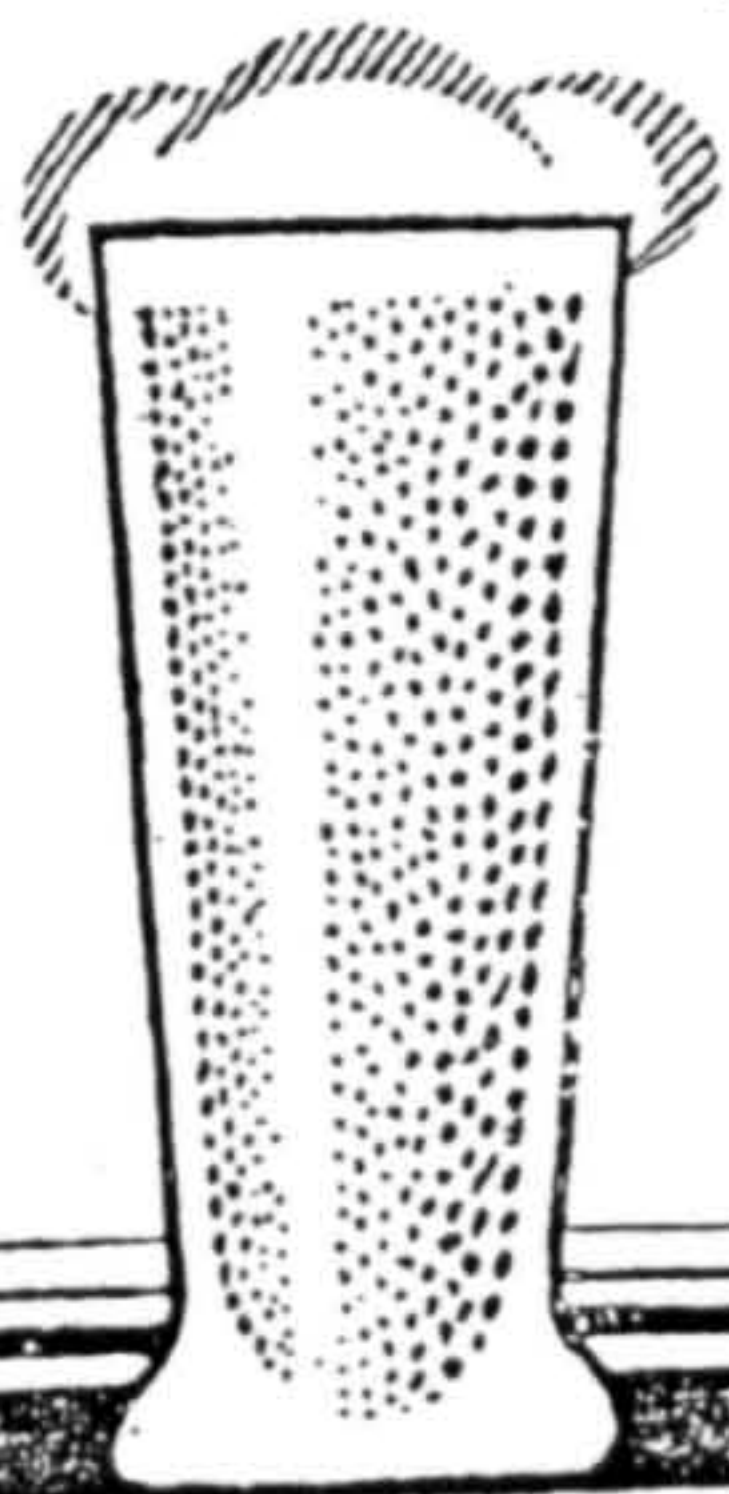
The relative uniqueness of the Cirio advertisements lies in use of image and text targeted at women in a purely self-related way, allowing their attention to be directed to issues far from those utilised by other producers like Buitoni, whose occasional advertisements in the magazine tended to focus more on women's mothering function (see Figure 4.8). Although founded in 1836, the company only begins to produce preserved foods after 1900 with fruit based products that circumvent the housewife's difficulty in obtaining fresh fruit in the winter months, whilst unleashing a veritable spate of advertising activity following its 1930s efforts at educating consumers on the benefits of using canned and packaged foods instead of the fresh and weighed variety (Villani, 1957).

Si lasci tentare, Signora!



Quando il largo respiro del mare non basta più a ravvivare le vostre forze, e al sole vi sentite bruciare e sciogliere come torce accese, quando vi sentite stanche e come dominate dal tormento della sete, lasciatevi tentare. Attingete refrigerio e ristoro a una buona tazza di birra italiana ✱ La bevanda bionda e spumosa ha un gusto e una freschezza che non hanno l'eguale ✱ Igienica, sana, contenente solo dal 3 al 4 per cento di alcool, saporosa e ricca di proprietà attive e nutrienti, la birra è una bevanda squisita che aiuta a vincere le depressioni nervose e le debolezze organiche. Provate una volta sola a bere questa bevanda che piace a tutti e a tutti fa bene ✱ Non potrete più farne a meno, tanto la troverete leggera, limpida e gustosa ✱ A qualunque ora del giorno e della sera e ovunque vi troviate, bevete birra italiana ✱ Proverete una nuova gioia e godrete un nuovo benessere.

Chi beve birra,

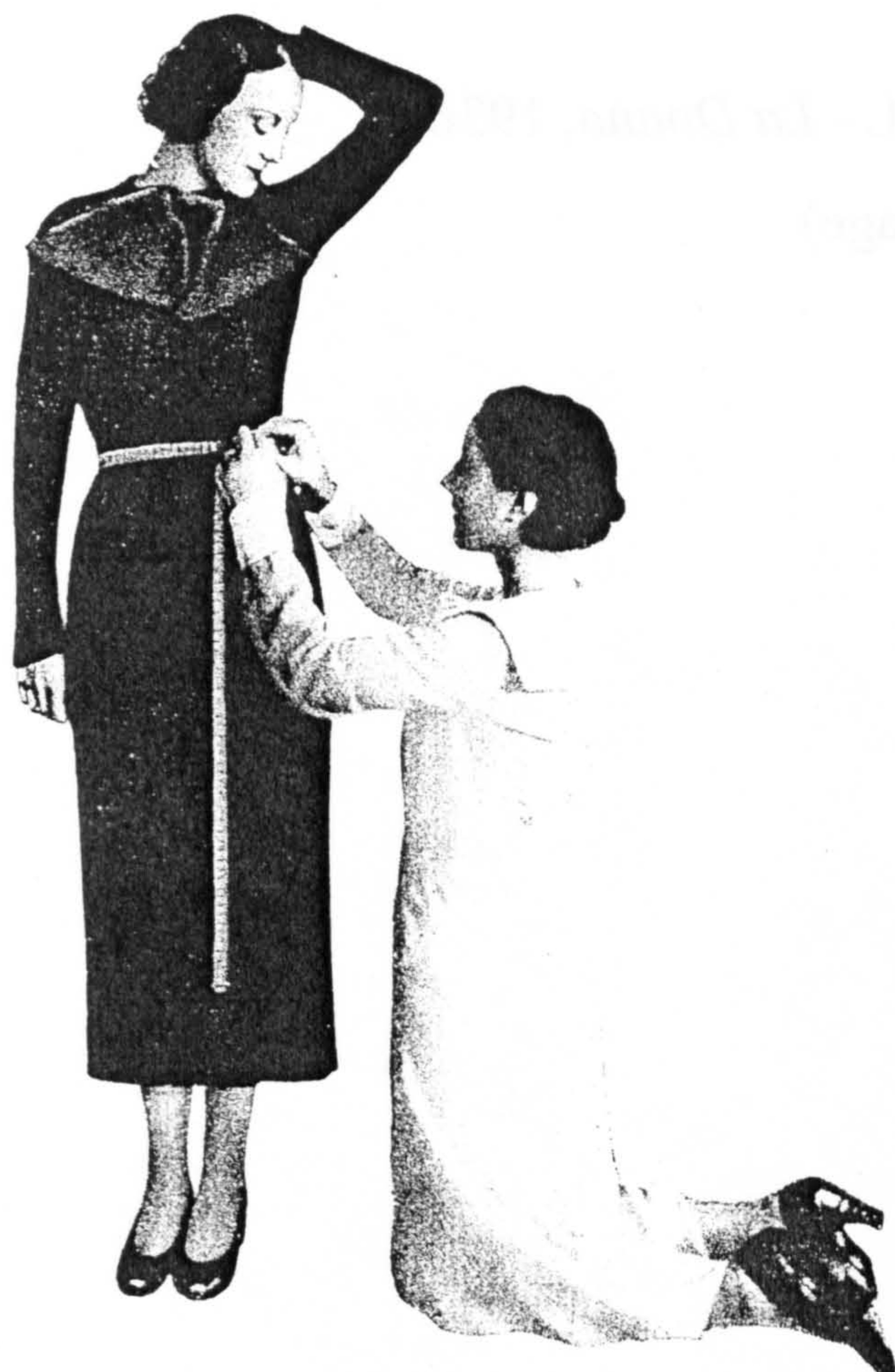


Campana cent'anni

4.4 BEVE BIRRA CAMPA CENT'ANNI

- *Lidel*, 1930

(on previous page)



Signora!

I'APEROL mantiene la linea

I'APEROL chiude la strada alla obesità, mantiene il corpo snello ed elegante e rinforza.

I'APEROL aperitivo poco alcoolico dissetante di gusto squisito è preparato con China - Rabarbaro - Genziana ed erbe aromatiche.

I'APEROL è l'amico dello stomaco perchè regola la digestione.

USO - Come aperitivo dissetante a qualunque ora allungato con acqua pura, minerale o Seltz. Come ricostituente in bicchierini prima dei pasti.

Chiedete campione ed opuscolo N. 1 (gratis) allo
Stabilimento S. A. F.lli BARBIERI - Padova

4.5 APEROL - *La Donna*, 1936

(on previous page)



S. A. FRATELLI BRANCA
DISTILLERIE - MILANO

SCIROPPI - BRANCA
PURO FRUTTO

4.6 BRANCA - *Almanacco della donna italiana*, 1937
(on previous page)



Lei Signora

è impensierita perchè comincia ad ingrassare e vorrebbe ritornare snella e leggera come alcuni anni or sono.

Ascolti il nostro consiglio, non faccia cosa che possa nuocere alla sua salute, non prenda medicine, non metta il proprio corpo alla tortura del busto stretto.

Mangi meno farinacei, meno grassi faccia qualche moderato esercizio fisico e basi la sua alimentazione sulla

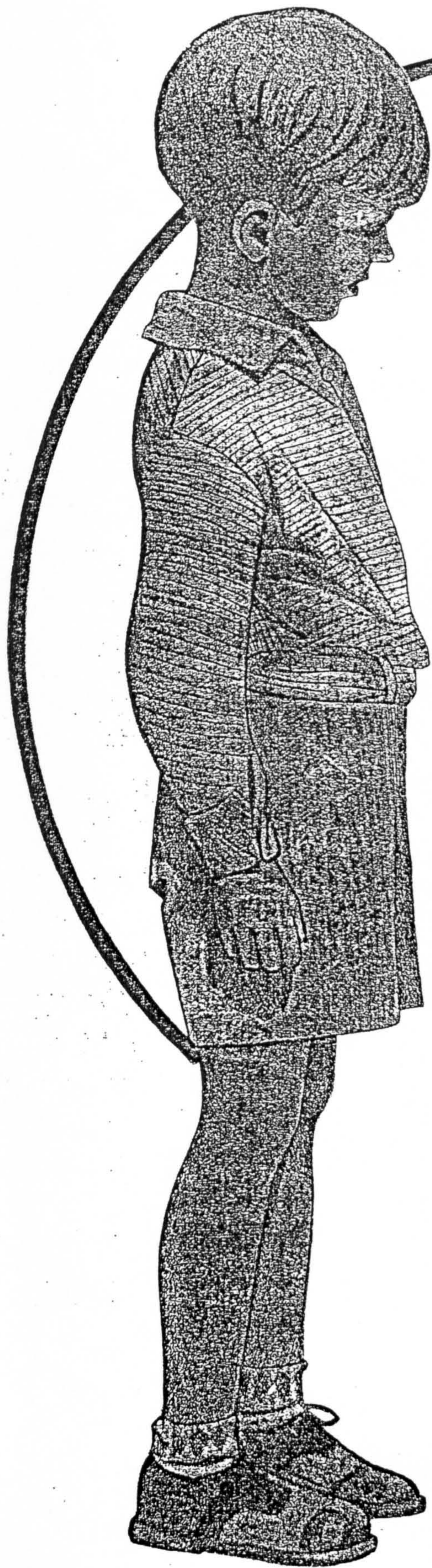
**CONFITURE
CIRIO**

la quale nutre senza
ingrassare

*Non accettate
sostituzioni ed
insistete ener-
gicamente per
avere le
Confitures
CIRIO*

A poco a poco, ella ritornerà svelta, snella ed elegante come un tempo.

4.7 CIRIO. Lei Signora - *Lidel*, 1930
(on previous page)



La scienza medica conferma che nella nutrizione dei bambini, vecchi, ammalati e deboli di stomaco, la Pastina Glutinata sostituisce la carne e le uova.

Recenti esperienze confermano ciò che la scienza medica aveva affermato e dimostrato da gran tempo. La Pastina Glutinata Buitoni, preparata con procedimenti speciali che conservano al glutine tutte le sue proteine, sostituisce nella alimentazione dei deboli di stomaco, la carne e le uova; nutre senza appesantire lo stomaco, favorisce la rinnovazione dei tessuti e giova ai delicati organi digerenti. Per questo la Pastina Glutinata Buitoni è l'unico prodotto destinato all'alimentazione infantile la cui composizione è regolata da disposizioni di legge. Obbedite ai consigli di tutte le celebrità mediche. Chiedete sempre Pastina Glutinata e Capelli d'Angelo Glutinati Buitoni nella nuova confezione sigillata che ne garantisce il peso e la qualità.

Gli Stabilimenti Buitoni di Sansepolcro, Perugia e Roma producono oltre cento tipi di ottime paste alimentari, oltre a venti formati di Pastine Glutinate, e tutti i più fini prodotti di regime

Erva-Milano

Scrivendo allo Stabilimento Buitoni in Sansepolcro, riceverete gratis una delle istruttive pubblicazioni di Propaganda igienica Buitoni: l'Alimentazione Infantile o il Ricettario per cucina.

BUITONI

DAL 1827 TUTTE LE MIGLIORI QUALITÀ DI PASTA

4.8 BUITONI. La scienza medica conferma
- *Lidel*, 1932
(on previous page)

The results are advertisements that, while having an educational content, present images using the 'before and after' concept, common to much advertising for dietary products in the 1960s. They call women's attention to their rotundity, and to an idealised, yet readily accessible ideal. Although hand drawn, the two sides of the image shown in Figure 4.7 are striking in their sameness, functioning much as a photograph of the one woman, and depicted in such detail that even the bracelets, hairstyle, and waist band draw the addressee's attention to the abundant curves of one and their absence in the other.

The headline acts as connector between image and text, providing the subject pronoun to the subsequent body copy, whilst also acting independently, much in the manner of a mirror image, to confront the addressee with her image. The headline is also significant in terms of its size, compared to the rest of the text, and the fact that it utilises the sort of typography typical of elegant hand-writing, and readily associated by the reader as pertaining to a woman of her own class. The addressee's eye cannot help but fall on the solution to her weight worries - 'Confiture Cirio' - before even proceeding to an in-depth reading of the text, given the dimensions of the capitalised script, and, perhaps more significantly, the upper-left, lower-right visually-appealing diagonal line upon which the image of the plump figure, headline and product name rest. This initial impact of the advertisement acts as an explicit invitation to the addressee, with the detailed solution lurking in a body copy awaiting perusal. The introduction tells the reader of her innermost desire, and, by implication, what every reader desires or should want. Weight inevitably comes with age, a fact emphasised by use of the adjectives 'snella' and 'leggera' generally associated with youth, and the concluding words referring to a youthful, yet not so distant, past. The advertisement is emblematic of the typical *Lidel* reader: in early middle age, with the time and money to dedicate to her appearance, lifestyle and image. The image, as much as the text, transmits a fashion-following, image-conscious middle to upper-middle-class addressee, more likely to have access to rich foods, and to feel the psychological and social consequences deriving from her excess body weight. Liable to search for a superficial solution in the various 'medicines' or 'corsets' that the advertisement dissuades her from using, she becomes the target for

an apparently advice-giving and benevolent message based on the unhealthy effects of such short-term remedies, combined with the exhortation to eat less carbohydrate and fat-based foods, and to do 'moderate exercise'.

Such sound advice is, nevertheless, negated, to the modern eye, by subsequent reference to the product as a 'cure-all', with the addressee told to 'base' her food intake on the brand of preserved fruit jams. The semi-slogan 'nutre senza ingrassare' may be interpreted in terms of its nourishing qualities, despite its low fat and sugar content, and finally, in terms of its validity as a substitute for other foods. The similarity to modern dietary food products that consumers are encouraged to eat instead of their normal meal is striking, giving the advertisement an alternative, and more persuasive, aura compared to the various medicinal and body constricting corset advertisements of the period. The appeal of this sort of alternative advertisement to readers of the time, may also be seen to lie in the apparently easy solution available to women constrained by changing socio-economic and cultural forces, to reflect the epitome of modern middle to upper-middle-class womanhood, that is, by implication, young, desirable, fashionable and appealing. The turned head of the female figure in the advertisement is symptomatic of this self-consciousness, where the figure appears to be gazing at herself in a mirror, assessing her body, make-up, hairstyle and jewellery, before putting on her outer garments. The pose strikes a familiar chord, as the addressee is reminded of the many times she considers her physical self and becomes 'impensierita' by the creeping weight. Significantly, the concluding line of the body copy recalls this combination of impressions, as the fashionable middle-class addressee is told that she may gradually regain a slim and elegant figure, and implicitly, the social or personal acceptance deriving from her status. The three adjectives 'svelta', 'snella' and 'elegante' are instrumental in reiterating this wish, whilst aptly associating elegance and social presence with physical slimness. The advertisement, thus, establishes a precise indexical relationship between prevailing notions of womanhood, that become increasingly dominant in all social classes, with the product, reinforced over again by the concepts emanating from image and text with which the middle-class addressee could readily identify.

Finally, of relevance is the fact that the consumer is actively instructed, in a telling and separate paragraph from the main body copy, to not accept brand alternatives that consumers are encouraged to see as inferior. The existence of competitors is, thus, confirmed by the advertisement, despite their limited advertising in women's magazines, and the fact that the principal form of competition would, undoubtedly, emanate from home-made and local products. Use of the French language term 'confiture' similarly lends an air of exclusiveness to the product, a factor generally linked to fashion and perfumes, yet exploited here in order to target the middle-class reader whose perception, and resulting decision to purchase, depend not merely on price but also on brand appeal. The term further encourages the middle-class housewife to associate the product with its unique weight-reducing properties, practically consuming it as a meal substitute, compared to regular Italian-language branded jams, seen essentially as products for family use and to complement other foods. The lack of pricing in the advertisement reinforces these notions of exclusiveness, as much as the exhortation to not settle for lower-quality, cheaper substitutes without the sought-after weight reduction results.

Advertising targeting the middle-class woman's preoccupation with her body weight, whether media, culture or class driven, also pervades the advertising campaigns of other national companies. Buitoni is the best-known case of an advertising message and image that is strategically combined to target women in their regime-restricted role of mother-housewife, and their more ideologically ambiguous role of middle-class hostess. The 'fat' Buitoni woman used mainly in poster advertisements of the period (see Figure 4.9) actively exhorts women to aspire to the contrary by providing a graphically exaggerated representation of possible future selves. The overt rotundity of the figures in the Buitoni advertisements for 'Antobès' pasta places before women the fact that a main duty is to their figure. Reinforced by later advertising, recalling this image but with a diametrically opposite ideal, women are asked to consider 'la linea' in a forceful headline (see Figure 4.10), and the inevitable fact that, as shown in Figure 4.11, 'si mantiene con: ANTOBÈS BUITONI la pasta e il pane che non ingrassano' (*La massaia*, 15th March, 1935).

Amey d'ici

pastasciutta



No signora, non si spaventi così...

**ANTOBÈS
BUITONI**

la pasta e il pane che non ingrassano

**GIO: & F.lli BUITONI - Sansepolcro
dal 1827 le migliori qualità di paste**

4.9 ANTOBÈS BUITONI. No signora, non si spaventi così
- *La massaia*, 1934
(on previous page)

la linea



si mantiene con:

ANTOBÈS
BITONI

la pasta e il pane che non ingrassano

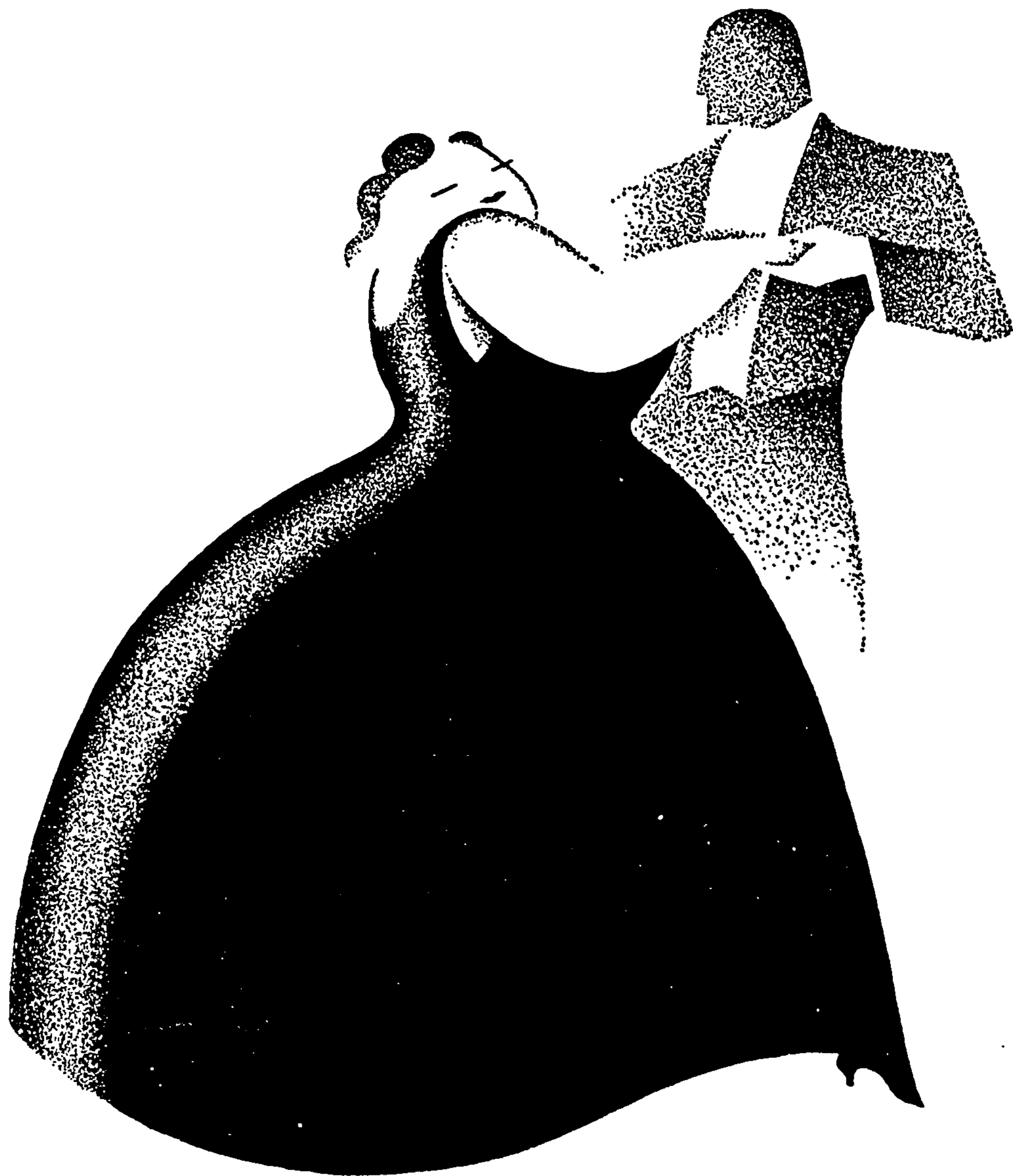
GIO: & F.lli BITONI - Sansepolcro
dal 1827 le migliori qualità di paste

4.10 ANTOBÈS BUITONI. La linea

- *La massaia*, 1935

(on previous page)

منسجس
non vorreste...



... riacquistare la linea?

**ANTOBÈS
BUITONI**

la pasta e il pane che non ingrassano

GIO: & F.lli BUITONI - Sansepolcro
dal 1827 le migliori qualità di pasta

4.11 ANTOBÈS BUITONI. Non vorreste ...

- *La Donna*, 1935

(on previous page)

The singularity of the advertising relates to the 'before and after' strategy utilised in separate advertisements, rather than in the one advertisement used by Cirio. Significant also are Buitoni's aims for a particular public image for its Antobès brand. Linguistically composed of the prefix 'anti' and the noun 'obesità', they are instrumental in defining the product not simply as a means of achieving weight loss, but also as a healthy, and typically Italian, method of prevention. Reference to the damage caused by pasta and bread are relevant in that, without forsaking these foods, the Italian woman is provided with a solution to her weight problems. Although the emphasis on physical image tends to encapsulate the 'degendering' taking place at this time (Pinkus, 1995), the emphasis given to women's loss of physical softness in other advertisements, such as the heavily advertised slimming drink 'Thé messicano' (see Figure 4.3), appears more a reflection of broader western cultural developments. Italy was not immune to these, despite increased media isolation and control¹ and a tendency by companies, operating in a relatively static business environment, to mediate market developments with the superficiality of much fascist rhetoric for the middle-class consumer. However, a market-driven, traditional acquiescence may still be identified in other brands advertised by the same companies, with reliance on middle-class lifestyle and ideological factors to promote brands. A particular case is that of Buitoni's 'Pastina Glutinata' (see Figure 4.8), a small-shaped pasta made with additional gluten. Advertised as early as 1905 in *La Donna* (20th May), in text only advertisements, the company rapidly develops its advertising to include a variety of mother, child and other family figures, in advertisements recommending the product's suitability for various family members. Buitoni advertising for this brand uses a prevalently nurturer-carer discourse that appears to reverse the self-centred, personally-focused messages of advertisements based on notions of the female body. Indeed, although this second type of discourse may be considered typical of such middle to upper-middle-class magazines as *La Donna* and *Lidel* in the inter-war years, it is not absent from the more homely, yet also consumption-centred magazines like *La massaia*. Targeted more decisively as a purchaser for the household, rather than for herself, in this food-focused, milk industry sponsored magazine, by means of advertising message and image, even the perfect 'massaia' is allowed to avoid nurturing as her sole function.

The expansion of business enterprises in this period is such that the role of nurturer is extended to the advertising of baby milk formula even for very young babies, despite regime attempts at encouraging breast-feeding. Even the typical housewife's 'handbook', *La massaia*, contains advertisements for milk products that, whilst acceptable for toddlers and older children, also move into the baby market. The advertising reflects milk industry magazine sponsorship, so much so that formula is compared to mother's own milk - 'identico al latte materno' - by companies like Polenghi & Lombardo for their 'Miranda' brand. Indeed, the verb 'allattare', usually synonymous with personal feeding by mothers, is used to create an indexical relationship with the brand by means of the multiple health, nutrition and growth connotations linked to mother's milk. Thus the brand offers 'latte in polvere per l'allattamento del bambino. È un alimento insuperabile che farà crescere i Vostri bambini sani e robusti. È 'IL PIÙ ECONOMICO' è un prodotto italiano' (15th May, 1931). This emphasis on milk formula for babies, who should be wet-nursed, according to regime dictates and the national association for children and mothers ONMI (Opera Nazionale Maternità e Infanzia), continues throughout the decade. This is an indication of the power wielded by large companies, and of their influence over women's perception of the meaning of modern motherhood.

By 1937, a florid baby is pictured next to the body copy for 'FARINA LATTEA ERBA': 'Il superalimento del bambino, assicura al nostro bambino un completo e rigoglioso sviluppo. Somministrategliela dal 4-5 mese in avanti e lo vedrete crescere sano bello vivace' (15th January, 1937). The advertisement is symptomatic of a large company's efforts at mediating regime requirements with sales, as the generic messages, and articles encouraging early milk intake is substituted by a balanced message in terms of nutrition, health and ideology. Whether middle-class women are inclined to follow the advice provided in advertising of this nature, and, thereby, continue wet-nursing for longer periods, as encouraged by the regime, is questionable. A number of factors such as the influential upper-middle class tradition of obtaining wet nurses, despite efforts by well-known women as Princess Maria-José at wet-nursing in public, may be considered, as

much as the multiple pressures exerted on middle-class women to conform to set modes of appearance and behaviour. The role of fashion, cosmetics, cinema, urban experiences, and women's magazines with their images, advertising, articles and advice, cannot but influence the emerging female masses. The middle-class woman's greater access to a certain lifestyle, and personal appearance attributes, might be seen to extend towards limiting the loss of her figure, a fear usually associated with child bearing and feeding, and one that the regime does little to assuage with its emphasis on the overly prolific rural 'massaia'. Nevertheless, regime attempts at redirecting wayward women, and particularly middle-class women as the class with the lowest birth rates, towards their fascist duty indicates a real awareness of the nature of the opposing ideologies and influences characterising the existence of this class of women. Typical of the regime's position on the lack of a baby boom is a 1937 pro-regime illustration in *Guerin Meschino* entitled 'Le Belle Famiglie', portraying the epitome of the elegant middle-class woman walking three dogs, and cradling one in her arms. A parallel illustration sees the same image of the woman as poor, but dignified, in a similar pose with four children (Del Buono, 1971, p.329). The comparison is clear, as the 'unfascist' behaviour of the middle-class woman carries dire consequences for the regime, society and women.

Indeed, with the birth-rate plummeting, a multi-faceted approach is used, centred on social service provision, and various forms of legislation. The first and undoubtedly the most effective is linked to the role of the 'fasci femminili', and the establishment of ONMI, with the December 1925 law aimed at providing a range of services. The role of the 'fasci femminili', or women's section of the 'Partito Nazionale Fascista' (PNF), is initially relatively political and active, with some women playing a prominent role in the first fascist stirrings, and actively campaigning for women's rights as espoused in the nascent party's political programmes. The presence of a mixed group of socialists, feminists, futurists, and militants of a variety of hues, gives greater social credibility to the fascist movement, whilst obliging Mussolini to initially follow through with female suffrage promises. Although established in 1921 by Elisa Mayer Rizzioli with mainly political aims, changing circumstances lead to a distancing of the movement from all

political activity after 1925, the relegation of the section to PNF control, reduction of decision-making power, and the introduction of aristocratic, and middle-class, figureheads into socially high-profile positions (Fusco, 1974). The importance of the social assistance functions assigned to the section from this point, lie in its ability to meet the health and care needs of Italian families, whilst in the 1930s the single-minded objective of the PNF's secretary Starace to 'nationalise' the Italian woman becomes a further feature of the many influences operating on women.

The centrality of the 'fasci femminili's duties, and its effect on women's lives and perceptions of their role, is reflected in the ONMI organisation. ONMI's most notable contribution is to improve knowledge of health-care concepts, provide training for health workers and midwives, childcare notions and paediatric services. Refectories are also available for low-income mothers and children, grants for children's clothes and equipment, food stamps, wet nurse provision, infant care centres for working mothers, and pre-natal care. Although mainly located in urban and Centre-North areas, mobile rural units also cater to isolated areas, in an organisation characterised by much political and class-based control, exercised by middle-class lady patrons, and administrators, evaluating need and provision (Saraceno, 1992). Steady growth of ONMI services, in the constant attempt at encouraging births, results in 92 obstetric and paediatric clinics in provincial capitals by 1931, with 16,000 pregnant women visited by a gynaecologist, and 75,000 children by health care workers in 80 mobile units and over 1,500 clinics (De Giorgio, 1993, p.360). Criticism of these services centre on the oft-cited requirement for women to breast-feed their baby as a condition for obtaining assistance, extensive bureaucracy, the frequent invasions of privacy by health workers, and enormous geographical variation of the quantity and quality of services. Nevertheless, the effect of lowering the infant mortality rate is obtained, as much as the fact that most women are exposed to health and hygiene notions, often for the first time in their lives. Greater food security for the entire family results, as well as an improvement in individual health, all factors that stimulate women's sense of belonging to an expanding middle-class. The importance of this fact lies in the renewed importance attached to female health, where

up to 1920, mortality rates for women and girls are higher than for males, given the different social value attributed to women and consequential differences in quantity and quality of care. Between 1920 and 1940, mortality rates are equalised, despite the continued attribution of different social and economic value (De Giorgio, 1993). As an index of the period of highest risk to infant life, statistics for the age group 0 to 1 years indicate that in the 1911-20 decade, the numbers of infants dying are 140,467, compared to 134,640 in 1921-30 and 104,708 in 1931-40 (ISTAT, 'Statistiche Storiche D'Italia', 1976, p.18). The drop in the pre-war decade also reflects a cumulative effect of the health and hygiene programmes, as well as the greater expansion, and co-ordination, of the services in the wake of ONMI's greater co-ordination with local organisations. The social, and long-term, effects of these initial welfare services are also significant, with breast-feeding a case in point, as actively encouraged by the regime, even amongst the middle and upper classes, with beneficial effects on child health and the consequential trickle down social effect. As noted by Saraceno (1988), women of the middle-class or 'piccola borghesia', the mainstay of fascism, see these services favourably, as the first ones catering to their needs. Giving birth in hospital became a social conquest, as much as sending children to the nursery, part of an educational ideal that signals women's middle-class standing and stimulates them to invest further in a middle-class lifestyle and personal appearance ideal.

The 'slim' version of the Buitoni woman (see Figure 4.10) is most emblematic of these two poles of influence, whilst the case of Buitoni's 'pastina glutinata' (see Figure 4.8) is more ambiguous. Amidst the numerous articles, editorials and advertising for food products, cheese and milk, the Buitoni advertisements depart from a message based simply on convincing the 'massaia' of the brand's quality, nutrition and health fortifying properties. Regularly advertised in women's magazines, the pasta brand is seen as an ideal dietary component for the weak, infirm, the old, and children, providing mothers, as the main family carers, with a scientifically- tested, easily-digested substitute for such protein and vitamin-rich foods as fish and eggs. This advertising backbone is supplemented by other advertisements throughout the 1930s, utilising a more complex

and varied content. By a 1933 issue of *La massaia* (15th February), the Buitoni brand features a typical middle-class 'massaia' in a housedress, whose role as nurturer would appear unassailable. Whilst reiterating cost, quality and nutrients, the text reveals a fundamentally urban middle-class in a typically non-fascist situation of a period characterised by an omnipresent maid, a necessity even for the idealised, middle-class, self-sufficient housewife.

'la donna di servizio deve essere guidata nelle sue opere. Se volete gustare minestre leggere, nutrienti, ordinate l'acquisto di Pastine Glutinate Buitoni nella nuova confezione sigillata, che ne garantisce il peso e la qualità. La composizione delle Pastine Glutinate Buitoni è regolata da disposizioni di legge, e soggette al controllo degli Uffici di Igiene. È questa una garanzia che protegge la salute dei vostri cari attraverso una alimentazione igienica, nutriente ed economica'.

The role attributed to the housewife is clearly that of household manager, overseeing the work done by others, with regular purchase of a brand, now seen as a product for all the family, delegated to the maid. The ambiguity of the image surfaces, however, as it inevitably does in advertisements utilising such an image before and after this period, as the 'massaia' addressee may contemporarily see herself reflected in the aproned figure, in accordance with her personal interpretation of the advertisement. Buitoni calls on women's nursing functions, substituting the 'massaia' with a 'nurse' figure in later advertising, as women remain in a caring capacity, yet are simultaneously required to consume a different pasta brand in order to control their weight within fashionable limits. The fluctuation between one message and the other result in a transformation of the middle-class consumer into a versatile chameleon, to be adapted to brand requirements and advertising strategy. The total absence of the male from much advertising discourse reinforces women's flexible image, readily adaptable to changing social, political and business needs in a market limited by increasing ideological control, and lack of real nation-wide competition for most pasta brands marketed on a regional or

territorial basis. The male functions as a precise point of reference that much advertising in women's magazines avoids, whilst resorting to a multiplicity of other notions and images inevitably to recall women to the centrality of the family, their physical appearance, and their caring attitude towards the male lurking in the cultural background of each advertising message.

The subsequent period of the mid to late 1930s is characterised to an ever greater degree by advertising on autarchic products, national fairs and exhibitions aimed at promoting the country's national, self-sufficient productive capacity. Food may be considered one of the most important areas of the initial drive for self-sufficiency, and of autarchic life, with promotional activity even conducted by Mussolini photographed bare-chested, energetically reaping corn in favour of the 'battaglia del grano' campaign.² The advertisements for the beer and fish sectors in magazines such as *Lidel*, good indicators of these developments, are rapidly supplemented by a diverse range of food products, including 'Hag' decaffeinated coffee, 'Franck' coffee substitute, tea, 'Specialità Delizia' pastry mixture for perfect afternoon tea parties (*Almanacco della donna italiana*), and the inevitable 'San Pellegrino' mineral water, and 'Rim' digestive remedy, to counteract the side effects of Italians' well-known love of good food, despite increasing difficulties in meeting daily food intake requirements. The emphasis attributed by the regime to the purchase of home goods sees women targeted in this function. The 1938 issue of *Almanacco della donna italiana* is particularly relevant in terms of this type of advertising, at a time when most middle-class women's magazines are characterised by a limited number of advertising pages with few full-page advertisements. The 32 pages of the new women's magazine *Grazia*, launched in November 1938, displays an advertising content limited mainly to perfumes, cosmetics and stockings, whilst the *Almanacco* provides a range of advertisements that the housewife is exposed to in a range of media: 'Karkadé ebe' tea substitute, 'Cacao Benesdorp', 'Pisonis' meat extract, 'Fructamine' fruit products, 'Bertocchine' wines, and 'Genepesca' frozen fish. Above all, the repetitive *Almanacco* contains advertisements and editorials for national industries, including those for the salt, biscuits, sweets, chocolate, and rice sectors, as women are

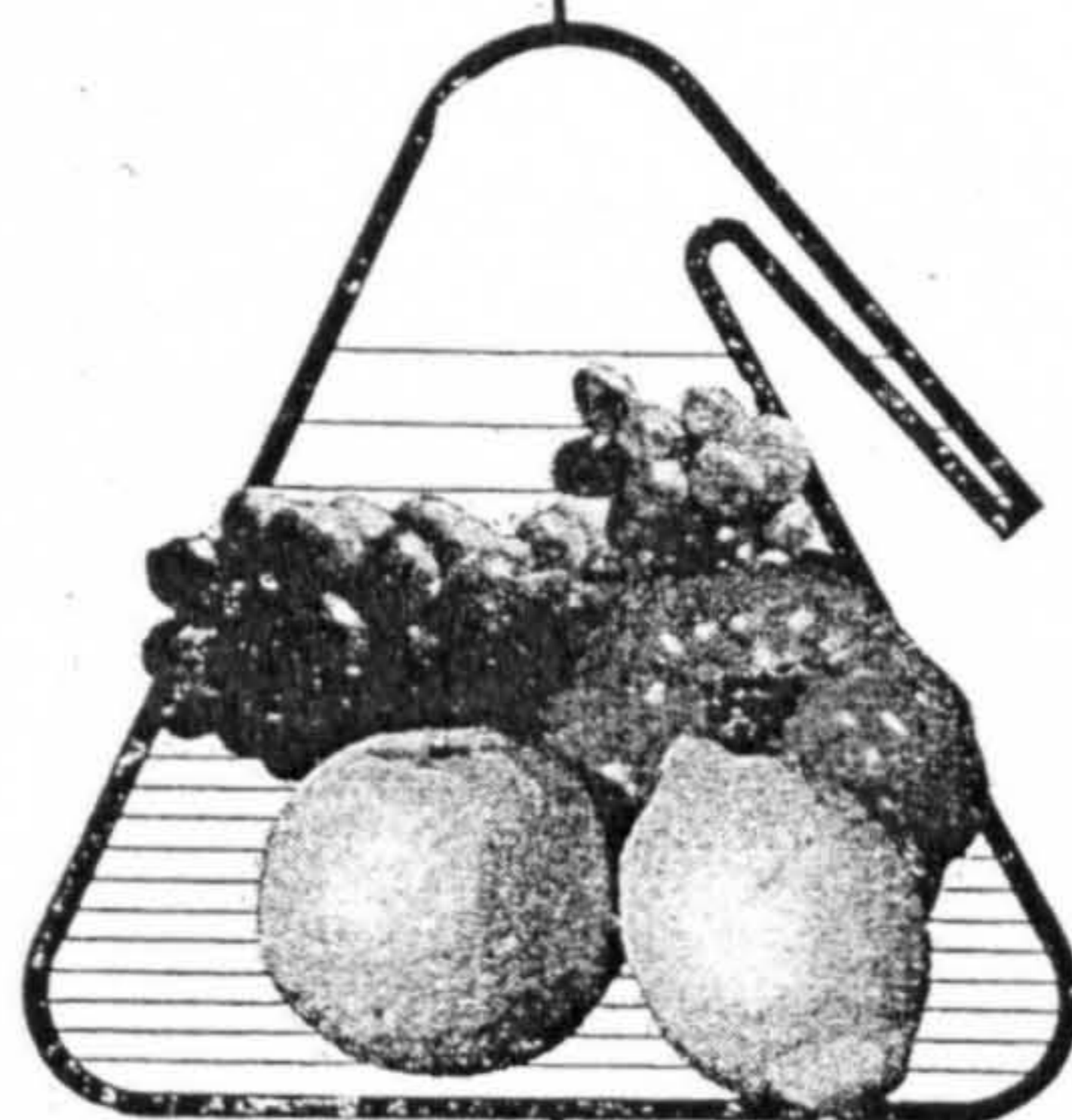
continually exhorted to purchase local products that, despite strenuous advertising, are no longer essentials but occasional luxuries in a situation of relative lack of income.

The images vary. The fat, bouncy baby of the 'Fructamine' jams and juices implicitly exhorts housewives to cater for the health, vitality and growth needs of all the family, with scientifically prepared fruit products packed with essential vitamins (hence the name) corroborated by baby, a laboratory beaker, and fresh fruit (see Figure 4.12). 'Genepesca' frozen fish utilises a similar concept with the aproned mother, or maid, depending on the addressee's perspective, escorting children to the dinner table. Reliance in the body copy is on notions of healthy growth facilitated by the product (see Figure 4.13). Similarly, the unmistakable maid in frilly headband utilises much salt in food preparation as the dubious association of salt in a healthy diet finds a way into the advertisement for 'Sale scelto', a national product (see Figure 4.14).

The use of photography and language in food advertisements reflects more or less sophisticated advertising message directed by producers faced with falling income and consumption levels, the developments in advertising during inter-war years, and the notions of competitiveness, that despite mutating conditions, continue to prevail. The example of 'Fructamine' jams and juices (see Figure 4.12) is particularly relevant in a climate dominated by the difficulty in maintaining fruit in a fresh, edible state, combined with advances in preservation techniques, leading to increased competition. Continued advertising by Cirio in women's magazines sees an advertisement for Cirio fruit jams in *Lei* on the 18th January 1938 (see Figure 4.15), making strategic use of language and image. Soon to be transformed into *Annabella*, as the third person singular, polite forms of address become associated by the regime with unacceptable bourgeois customs, the magazine *Lei*, albeit of few advertisements, and only 12 pages per issue, is instrumental in filling the void left by *Lidel* in terms of a middle to upper-middle-class target. Although not fulfilling the same advertising function as *Lidel*, the magazine represents a hybrid of the world portrayed by *Lidel*, whilst containing a variety of women and home issues associated with the more middle-class *Grazia* and *Gioia*.

FRUCTAMINE

ALIMENTI
DIETETICI
VITAMINICI



PER LA CRESCENZA
DEI BIMBI

PER LA VITALITA'
DEGLI ADULTI



CHIEDETE alla S. A. FRUCTAMINE
Viale Coni Zugna, 4 - MILANO i Tre interessanti
Opuscoli illustrati che, a semplice richiesta e ci-
tando l'Almanacco, riceverete **gratis** e franco
di porto al Vostro indirizzo.

4.12 FRUCTAMINE. Alimenti dietetici vitaminici

- *Almanacco della donna italiana, 1938*

(on previous page)



IL PESCE

è oltremodo indicato nell'alimentazione dei bambini, perchè
FAVORISCE il loro sviluppo aumentando
la massa dei tessuti muscolari e delle ossa.

MAMME! Consumate il **PESCE CONGELATO** della
GENEPESCA

che essendo di sicura freschezza contiene inalterate le pre-
ziose vitamine tanto utili ai vostri bambini.

SPACCI IN TUTTE LE CITTÀ D'ITALIA

4.13 GENEPESCA. Il Pesce

- *Almanacco della donna italiana, 1938*

(on previous page)



PREFERITE
IL SALE SCELTO
DA CUCINA

4.14 SALE SCELTO

- *Almanacco della donna italiana, 1938*

(on previous page)

Oh! come siete bella



SALUTE e BELLEZZA

Il succo di frutta con le sue qualità di eccitatore del fegato, stimola le difese autotossiche e purifica l'organismo

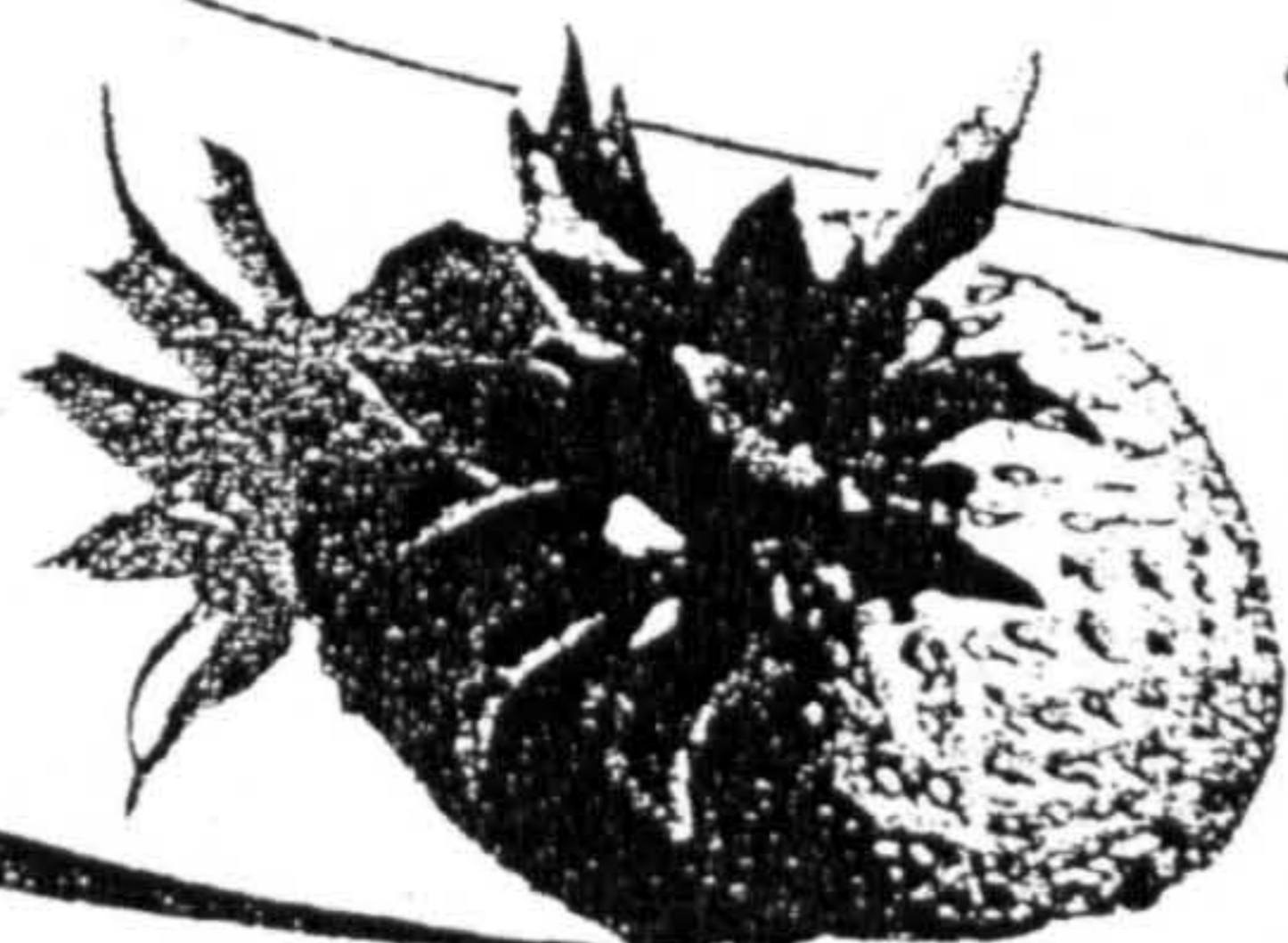
Il succo di frutta, usato regolarmente come nutrimento, rappresenta una fra le migliori garanzie di vita longeva, e dà, col benessere, un aspetto di salute, un colorito fresco, una pelle sana. Infine la cellulosa della frutta ha un compito di prim'ordine nel favorire e regolare le funzioni intestinali

Frank, Mendel, De Steenbock, stabilirono che l'esclusione della cellulosa dall'alimentazione provoca disordini non lievi

Nelle Confetture Cirio troverete frutta matura, intera o dimezzata alla quale è stato tolto solo il nocciolo; frutta matura ancora turgida del suo succo prezioso e ancora ricca di cellulosa, utilissima per le funzioni intestinali

Con le Confetture Cirio si ottiene la salute e la bellezza

Le Confetture Cirio non si vendono sciolte in mastelli, secchielli ecc., ma esclusivamente in scatole o flaconi ermeticamente chiusi al riparo dall'aria, dalla polvere e dai germi.



M. DALM

4.15 CIRIO. Salute e Bellezza - *Lei*, 1938

(on previous page)

The advertising function of this magazine is particularly significant in the case of Cirio, where the second half of the 1930s sees an increase in full-page advertisements utilising photography, and eye-catching techniques, as well as an attempt at entering new sectors with a range of food products utilising the company name. Issues of *Lei* contain full-page Cirio advertisements for its 'Estratto di Carne' and Brazilian coffee, the first aimed at providing a substitute for fresh stock, and the second at filling a gap in the market for real coffee. An advertisement for the meat stock makes use of a mother and son eating a healthy soup where: 'In pochi minuti, con l'ESTRATTO DI CARNE CIRIO potrete preparare un brodo saporito e nutriente come quello che si ottiene facendo bollire molto manzo' (29th June, 1937). A later advertisement also introduces the male into the equation, as a mother serves coffee to husband, and teenage daughter, seated at the dining table. As an older man smiles benevolently on the family scene from the upper corner of the page, coffee cup in hand, the addressee is reminded that: 'È vero caffè brasiliano, è vero caffè Cirio' (19th October, 1937). Use of family images, limited to the members of a typical, middle-class, nuclear family, is indicative of the changes taking place in society, as much as of the perspective adopted by companies bowing to social and market forces in an effort at circumventing autarchic limits and ideological visions.

The Cirio advertisements of the Rizzoli-published *Lei*, see use of this woman's magazine at a time of fluctuating advertising content in women's magazines, with magazines like *Gioia* having a negligible advertising content compared to the more up-market *La donna*. The advertisement (see Figure 4.15) located on the eighth page of a 1938 issue of *Lei* (18th January) comprising a mere 12 pages, largely dedicated to high society events, beauty, sports, dress-making, letters and stories, provides the focus for an in-depth analysis of developments in the pre-war period. Unlike the small advertisements located on less than a quarter of a page, and confined to the initial and end inside cover pages, the advertisement occupies an entire page of the magazine measuring 28 by 37.5 centimetres. The large page size results in an even more eye-catching advertisement, where the addressee cannot help but gaze at an advertisement that in its use of photography, quite unlike most other advertisements in women's magazines, captures

and holds the reader's attention. The image relies on the use of a female face as the focus of the reader's gaze, and of that of the admiring male as onlooker. The addressee is, thereby, drawn towards considering herself in place of the model, becoming, in turn, the focus of an admirer's gaze. The advertisement relies on this form of simulation to stimulate effectively the addressee's imagination, reinforced by the typically demure, off-centre gaze of a young woman who, in accepting a compliment, does not over-acknowledge it by openly attracting the attentions of the man. Use of this technique allows the model and, by implication, the addressee, to conform to acceptable standards of prevailing middle-class codes of female behaviour. The passionate male gaze is aptly compensated by the open, fresh, asexual, response expected from a young woman, whose attractiveness is linked to her consumption of the brand.

The notion of beauty emanates from the headline, where the two nouns 'health' and 'beauty' perform the function of connecting the image to the text, as well as reiterating the product's particular qualities. Although both concepts are fundamental to the message, beauty appears to dominate, despite the antecedent location of 'health' in the headline, in the concluding slogan, and in the focus attributed to the product's health-boosting properties in the body copy. Health is the basis for beauty, the latter non-existent without the former, thus justifying the apparent emphasis given to health factors. Nevertheless, beauty emerges as dominant in terms of the image and the telling exclamation, and thus for women increasingly culturally conditioned by notions of beauty. The physical closeness of the two faces lends further emphasis to the central notion of beauty, as the woman's beauty may be seen, by the addressee, as whole, natural, complete, able to bear close scrutiny, unlike other forms of superficial, cosmetically-assisted beauty. As a result, beauty is sensed as something profound, emanating from within, as reinforced by the man's exclamation 'Oh!' of astonishment, and strategic linguistic framing of the two faces located on the culturally significant left-hand side of the page. The greater attention generally attributed by readers to information located to the left also sees the advertisement positioned on a left-hand page of the issue, and the body copy left to centre, with the extreme right of the advertisement merely

filled by an image of fruit. This element provides the advertisement with an all-inclusive frame, and in compensating for a lack of image in the lower half of the page, graphically balances the image of the couple in the form of fruit. The cherries and strawberries flow out of the upper image in a graphic continuum that allows the addressee to retain a mental picture of the advertisement, and of the product's effects, as reflected in the woman. The graphically soft, and rounded lines used in the advertisement may be considered important to the addressee's interpretation, where these pictorial characteristics are seen to reflect the contemporary Italian woman's gentle, softly-spoken, pleasing nature. The graphics of the advertisement, thus, imbue the product with extra-linguistic connotations that the addressee is invited to culturally and socially develop, and make her own.

The concept of natural beauty, based on consumption of a healthy food product, thus, also insinuates its way into a reading of the advertisement, where the particularly delicate, almost feminine quality, of the fruit, allows a further link to be established. In particular, the body copy focuses on the concept of health in four distinct paragraphs. The first introduces the addressee to the benefits of fruit juice, with the verbs 'stimolare' and 'purificare' the key to understanding the more biological 'eccitatore', 'fegato', 'organismo' and 'difese' nouns. The adjective 'auto-tossiche' completes an initial objective statement, that the second paragraph develops in more accessible language with noun and adjective couplings that communicate the externally visible, and internally invisible, benefits deriving from product use. 'Vita longeva', 'un aspetto di salute', 'un colorito fresco', and 'una pelle sana', are all sought by women eager to improve their 'funzioni intestinali'. The emphasis on body functions, usually present in food advertising, although by no means in all, projects the advertisement's message further afield, with the woman becoming the keeper of the family's diet.³ Reference to body functions has the woman continually relegated to her role as carer, despite language relating to personal care, and appears as part of a general trend in a period characterised by a more scientifically-espoused approach to various areas of life, as well as the greater fragmentation of taboos regarding women's function in an ideology that requires them to

be prolific mothers on the one hand, yet domestically efficient, and physically fit on the other. The centrality of scientific opinion emerges in the use of well-known German names, based on the renowned nature of German scientific advances, and the undeniable business compromise in facilitating acceptance of the advertisement by regime censors, and in encouraging consumers to recall Italo-German ties. Finally, the advertisement brings together benefits and expert opinion in a near poetic language with the adjectives 'turgida' and 'matura' corroborating the nature of the fruit-filled 'succo prezioso' and 'cellulosa' that is in Cirio jars. In this respect, the flowing graphics effectively soften the 'hard', typically male scientific facts in the text. The whole reiterates the centrality of 'succo' and 'cellulosa' in a message that sees both nouns strategically repeated three times, and 'frutta' five, as the consumer comes to associate one with the other.

The advertisement does not address the reader directly, but makes use of a factual, scientific language in all but the concluding section, where the verb 'trovare' signals a real discovery, something so unique in terms of quality and content that it may only be provided by Cirio. Quality levels are also communicated by the small design-centred paragraph that performs the function of assuring the consumer of the hygiene afforded by individual sealed containers, a market issue by the late 1930s, as the arrival of packaging began to erode the prevalence of corner shops and market stalls to sell by weight. In this respect, the Cirio advertisements are symptomatic of the modernisation occurring in Italy during the inter-war years, especially in a sector whose advertising attempted to straddle the changing socio-economic climate of global depression that characterises the 1930s, the culture of a period dominated by a regime-directed vision of women, and counterbalanced by the other forces shaping women's destinies. Of relevance is the almost cinematic quality of the image dominating the advertisement, recalling more a scene from a film, than from daily life, with the effect of relegating the body copy to short-term memory, and the image to long-term recall of the brand. As a result, the emphasis attributed to beauty, by image and language, despite the scientific focus on health, appears even more non-fascist at a time of abundant regime rhetoric on women's role, as the influence of the mass media, cinema, radio, women's magazines, and their

advertisements, appears to further fuel a middle-class, modern, and, almost Americanised, model of womanhood. Beauty emerges from the fashion and cosmetics pages in this decade to penetrate the advertisements of products like Cirio jams and Buitoni pasta, which temper their advertising message with reference to health and nurturing, yet continually propose beauty as an enduring personal duty. In the face of Church and State ideologies, and despite abeyance to the historic compromise between the business sector and the regime, the advertisements by these companies, and those most historically associated with personal care, shape the lives of middle-class women with what is probably the most insidious of all ideologies: beauty.

4.3 THE 1940s AND 1950s: THE CIRIO HEGEMONY

The war years are characterised by an almost universal absence of food advertising in middle-class women's magazines, although occasional advertisements for milk products intended for children are typical of the early war years, with the Carlo Erba company being a regular advertiser. By the later war years, the only advertisement to appear in the occasional issues published of *Grazia*, *Gioia* or *La Donna*, aptly signal the breakdown in production, purchasing and distribution as people revert to more traditional and self-sufficient ways of obtaining food. The appeal of the 'Ovocrema' brand (see Figure 4.16), advertised through the slogans 'Sostituisce otto rossi d'uovo.' and 'Costa pochi soldi', is based on the attempt at tapping into a market dependent on limited fresh produce. Featuring in these magazines throughout 1942 and 1943, the urban housewife is supplied with a versatile substitute for the difficult to locate fresh eggs that form the basis of a number of popular dishes like home-made egg pasta. As the war progresses and food supplies diminish, middle-class women establish contacts in rural areas, frequently through their maids, and venture ever further out of the urban centres attempting to buy food or barter for it. The importance of the role played by middle-class women in this period, mainly in ignoring the domesticity that fascism relegated them to, is frequently underestimated despite desperate efforts to meet minimal daily nutritional requirements for those under their care.⁴

TEXT BOUND INTO

THE SPINE

OSTA POCHI SOLDI



**CREME
BODINI
PASTICCINI-TORTE
TAGLIATELLE**

tutta senza uova!

domandate ricettario gratis alla:

S. A. PAOLINI VILLANI & C. - VENEZIA

"OVOCREMA"
SOSTITUISCE OTTO ROSSI D'UOVO

ACME
MILANO

4.16 OVOCREMA - *La Donna*, 1942

(on previous page)

Nevertheless, the war years are characterised by a particular contrast in the publication of women's magazines that deserves a passing mention, given its impact on women and on the advertising of food products by companies like Cirio. Produced from the beginning of 1941, the fashion-oriented, upper middle-class *Bellezza: Mensile dell'alta moda e di vita italiana*, lasts but a couple of years in the war-torn climate. However, it is highly indicative of the ability of this class of women to live mentally apart from the war, a fact particularly evident in the almost total concentration on cosmetics, toiletry, furniture and fashion boutique advertisements. In comparison, the fashion and family focused *La donna, la casa, il bambino* contains much advertising for food products in line with its home-oriented vision of the woman's role. Advertising by Cirio continues well into the war years, where even by 1942, issues contain multiple Cirio advertisements alongside the more common 'Misticum' cheek powder, 'Ovocrema' egg substitute, 'Nivea' cream and 'Miranda' milk powder. A 1942 issue (February) of the monthly 20 page magazine initially exhibits a full page advertisement for Cirio jams, and two further advertisements covering two-thirds of the 24 x 34 centimetre page for the Cirio household book and 'Rubra' ketchup sauce. In the advertisement 'per gli sportivi' (see Figure 4.17), the jams become the means by which mothers can fuel tired bodies in an advertisement showing the benefits of sport, with active males on the football field, and a less active girl exercising in the 'young fascists' uniform. In comparison, 'Rubra' (see Figure 4.18) encourages a complete change in eating habits, as declared by a testimonial housewife - 'Faccio a meno dell'olio e del burro' - with the traditional 'massaia' encouraged to convert to the very Americanised tomato ketchup, an ideal universal dressing for all foods. Emphasised once more in the last advertisement (see Figure 4.19), where the home management book is freely available in exchange for three 'Rubra' bottle labels, the supremacy of the advertising conducted by Cirio in both stimulating change and confirming prevalent ideologies is significant. The paradox of the post-war return to a domesticity that women never truly abandoned is thus further heightened by the very war-time experiences, that continue into the immediate post-war years. The late 1940s and 1950s are characterised by the dominance of Cirio advertising in women's magazines, with a relative absence of any other food producers.

per gli
Sportivi

È noto come lo zucchero sia un alimento di pronta assimilazione e specificatamente di alto potere calorifico. Somministrato ad un organismo affaticato da lavoro muscolare, dà subito un senso riposante di sollievo. Per queste qualità è stato consigliato a tutti gli sportivi ed in taluni esercizi viene dato come razione speciale dopo grandi latiche

Le Confetture Cirio realizzano mirabilmente il modo di offrire all'organismo stanco, una forte quantità di zucchero, unitamente ai principi nutritivi della frutta fresca matura, sotto una forma gradevole ed appetitosa

Confetture
Cirio

Conservate i vasetti di vetro delle Confetture Cirio; restituendoli al vostro fornitore, avrete UNO SCONTO sul prezzo di quelli nuovi che acquisterete

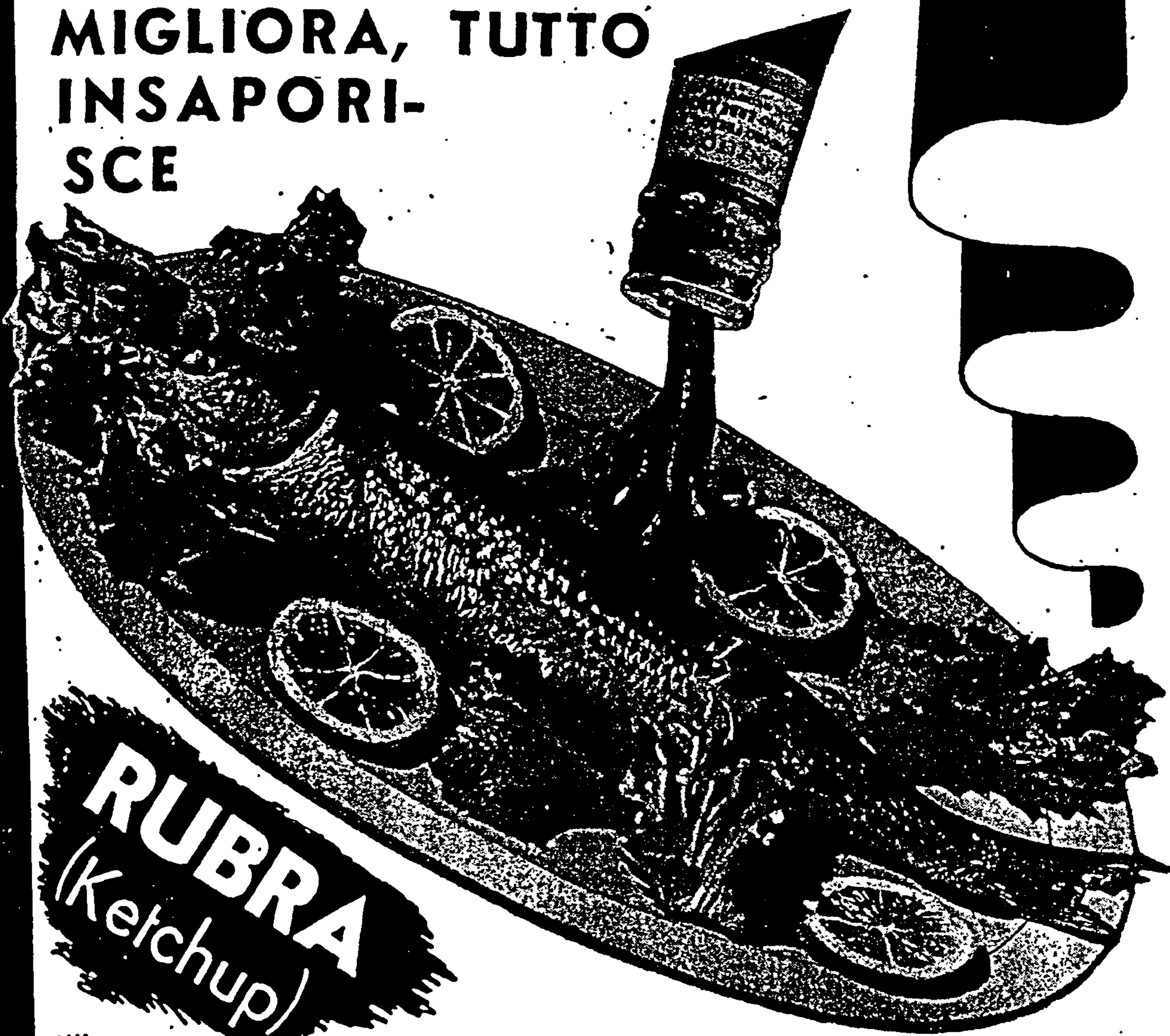
4.17 CIRIO. Per gli sportivi

- *La donna, la casa, il bambino*, 1942

(on previous page)

**FACCIO A MENO
DELL'OLIO E DEL BURRO**

**IMPARATE A CONDIRE SENZA
OLIO E SENZA BURRO LE VER-
DURE, LE UOVA, LA CARNE,
IL PESCE; LA SALSA RUBRA
FAMOSO PRODOTTO CIRIO
CONDISCE TUTTO, TUTTO
MIGLIORA, TUTTO
INSAPORI-
SCE**



DALM

Restituite i vetri vuoti. Diminuite lo spreco del vetro. Restituite la bottiglia vuota Rubra al vostro fornitore. egli ve ne consegnerà in cambio una piena A PREZZO RIDOTTO.

4.18 CIRIO. Rubra (Ketchup)

- *La donna, la casa, il bambino*, 1942

(on previous page)

TRE

TRE

3

TRE

etichette RUBRA

3

TRE

3

TRE

3

Un libro famoso per 3



3

tre etichette tolte da tre bottiglie di salsa RUBRA (Ketchup) sono necessarie per ottenere gratis questo prezioso libro!



la vostra copia del LIBRO CIRIO per la CASA 1942

è pronta. Richiedetela subito unendo al tagliando qui sotto stampato 3 - tre - etichette tolte da tre bottiglie di salsa RUBRA (Ketchup) e precisamente uguali a quelle qui a sinistra riprodotte.

RACCOMANDATA

Spett. Società Conserve CIRIO - San Giovanni a Teduccio (Napoli)
Vi prego spedirmi gratis e franco una copia del LIBRO CIRIO per la CASA 1942-XX. Unisco tre etichette RUBRA tolte da tre bottiglie di salsa RUBRA (Ketchup).

NOME
VIA
CITTÀ Provincia

4.19 CIRIO. Libro Cirio per la casa 1942

- *La donna, la casa, il bambino*, 1942

(on previous page)

The image and discourse utilised by the advertisements is relatively unsophisticated, in line with much advertising of the time, and compared to the pre-war years make use of hand-drawn images instead of photography, and a basic language text to revive consumer spending and brand loyalty. The breadth of company offerings is advertised in quarter page or less advertisements, with prolific use of the aproned, or serving, housewife as the focus for a message targeting women's sense of domesticity and value for money. By 1949, the addressee is pictured carrying in a steaming plate of pasta to the expectant family and announcing 'CINQUE MINUTI! Pasta asciutta pronta' (*Grazia*, 19th February, 1949). The body copy aptly continues a message based on the ability of the company's pasta sauce to free the housewife from binding kitchen chores:

'Da quando uso il CONDICIRIO ho ridotto alla metà la mia permanenza in cucina trovo così il tempo per tant' altre cose, e che belle passeggiate faccio!
Non c'è che dire, Cirio, per noi donne, è proprio un benefattore!
Cinque minuti e la pasta asciutta è pronta, il marito soddisfatto, i bambini felici.
Il CONDICIRIO è proprio il condimento semplice, sano, squisito, economico.
Provatelo, gli darete un bacio!'

The emphasis attributed to food shopping, preparing and cooking, especially of the universally used, time-consuming tomato sauce, provides the focus of a message that is inserted over and over again in advertising discourse throughout the following decades. Despite the greater free time supposedly available to the addressee, she is never pictured as dedicating time to anything but the home, herself, and the family, as emblematic of a prevalent form of advertising that envisions the middle-class woman exclusively within the domestic sphere.⁵ The brand strategy developed for Cirio canned food products featuring this post-war aproned housewife, once more at her cooker, alternates with sophisticated beauty products such as the Max Factor advertisement for 'Pan-Cake Make-Up' (*Grazia*, 13th November, 1948), as a 'new' fast, capable, efficient 'massaia' moulded by Church and State propaganda of women's much-vaunted return to 'normality' emerges (Bravo, 1990). However, unlike her traditional and pre-war

counterpart, less time is dedicated to the kitchen with modern products providing more time for self-indulgence. Cirio's canned sauces and vegetables are the most common, ready-to-cook, product of the period, and are emblematic of this attempt to give the Italian middle-class woman an aura of modernity. Advertisements fluctuate between rhetoric of free time, long walks, contented husband and children all provided by a simple, healthy, tasty and cheap product, in fact '...Cirio, per noi donne, è proprio un benefattore' (*Grazia*, 19th February, 1949). Notions of time saved in a busy work schedule are avoided as the producer rigorously adheres to prevailing social views of the woman's role, despite a not insignificant presence of women in the workforce, and the numerous battles for greater equality in terms of employment conditions conducted at the time (Ravera, 1978). An attempt at injecting a sense of difference into the advertising of a relatively 'new' product for the middle-class housewife, nevertheless, is evident, as her duty appears to be transformed from family to self, a decidedly dubious message considering the prevailing socio-cultural climate. However, of relevance is the strong influence exerted by the war in overturning attitudes, to a certain degree, given the reduced propensity of the younger generation to consider roles in the previously socially pre-determined manner. The flux and change inherent in this period of socio-economic transformation is reflected in advertisements that signal an attempt to combine various visions of women's roles, in a still prevailing conservative climate.

This modern, self-indulgent image appears fundamental to the brand's success, despite the fact that the majority of women would use their own recipes, and be unable to afford, or benefit from, labour and time-saving products for some years to come. In order to counteract budget constraints, 'value for money' and 'points mean prizes' concepts emerge in the advertising message, substantiated by a campaign featuring the housewife as the person able to meet family desires beyond mere comfort and nutrition, and as such a veritable fairy godmother. In advertisements covering two-thirds of page space, the company's benevolent hand symbolically penetrates the advertisement and calls on the addressee: 'ALT prima di gettar via le scatole Cirio, staccate l'etichetta!' . Brand loyalty is sought through prizes earned at the expense of a staggering 300 labels collected,

whilst the tantalising sum of 500,000 lire, beyond the reach of many families, is within the sights of lucky winners. By mid 1949, Cirio announces a further lowering of its prices to meet demand, with a campaign against competing jam brands made with preserved rather than fresh fruit (*Grazia*, 7th May, 1949). As shown in Figure 4.20, purchase is stimulated by the next-door-neighbour testimonial, where one housewife shows off her store cupboard to another (*Annabella*, 2nd April, 1950) as part of a campaign laying emphasis on the product range and its benefits, in magazines where few other food products are advertised. Declaring proudly ‘Ho cambiato sistema’, the self-fulfilled ‘massaia’ exchanges morning shopping trips to stock up, and hours at the kitchen sink for ease, convenience and speed.

These advertisements are indicative of women’s reality, where despite their middle-class status, much of the work previously relegated to the maid, finds its way back into their daily schedule, with the brand’s particular qualities linked to its ability in alleviating burdens, yet at the same time fulfilling personal and class-based desires. The message is, thus, frequently phrased in the first person singular, as the woman talks to others like herself: ‘Se i cibi sono saporiti, se risparmio tempo, denaro e fatica, se ho la casa più pulita, a chi lo debbo ...? ...a CIRIO!’ (*Annabella*, 2nd April, 1950). The degree of empathy established with the addressee is total, and taken for granted, as the middle-class reader cannot help but envision herself within this budget-constrained, home-oriented role. The relative dominance of Cirio advertising in these post-war reconstruction women’s magazines, is also significant in terms of their intrinsic normality, and ability to surpass the run-of-the-mill cosmetic and toiletry advertisements, revealing and reflecting the influences that the middle-class woman is subjected to. As shown in Figure 4.21, she relies on the expert advice of the ‘droghiere’ (*Annabella*, 7th January, 1951), or, as shown in Figure 4.22, on the guiding voice of her husband (*Annabella*, 30th December, 1951). The shopkeeper provides the perennially indecisive shopper with advice in a half page advertisement. A second marginal advertisement features a rather elegant woman pondering her shopping, in the shadow cast by the man.



Ogni mattina...

dovevo correre di buon'ora al mercato, pagavo a peso d'oro, anche le bucce, tornavo a casa carica come un somarello, lavoravo per un'ora a mondare, senza tener conto di quello che dovevo gettar via.

DALMONTE - VARESE

Ho cambiato sistema

Ma quest'anno ho cambiato sistema, ho fatto, come vedi la provvista per tutto l'inverno, acquistando i famosi prodotti Cirio: (Pomodoro pelati, Super-Cirio, Piselli, Fagiolini, Condi-Cirio, Zuppe, Estratto Carne, Fagioli stufati, Acciughe, Confetture, Frutta sciroppata).

CIRIO

Li ho comperati a buon prezzo col giusto peso del commestibile. Non ci sono bucce, nè la fatica di

toglierle e non c'è pericolo che la roba vada a male. Se i cibi sono più saporiti, se risparmio tempo denaro e fatica, se ho la casa più pulita, a chi lo debbo...?... a CIRIO!

4.20 CIRIO. Ho cambiato sistema - *Annabella*, 1950

(on previous page)

CHE QUALITA'

non c'è
paragone!
... lo dicono
tutti:

NON C'E' PARAGONE

lo dice anche il
droghiere che
se ne intende.

CONFETTURE CIRIO:
DIECI QUALITA' DI FRUTTA FRESCA,
SANA, MATURA, SUCCULENTA:
ALBICOCCHIE - AMARENE - ARANCE
CILIEGE - COTOGNE - FRAGOLE
GELSOMORE - LAMPONI - PESCHE - PRUGNE



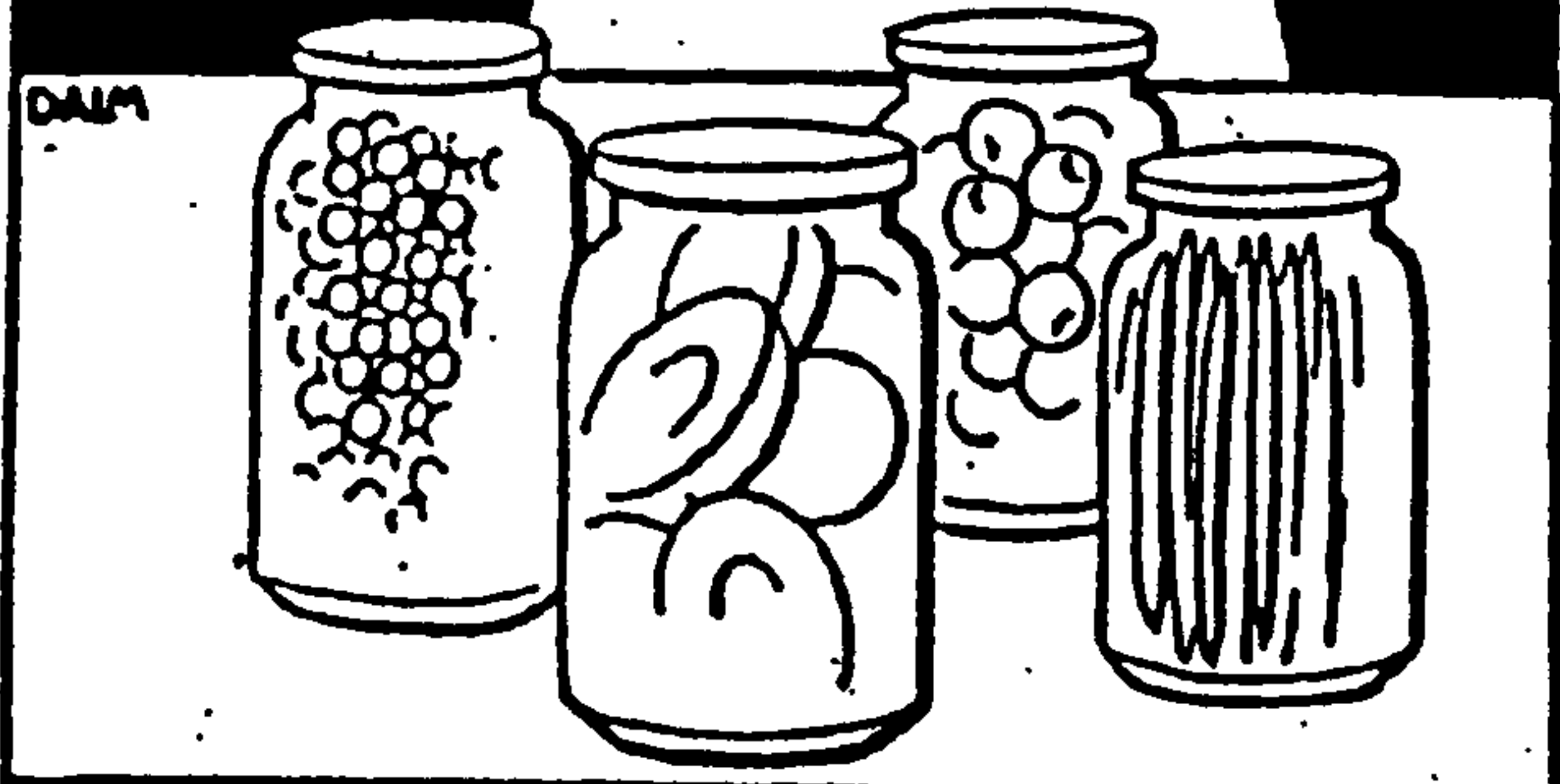
4.21 CIRIO. Che qualità. Non c'è paragone

- *Annabella*, 1951

(on previous page)

**mio marito dice:
attenzione**

**COMPRA
CIO' CHE
VEDI**



**e i prodotti CIRIO
nei nuovi recipienti
di vetro**

SI VEDONO

4.22 CIRIO. Compra ciò che vedi

- *Annabella*, 1951

(on previous page)

The new product packaging, compounded by her husband's guiding words - 'mio marito dice: attenzione COMPRA CIÒ CHE VEDI'- dispels any doubts. The strong tone of paternalism, and familiar imperative form, dominate the advertisement, as the woman is moulded by the judicious wisdom of the men in her life.

This lens through which women are mediated becomes fundamental in a context of limited advertising content. Of the two 1951 issues cited, out of the approximately twenty commercial advertisements, the Cirio advertisement is one of four food and drink advertisements in the first case, and one of five in the second, where baby milk, aperitifs, 'Miscela Leone' coffee substitute, sweets and biscuits compete minimally with Cirio's range of tinned essentials. The December issue also contains the Cirio housewife's organiser and diary, published by Mondadori, able to meet the reader's every household need, and complemented by yet another points scheme.

4.4 THE BOOM IN FOOD ADVERTISING: THE EMERGENCE OF VARYING DISCOURSES

The second half of the 1950s signals a turning point for advertising of food, as much as for other sectors, with women's magazines reflecting the potential of the country's expanding industrial base. With the increasing advertising of domestic appliances, household goods and equipment, the myth of the modern, middle-class 'massaia' takes shape in the immediate post-war years, entering a phase of identity construction. Even the conservative Catholic weekly *Gioia* reflects the move from modest consumption to lifestyle improvements. Early 1950s advertisements were limited to such products as 'China Martini' aperitif and 'Simmenthal' tinned beef, the latter reflecting a budget-conscious family dependent on the woman's management skills with its 'Menù d'oggi' Involtni S. Daniele' to show the total price, reminiscent of pre-war advice in women's magazines and cookbooks (*Gioia*, 9th February, 1950).⁶ By 1953, the message was not changed as 'Franchi' coffee substitute was an advertising staple. SAIWA's 'Bel e Bon' biscuits use a time, cost and energy-saving discourse to convince housewives of their

'genuinità casalinga' derived from an old Scottish recipe (*Gioia*, 11th October, 1953). Use of the efficient, household manager in advertising of the period, does, however, leave some leeway to other discourse. A particular interference is represented by notions relating to weight, or age, where 'Krek Saiwa' encourages women - 'se non volete ingrassare' - to forsake bread for the brand, in various small advertisements, in a message reminiscent of Buitoni's 'Antobès' (*Grazia*, 4th November, 1950), whilst 'Plasmon' advocates a 'cradle to grave' use of its products by female consumers (*Grazia*, 7th March, 1953). 1953 also sees Cirio's 'Vera Napoli' brand of pasta advertised as the most versatile of products. An appreciative husband smiles at his young, pretty wife, reminding the addressee that, her first duty is to her husband. Reiteration of the phrase 'La pasta che piace a vostro marito' functions as a slogan, despite a focus, by the pointing female hand, on the packet and accompanying message. The non-fattening quality of the brand focuses attention on the upper half of the advertisement, as well as on the value for money encapsulated in other semi-slogans, 'La pasta che cresce' and 'La pasta che si può mangiare al posto della carne'. The product's ability to provide a trouble-free marriage is complete, given the woman's ability to meet personal weight and appearance criteria and budget constraints. This discourse appears remarkably static, as Buitoni and Cirio advertisements of the early 1930s spring to mind.

While in the few food advertisements characterising 1950s magazines the theme was of youth, occasionally the more balanced older 'massaia' image diverged from that of the young, slim, efficient housewife typical of Cirio advertising. 'Ovomaltina' is featured in the advertising-dense magazine *Grazia* (19th June, 1955) with a mature woman saying:

Io non sento il peso degli anni ...si direbbe che la vecchiaia non si ricordi di me. Il segreto della mia salute sta nell'Ovomaltina, che prendo regolarmente da anni. L'Ovomaltina, alimento completo facilmente digeribile, contiene le forze vive del malto, del latte e delle uova fresche, il tutto aromatizzato con cacao. L'Ovomaltina è una grande risorsa per l'organismo. OVOMALTINA dà forza!

The emphasis placed on age and health is telling at a time of gradually increasing advertising frequency, content and product purchasing. The indexical relationship with the product is not simply based on the multiple characteristics of the culturally acclaimed housewife, but is extended to include these other factors, albeit indelibly related to age, where the product's ability to slow down the ageing process, whether in the case of a malted barley drink, or in that of Cirio fruit preserves and pasta, retains a centrality in the advertising discourse targeted at women.

The universality of the indexical relationship established between the socio-cultural notion of the capable 'massaia' and food brands continues to be dominant in most magazines. In 1955, magazines like *Gioia* forsake the former twenty page long issues when they increase them to forty pages in length. They also adopt the format of a greater number of full page advertisements and, at the same time, the middle-class tone fluctuates from one end of the middle-class spectrum to the other.⁷ The well-dressed hostess surveys a perfect table declaring: 'La signora elegante non ha dubbi ...: RITZ PREMIUM crackers ... sottili, freschi, croccanti'. A mere three pages later, the addressee is once again reminded of her limited finances by the product that allows her to stretch her coffee allowance: 'FAGO. Vero estratto Olandese l'aggiunta che migliora OGNI buon caffè' (13th November, 1955). The principal development resulting from the increase in the frequency of food advertisements by the second half of the 1950s, despite its relatively contained nature, compared to other sectors, is the emergence of the product as the protagonist of advertising discourse, in terms of language and image, with use of features like exotic locations to enhance appeal. Galbani's 'Bel Paese' cheese advertisements utilise elegantly Western dressed Indian women in the Bombay Taj Mahal restaurant to imbue consumers, whose existence is frequently limited, with a sense of national pride in belonging to an international community, and with an awareness of the growing cosmopolitan nature of brands found 'in Italia e nel mondo' (*Gioia*, 21st July, 1957).⁸

The end of the decade increasingly marginalises the use of human figures in such full-page product-focused advertisements for margarine, stock cubes, or olive oil, as 'Olio Sasso' is regularly shown being poured over a pot of vegetables (*Gioia*, 28th June, 1962). With the image of the housewife lingering on the horizon, she continues to act, where used, as the ultimate form of identification for the addressee, and as an undeniably unequivocal carrier of meaning for reader and brand. The testimonial effect is total in advertisements for 'Olio di semi Topazio EXTRA', where the penetrating, sincere gaze of the housewife is reflected in her assurance: 'l'olio magro che non impregna di grasso i cibi' (*Gioia*, 28th January, 1962). Use of alternative image and text occasionally persist, with the case of Cirio particularly relevant. Despite an apparent reduction in company advertising, probably due to increased competition for advertising space, and greater visibility of certain product categories, a 1962 Cirio advertisement signals a divergence from the housewife model. The 'Confetture Cirio' advertisement calls on women to feed their reflexes ('alimentate i riflessi'), compounded by the image of a busy secretary, the idealised female occupation of the period, typewriter before her, phone to her ear, and sheet of paper in one hand. The advertisement utilises a shadowed image of the same playing tennis, in order to extend the indexical relationship from the efficient secretary to notions of sport, energy, agility and ability, factors readily associated by working women with the role of secretary, notably one of the few roles in which active or employed women are to be found in advertising. Progressively, however, Cirio advertising takes on a more standard format with the company's increasingly limited product range confined to an advertising message oriented towards quality and value.

4.5 BARILLA PASTA ADVERTISING IN THE 1960s

A significant presence in terms of food advertising in the 1960s, and to an even greater extent in the 1970s, is the multinational Kraft and 'Star' brands of tinned and packaged foods, where increasing dominance of the brands brings a marginalisation of Cirio, and of other brands, in women's magazines, with Cirio advertising practically only its tomato-based range. The intensive market penetration strategy carried out in favour of

the 'Star' brand sees numerous, eye-catching, full-page, colourful, advertisements, touting give-aways in exchange for points in a 1960s scenario dominated by black and white advertising pages, whilst by the 1970s, the sheer number and size of full or double page advertisements cannot but reinforce the reader's brand awareness, knowledge, and loyalty. The presence of these advertisements in women's magazines is indicative of multinational entrepreneurialism in the expanding markets of a post economic-boom Italy. The fact is that such national firms, frequently unable to compete in the heightened competitive environment, are increasingly substituted by those who are able to absorb international influences. One of these is Barilla, the Parma-based producer that by the end of the century becomes synonymous with pasta, the most culturally Italian of foods.

In terms of cultural identity, the 1960s herald the arrival of Barilla as an important advertiser, in women's magazines, and in other media. The very cultural importance attached to pasta, its preparation, and consumption, allow for the implementation of an advertising strategy that leads to the brand becoming an identity badge of Italian cooking, and of the housewife's supreme role as cook. The real, commercial importance of pasta for the advertising sector may be deemed quite recent, and dates from this period. Although pasta has long formed a staple in the Italian diet, it develops over the twentieth century, expanding in number and variety, from dried, hard wheat pasta to fresh egg pasta, from the traditional, regional specialities, to the modern, mass market selections. Sauces, and olive oil, have similarly become synonymous of pasta preparation, complementing and completing dishes, to provide consumers with ready-to-eat alternatives requiring minimum preparation time. Indeed, the many sauces, olive oil, tinned tomatoes advertised by the Cirio and 'Star' brands, may be seen, by this stage, as complementary of a product that has evolved out of the home and into the supermarket, and by implication, it may be supposed, away from the massaia's rolling pin, and towards the working woman's shopping basket. In fact, pasta also represents Italian women's emancipation out of the kitchen, more than any other food, given its minimal preparation time, and the increasing availability of 'ready-to-stir-in' products. Despite a significant lack of advertising message oriented towards use of the notion of the greater

free time provided for women's self-realisation, the evolution of pasta advertising in a country whose eating habits are so firmly based on this food is particularly interesting.

The degree of pasta advertising characterising the pre-World War Two period is rapidly reinstated by the period of the 1960s, following a gradual development in the number and frequency of pasta advertisements in the preceding decade. The fact that this essentially non-commercialised product regains importance in the production and distribution efforts of manufacturers may be linked as much to the post-economic boom expansion of various sectors, as to the international myth of the urban housewife. The latter accompanied growth and advertising visions, and led to increased investment by companies like Barilla. From being produced principally at home by the turn-of-the-century middle-class housewife, pasta increasingly came within the reach of the masses, seen as a perfect substitute for the home-made variety. Unlike advertisements of preceding decades focusing on 'pastina' for the infirm and children (see Figure 4.23), or occasional spaghetti advertisements, the 1960s herald an advertising campaign that places the woman as user, consumer, and purchaser squarely at the centre of a defined market expansion process. Anchored to a tradition of eating well, the Mediterranean diet and traditional dishes, the Barilla advertising message nevertheless retains notions of body weight, nutrition and family needs that historically are within the woman's remit.

The company history and advertising of Barilla have generally reflected the above emphases. It is also reflected in its history which forms a narrative for the company and its products. Thus, from quite humble beginnings as a family-run baker in 1877, the firm significantly expands by 1910, as part of a more general process of both urban and local growth. Advertising focuses on the use of posters, postcards, and calendars, with a diverse range of interesting images inspired by current events, such as the war in Libya, as well as more linked middle-class concepts around ideas about the family and home-made goodness. Clients remain geographically regionalised well into the inter-war period, as industrial plant reconversions from the artisan base of the pre-war years, with a modernisation impetus, fuel company growth in this crucial inter-war period.



Difendiamo la resistenza della razza

Il deperimento vince l'uomo affaticato da eccessivo lavoro o da prolungata tensione nervosa. Una buona minestra preparata con **PASTA FOSFINA BARILLA** permette di combattere con un mezzo facile e gradito e tutto il deperimento organico, perché contiene un alto percentuale di fosforo organico assimilabile che rinvigorisce e rinforza.



LA PASTA FOSFINA BARILLA dà forza ai deboli, sostiene i forti

IL DEPERIMENTO VINCE L'UOMO...
e stanco e indebolito da eccessivo lavoro e da prolungata tensione nervosa. Ma l'uomo si dimentica e non trova tempo il tempo di arrestarlo e combatterlo.




IL DEPERIMENTO PUÒ ESSERE VINTO
e senza medicine, né cure, né spese, con l'uso giornaliero come minestra della **PASTA FOSFINA BARILLA**. Omma per rinforzare organismi deboli e indeboliti.

Provate una scatola, costa L. 2.60

Chi mangia Pasta Fosfina - ha braccio forti e testa fida

NUTRIRLO OGGI PER LA VITA DI DOMANI



Per i giovani, per i bimbi, per gli organismi deboli e affaticati, è stato creato la **"Pasta Fosfina Barilla"** che è uguale come gusto, qualità e rendimento, alle migliori paste e come meno.

Provate una scatola, costa L. 2.60

IL NUOVO PRODOTTO CHE IL PUBBLICO ATTENDEVA

Non è una gioia prendere medicine... ma è una gioia mangiare **Pasta FOSFINA Barilla**



perché questa minestra affatica è uguale come gusto, rendimento e qualità alle migliori paste, in più contiene un alto percentuale di fosforo organico, che rinvigorisce e rinforza gli organismi deboli e indeboliti da eccessivo lavoro, da tensione nervosa, da stanchezza, ecc. e dà tempo di riprendersi.

Provate una scatola, costa L. 2.60

Un minestra Pasta Fosfina - dà braccio forti e testa fida

un vero consiglio da amico:



Adopera sempre la **FOSFINA Barilla**

Chi l'ha adoperata si è subito reso conto dei pregi e della bontà di questo nuovo alimento, che rinvigorisce e dà tempo di riprendersi. Adottare la pasta Fosfina Barilla è uguale come gusto, qualità e rendimento alle migliori paste. In più contiene un alto percentuale di fosforo organico, che rinvigorisce e rinforza gli organismi deboli e indeboliti, per bambini, per la gravidanza, ecc.

LA PASTA FOSFINA BARILLA - dà forza ai deboli, sostiene i forti

Pasta **FOSFINA**


Barilla

CONTIENE UN'ALTA PERCENTUALE DI FOSFORO ORGANICO ASSIMILABILE

La minestra per le persone deboli, affaticate, convalescenti, bimbi, ecc.

DIETRO RICHIESTA AL PASTIFICIO G. R. F.lli BARILLA - PARMA VENGONO SPEDITI GRATIS AI SIGNORI MEDICI NOTIZIE E CAMPIONI

PROVALA ANCHE TU!



è una ottima Pasta Barilla, con la quale si possono preparare varie e gustose minestre, anche asciutte. Si vende in 12 formati diversi e in scatole sigillate che costano L. 2.60.

La "Pasta Fosfina Barilla" è uguale come gusto, qualità e rendimento alle migliori paste, in più alimento e rinforza organismi deboli e affaticati.

DA FORZA AI DEBOLI SOSTIENE I FORTI

PREPARIAMOLI A UNA VITA SANA E FORTE



UN NUOVO ALIMENTO PASTA FOSFINA BARILLA

La minestra preparata con questa pasta è uguale come gusto, qualità e rendimento alle migliori paste. In più contiene un alto percentuale di fosforo organico, che rinvigorisce e rinforza gli organismi deboli e indeboliti, per bambini, per la gravidanza, ecc.

Pasta FOSFINA Barilla: l'alimento che il pubblico attendeva

Chiedi a tutti mangiare pasta Fosfina Barilla



È un ottimo pasto di tutti i giorni e si mangia con piacere. È uguale come gusto, qualità e rendimento alle migliori paste. In più contiene un alto percentuale di fosforo organico, che rinvigorisce e rinforza gli organismi deboli e indeboliti, per bambini, per la gravidanza, ecc.

LA PASTA FOSFINA BARILLA "dà forza ai deboli, sostiene i forti"

4.23 BARILLA. Pasta Fosfina - 1937

(Ganapini and Gonizzi, 1994, p. 121)

(on previous page)

It is of interest that the importance of wheat to areas like Parma provides the company a means to balance the regime's aversion to industrial growth, with policies such as the 'Battaglia del Grano', allowing the city to win the campaign's 1941 'Spiga d'Oro'. In fact, the period is characterised by particularly original promotional activity, and advertising, focusing on the sales outlet, frequently selling the one brand, and acting as the sole point of reference for consumers, who are drawn by attractive shop windows, displays, free gifts, and a personalised service provided by the shopkeeper, whose advice and knowledge are relied on for an individualised service of the unpackaged, ready-to-weigh pasta located in the shop's food bins.⁹ This strategy continues for most of the inter-war years as the company expands its business into other cities of the Centre and North, to be supplemented by the first truly modern advertising campaign for its nutrition-building 'Fosfina' brand in 1937.

Packaged for individual purchase with a transparent window to satisfy curiosity, the brand is the first to be available only in pre-packaged format, thus obliging the consumer to change an established pattern of choice. Reminiscent of Buitoni's 'pastina glutinata', and characteristic of a long period in which families often lacked a sufficiently nutritious diet, a fact readily utilised by companies in their advertising, the brand becomes a focus for a press campaign based on the middle-class family, and participates in the modern 'Concorso Bonaventura' organised by a number of companies. The consumer is encouraged to identify the brand with daily energy requirements, and away from the images usually associated with the type of pasta (Bonatti Bacchini, 1994).

As post-war recovery proceeds, government supply contracts, along with later bread production, are abandoned to focus on pasta lines characterised by standardised packaging. The 1950s also sees the launching of an advertising campaign aimed at raising brand awareness at a time of increasing food consumption, and growing competition for shelf space by the various pasta brands on the market. Although the campaign is significant in refashioning brand logo and packaging, in a modern

advertising effort with the award-winning 1952 slogan, 'Con pasta Barilla è sempre domenica', it is only by the early 1960s that other forms of advertising take over from the dominant daily press and roadside posters. With the contemporary move into television and women's magazines, the late 1950s to early 1960s see a consolidation of the concept of the female consumer, and of her role as 'massaia', at the centre of much advertising. The role model rotates around the modern Italian woman in an idealised home, with a sprinkling of emancipation making her acceptable to younger consumers.¹⁰

The 1965-67 period is emblematic of this development, as advertisements on single and double pages communicate women's apparently central role in the kitchen, initially with the 'c'è una Gran Cuoca in voi ...e Barilla la rivela' slogan (see Figure 4.24), and later the 'Ogni giorno un piatto da favola', as the brand comes to represent a real gastronomic experience for the bored housewife. By 1967, both slogans are incorporated in the one advertisement to give the consumer a sense of success and daily achievement. Located predominantly in the most widely available weeklies, according to a 1966 media plan (Ganapini and Gonizzi, 1994, p.233), format and language vary minimally in single page advertisements. The first 1967 issue of the popular *Grazia* (8th January) launches the company's new advertising campaign, given its significantly high readership level, with 600,000 copies sold per week, as declared by this very issue. Readership as a multiple of the actual number of copies sold is particularly relevant in such cases, where, typically, 67% of purchasers lend or give away their copies of *Grazia* (Istituto Doxa, 1963, p.109), thus allowing multiple visions of the advertisements by diverse groups of readers in mixed socio-economic categories. The spread of weeklies to be included in the campaign is also indicative of the fact that the housewife concept is seen to extend in social, and religious, terms in various directions. The more middle-class *Annabella*, *Grazia*, and newly-launched, innovative *Amica*, feature alongside the more lower middle-class *Intimità* and *Gioia*, the photoromance *Grand Hotel*, the Catholic *Famiglia Cristiana*, the gossip-centred *Oggi*, and the ubiquitous *Domenica del Corriere*, all popular magazines, with a predominant readership amongst the female population, increasingly converging towards the brand of consumerist middle-class advertising typical of Barilla pasta.

C'è una Gran Cuoca in voi

...e Barilla la rivela

tagliatelle all'uovo



Barilla



COTTURA: 9 MINUTI

Voi e Barilla, insieme, fate un capolavoro di cucina. Voi ci mettete la vostra cura, Barilla la sostanza e il gusto della sua pasta all'uovo, ricca e squisita, come fatta in casa. Un tocco di alta cucina anche nei piatti semplici di ogni giorno, una festa sulla tavola!

Pasta all'uovo Barilla come fatta in casa

LE VOSTRE RICETTE

Tagliatelle all'uovo
in salsa di fegatini

Scegliere una scatola di tagliatelle all'uovo Barilla, formato n. 129. Soffriggere in due cucchiaini d'olio e una grossa noce di burro mezza cipolla affettata sottilmente; quando comincerà ad imbiondire, aggiungere 200 gr. di fegatini di pollo, tagliati a fettine; cuocere a fiamma viva per 5 minuti. Versare subito 300 gr. di pomodori pelati, ben scolati e tagliati a filetti. Fare insaporire per altri 5 minuti, salare e pepare. Versare sulle tagliatelle cotte al dente, e ben scolate, e ben scolate, e ben scolate, e ben scolate. Servire con parmigiano grattugiato.

Dosi per 4, 5 persone.
Per ogni consiglio di cucina, scrivere a:
Servizio Cucina Barilla - Parma



4.24 BARILLA. C'è una gran cuoca in voi ...

- *Grazia*, 1965

(on previous page)

The initial attention-grasping, four page, fold-out, Barilla advertisement in *Grazia* (8th January, 1967), is the first thing that the reader sees upon opening the magazine, with the cover page exhibiting an inviting dish of tagliatelle with mushrooms, set in a vineyard-covered, stone-laid, long, rustic patio, alongside a glass of red Italian wine. The consumer's taste buds are tickled at the thought of a different, fairy-tale like recipe each day, aptly communicated by the various recipes as usually beyond her reach, or imagination, as the new slogan -'Ogni giorno un piatto da favola'- is reinforced by that of previous advertisements, once the fold-out is opened -'c'è una Gran Cuoca in voi ...e Barilla la rivela'. The addressee is reminded that the brand's unique qualities lie in value, range, and the ability to contribute in alleviating the burden of not knowing what to cook one day after the next, by moulding her cooking skills. The emphasis on cooking skills, a much sought-after ability in a spouse, is repeatedly called upon, as the indexical relationship established between the brand, and the housewife, regards one salient feature of her multi-faceted role. Noticeably, the images merely feature the young, smiling model, never actually in the act of preparing the dishes she contentedly smiles next to, as all attempts at firmly categorising the woman of this period are avoided. The message is, therefore, open to interpretation, as younger, domestically inexperienced women may regard the advertisements, and product packaging, as the solution to their cooking perplexities, whilst the older addressee easily associates the brand to her home and family based lifestyle. The presence of working women as a target of most firms signals the use of a less static formula, recalling vaguely a figure that is quite ephemeral. Nevertheless, the text is emblematic of the educational function as women, wooed from tomato sauce, are encouraged to experiment under the benevolent guidance of Barilla:

'Ogni giorno un piatto da favola.

Un piatto preparato con la

vostra cura e la qualità della pasta Barilla.

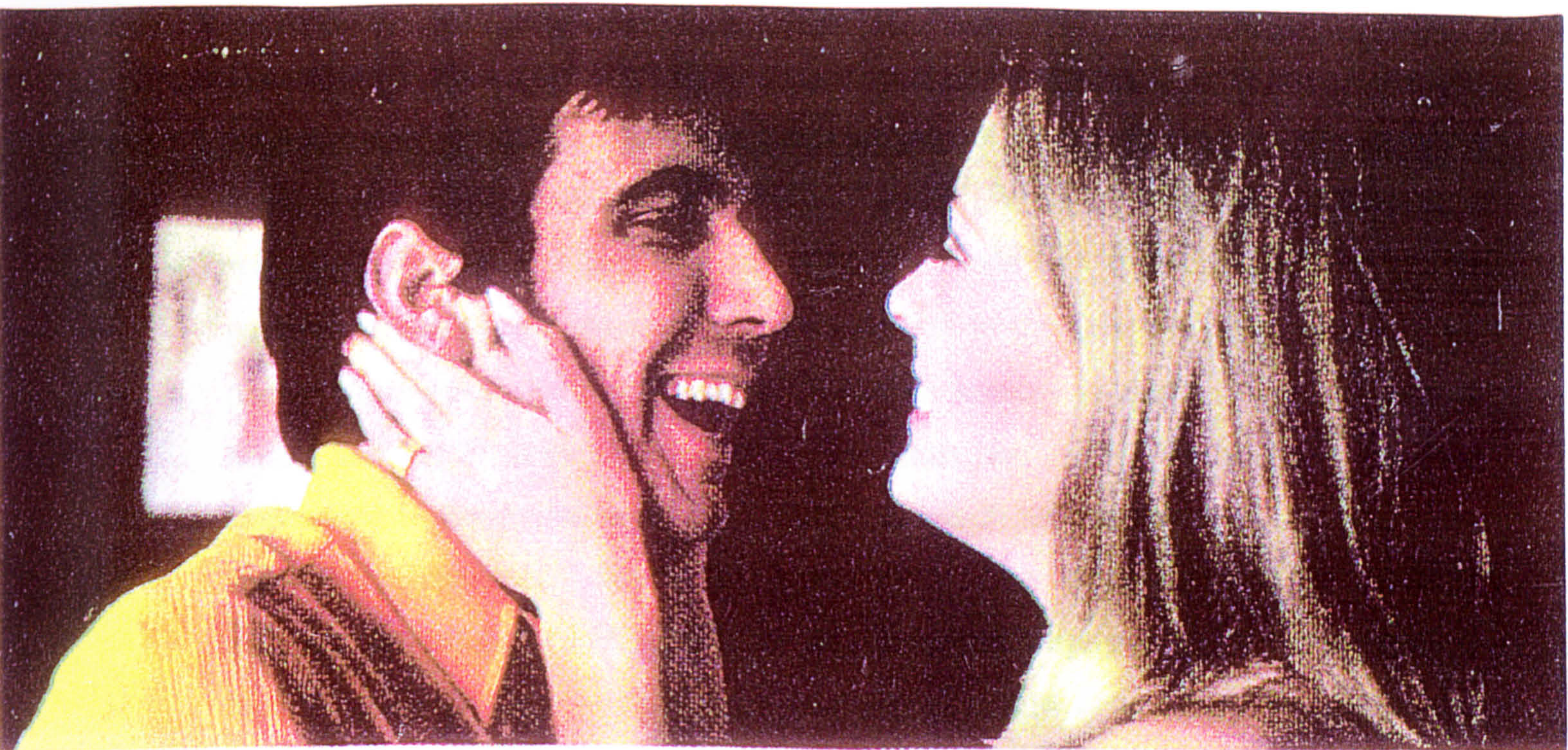
Una qualità che vuol dire un

"tocco di alta cucina" anche nei

piatti più semplici di ogni giorno'.

The advertisements that follow this launch use scenic locations as inviting backdrops to regional recipes, with the woman encouraged to expand her Italian culinary identity while firmly reinstating herself in her role as nurturer, so much so that advertisements feature her in more active poses, catering to the desires of one man. The centrality of pasta to the Italian way of life is such that even the young couple portrayed in Figure 4.25 retain a distinctly traditional aura, despite belonging to the baby boom generation. However, the figures' parallel head and body level denote equality in social, cultural and personal relationship terms (*Grazia*, 1967). The young, married woman captures the face of her contented consort in her hands upon his arrival home, suffusing the advertisement with a sense of modernity in the physical poses, clothes, hairstyle, whilst strategically diverging from the previous focus on the notion of 'appetising appeal', to direct the consumer towards a different message based on pasta as the 'food of love'. This sense of modernity is palpable above all in the non-conventional, bright yellow shirt, longish hair, and side-burns of the man, despite the fact that the advertisement retains a concrete link with the woman's home-centred role, essential to forging the indexical relationship with the brand, facilitating the advertisement's guided interpretation by the female addressee.

The image of the couple is the most striking part of the advertisement, albeit occupying less than a third of page space, linking the message and appetising image. The middle-class aura exuded by the image is emblematic above all in the figure of the woman, given her centrality as carrier of meaning in the advertisement, and for baby boomer addressees, who dominate the target market. Her precise hairstyle, delicately made-up features, well-kept hands, and long nails, provide a defined, yet contained, sophistication, easily associated with the middle-class woman, whose day would be dedicated mainly to personal, and home-centred activities, even if employed outside the home. The emphasis given to the woman's hands, clasped in welcome around the man's face, is particularly relevant, as the perfect hands communicate the indelible presence of a variety of modern home conveniences. This frees up time to be dedicated to herself, and, more significantly, to her husband. However, the hands may have dual significance.



"Ciao! Fammi subito i complimenti per questo minestrone! L'ho fatto io, sai.

Ci sono dentro tutte le cose che piacciono a te: tante verdure fresche e la

pasta Barilla, fatta proprio per cuocere nel buon minestrone"



4.25 BARILLA. Ciao! - *Grazia*, 1967

(on previous page)

They also indicate a serving function, notable for their female presence in advertisements for various products, but above all for food, where the hands perform the supreme function of food preparation and serving for others (Winship, 1987a and 1987b). This serving function is emblematic in the way the hands are placed, much akin to the position utilised by women carrying a serving dish to the table and offering it to their partner. As a result, the positioning of the hands appears to symbolise an offering of herself and her culinary skills, with gender, class and public-private role difference emphasised by hands that carry such meanings, which are crucial to the advertisement and for the addressee.¹¹ Indeed, the importance of the hands as 'a visual mode of address' (Winship, 1987b), lies in the contrast between the man's typically Mediterranean dark hair and skin, and the woman's white complexion, lending further emphasis to this feature, and to its connotative function, particularly when the addressee's gaze rests on the unmistakable wedding ring. Symbolising love by iconographic convention in Western societies, the wedding ring, or wide gold band utilised in the advertisement for its greater visibility, is shown on the woman's hand in a large number of advertisements, whether or not there is a focus on the hands. Symbolising the love relationship that cements together a young couple, the ring by means of its middle-class connotation of the family, stability, tradition, religion, and private roles, also ensures a high degree of acceptance of the advertisement by the predominantly middle-class addressee. The importance attached to ritualised social and religious recognition of relationships aimed at producing offspring, is still significant in a society defined by convention, tradition and the Church, as is Italy in 1967. In terms of the specifics of the advertisement, the ring acts as the pivot upon which the indexical relationship is established between the brand and specific notions of womanhood, linked to the home, family and notions of middle-class behaviour. Precisely because of its symbolic significance and favourable connotations carried, the wedding ring represents a complex combination of country-related social, cultural and economic factors that the female addressee readily perceives as part of her real or desired living conditions.

The attempt by the advertisement to mix modernity and tradition in the figure of the young woman reflects a number of complex socio-cultural forces, as well as the fact that the baby boom market has largely come of age, and has entered the socio-economic and age category shown in the advertisement. In the case of young women, the fact that it is considered the norm for them to work until they marry, or have children, much along the lines of other industrialised countries, means that working is often regarded as a means of meeting future spouses, and of earning enough to save, and prepare for their 'corredo' or 'bottom drawer'. This focus on marriage, and purity, as transmitted by the bride in white in various advertisements by producers like the linen company Bassetti, has always played a fundamental part in Italian society, with young women encouraged to find 'un ragazzo serio', with whom to have a steady relationship before settling down to become a good wife and mother. This idealised picture would be transmitted to young girls by eager mothers hoping for a better future for their daughters, and is reflected in magazine advertisements, on billboards, and on television, as well as through the columns and problem pages in women's magazines. Research of the time highlights a preference by young women for the synthetic night-dress (Alberoni, 1967) as clearly indicative of changing perceptions, with this garment associated with sexuality and attractiveness even after marriage, compared to the austere duties associated with the white 'corredo'. Thus, the concept of being 'una ragazza seria' (Steiner, 1977) permeates Italian life with its connotations of being level-headed, respectable, capable and stable, all elements that characterise the Italian woman as the keeper of the hearth, and the element of social stability in a state ruled by volatile men. This concept is further combined with the numerous efforts of the Catholic Church directed at young women to take on the traditional roles of mother and wife in a society where, an increasing number of women are choosing work and education, or indeed not considering the marriage option at all.¹² Thus, the figure of the woman and her wedding band, is synonymous with a complex set of cultural and social referent systems that addressees instantly interpret.

In turning to the body copy, the flavour is distinctly modern by subverting the expected order of the text. The headline is strategically located at the centre of the advertisement,

in order to instantly attract the addressee's attention to the product, and its culinary possibilities, in a clear reminder of the previous advertising campaign. The sense of continuity is carried forth in the use of colour, with the blue script of 'pasta Barilla' highlighting the product packaging, and the red script linking the introductory 'Ciao!' of the body copy to the red pot of minestrone soup and the ladle. The visual attractiveness of the advertisement encourages the addressee to delve deeper into the text. The enigmatic, and informal, greeting uttered by the woman in the timeless middle-class ritual of welcoming her husband home from work, functions more as an introduction to the subsequent text than as a headline. It does, however, perform the function of a headline, facilitating the addressee's identification of the situation, and allowing her to understand who says the greeting. Consequently, she provides herself with a specific and intended interpretation of the message. The greeting has an important function of relay as uttered by one of the characters, confirmed as female by a reading of the body copy, and by an in-bred cultural tendency to attribute the 'welcome home' ritual to the woman, a fact confirmed by the positioning of the hands in an affectionate welcoming gesture.

The greeting is followed by the familiar, imperative form, as the woman insists on her right to be complimented and appreciated for her labours, an approach to the message that allows for that aura of linguistic modernity, where asserting rights is no longer seen as so inappropriate, especially for younger generations of women. Nevertheless, the modern aura stops there, as, significantly, the woman's labours are personal, reiterated by the further assertion 'L'ho fatto io, sai!'. With pasta the only packet food utilised, tradition goes hand in hand with genuineness and wholesomeness, reinforced by the verb 'sapere' in a colloquial form eliciting a confirmation from the receiver. The notion of genuineness is further highlighted by reference to fresh vegetables, as the wife willingly satisfies her husband's culinary desires. The concepts of personalised labour, time dedicated to food preparation, and to 'reaching a man's heart through his stomach' suffuse all advertisements for food products, whether implicitly or explicitly. The centrality of these multiple cultural concepts is such that the addressee, even if not quite middle-class, young or modern, cannot help but be drawn into the message, and interpret

the advertisement according to one or more of these factors, the modernity of the image, the innate traditionalism permeating the advertisement, or most banal of all, the universal appeal of the dish and the brand.

In conclusion, the advertisement relies essentially on the paramount binary combination of working husband/stay-at-home wife, that addressees can associate with across diverse socio-economic groupings, whether as those content with this situation, aspiring to it, or conversely, attempting to emerge from it. Although never stated nor refuted, Barilla advertisements, like those of other food companies, generally utilise this culturally embedded binary dual in terms of image and language, whilst never explicitly featuring objects such as kitchen apparel or utensils associated with the woman in a home-based function. The language, symbols and focus on a personalised and time-consuming approach to food preparation act as markers for identifying this underlying model, and its predominance in advertising message at a time of few advertising innovations. The emphasis attributed to such elements appear to leave women with little time for other activities, or non-domestic employment, as rediscovering the pleasures of the hearth go hand in hand with a post-boom economy, and marginalisation of women's employment possibilities. By the following decade, such unequivocal, one dimensional discourse gives way to greater variety for some products, yet less for the food sector, in the wake of the post 1968 movements, socio-economic developments, and fragmentation of reference markers in Italian society. Above all, food remains the Cinderella of the advertising sector, making use of a frequently unimaginative discourse that, unlike the developments in other sectors, sees women further repositioned within the eternal housewife model.

4.6 THE 1970S: THE SUPREMACY OF THE MODERN 'MASSAIA' IN FOOD ADVERTISING?

The food sector is characterised in the following years by a concentration on product-related factors, as the fragmentation of what has previously been regarded as relatively

uniform target groups, results in an attempt at avoiding precise socio-economic and cultural carriers of meaning that elicit negative reactions in consumers. Faced with a female-based market that varies in terms of age, socio-economic standing, and experience of the preceding years of change and transformation, the predominant middle-class model of traditional female virtues appears less as a unifying market symbol for food, yet, paradoxically, more for other products like domestic appliances, and even cosmetics. There emphasis on time dedicated to personal pleasure, rather than self-fulfilment by other means, becomes the dominant discourse. The general avoidance of feminist advertising discourse, language or image, vouchsafes the existence of the eternal housewife in food product advertising, allowing a product-oriented discourse not to chip away at the existence of this supreme myth, which is so essential to consumers' underlying brand perception.

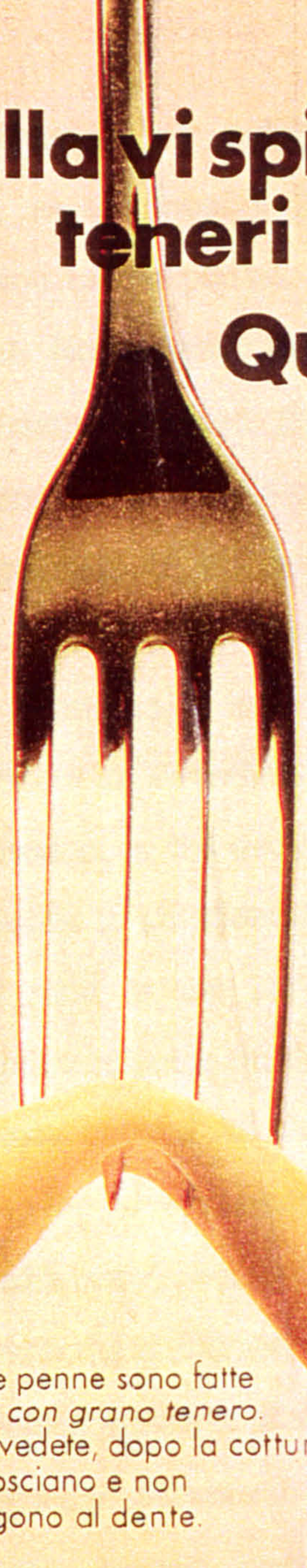
The 1970s are a period of inflation, austerity, and a government imposed price freeze on essential goods, first and foremost food. Also characterised by increasing advertising expenditure on cosmetics, toiletries, alcohol, and other lifestyle products, women's magazines reflect these contradictions, with women encouraged to spend ever more on goods that appear to embody the innovations and desired changes in middle-class lifestyle, whilst leaving many middle-class notions relating to success, social standing, and achievement firmly in place. In comparison to these trends, focus on the product in food advertisements is frequently quality-based, as companies struggle to differentiate by this means from the late 1960s onwards. Large advertisements encompassing the entire page encourage brand loyalty from the increasingly fickle consumer faced with wider choice, as an advertisement for Cirio tinned tomatoes states: 'solo 4 pomodoro su 10 diventano Pelati Cirio' (*Grazia*, 8th January, 1967). The image relies on comparison as the ten smaller tomatoes appear less attractive than the four larger, succulent ones, as the addressee is reminded 'la scelta significa qualità'. Indeed: 'Tutto sta nella selezione. Se non sono pomodoro di primissima scelta, ricchi di polpa e matura al punto giusto ... non diventano Pelati Cirio!'. The slogan - 'CIRIO ... come natura crea' - is emblematic of a message based on genuine produce, an increasingly important factor, above mere price,

for various consumer groups by the 1970s, as environmental and product knowledge increase, yet one that sees a reversal in the period of inflation. By 1975, 'Gran Turchese' biscuits exhort the mothers to consider the superior quality, and competitive price, of a packet whose contents can cater to many breakfasts and children's breaks: 'Adesso che la spesa è un impegno, pensa bene a quello che compra' (*Gioia*, 30th June, 1975). Use of the female testimonial fluctuates as advertisements feature a budget-conscious 'massaia' adroitly managing household expenses, or, alternatively, make attempts at avoiding this limiting categorisation in view of the many changes taking place in perceptions of Italian women's roles and identity.

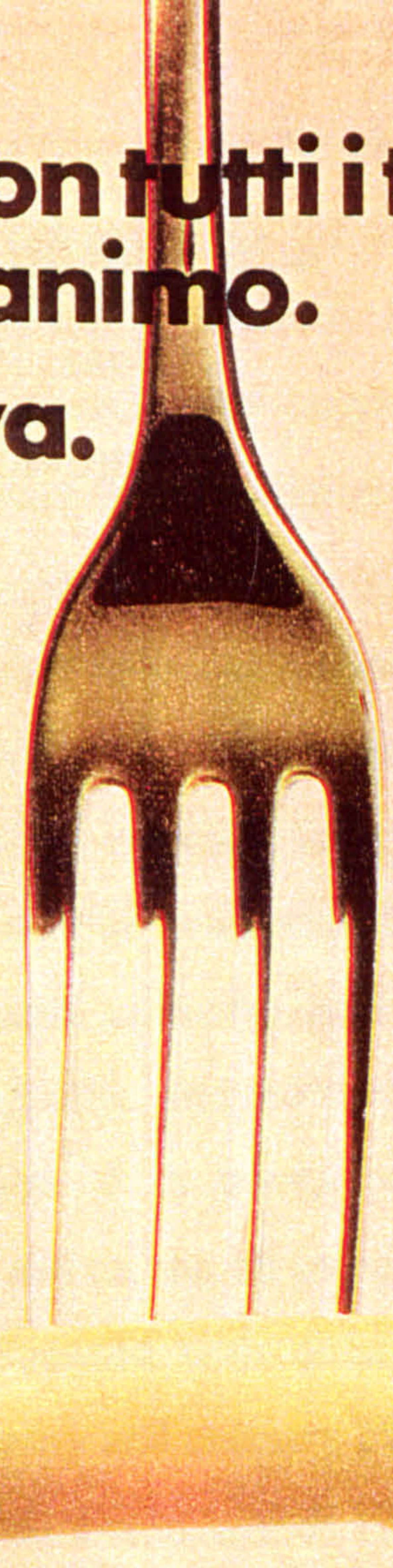
Barilla advertisements of the 1970s are emblematic of this dilemma, with early campaigns focused on expansion of regional consumption in the Centre and South, and the company's diversifying product range. Penetration of ever more marginal geographical areas of the peninsula is not a prerogative of Barilla, but is matched by competitive campaigns by such well known brands as Kraft and 'Star' sauces.¹³ In a North-Centre-South symbolically shaped white ceramic dish containing spaghetti mixed with the contrasting, traditional, red tomato sauce, Italians are convinced of their choices: 'Gli Italiani non Hanno Dubbi ... da 15 anni preferiscono gran ragù star e gran sughi' (*Annabella*, 29th March, 1975). These basic messages rely on visual, rather than linguistic, techniques, with the latter whittled down to a few basic elements, most notably in this case use of capital letters in the headline, use of the negative form to reinforce the concept, the verb 'prefer' as a strong carrier of meaning, and the use of the adjective 'grande', that while doubling as a brand name, validates the addressee's choice. Similarly, the Barilla advertisement (see Figure 4.26) featuring in women's magazines in this period, particularly from 1974 to 1976, develops a product-focused approach, with the same discourse used over again with minimal image and language variation. The emphasis on quality, as reflected in the explicit language of the advertisement, reveals a situation of market crisis caused by the government price freeze, and recourse by various producers to mixed wheat blends for pasta, to the detriment of Barilla, whose continued use of traditional durum wheat leads to a significant price difference for the consumer.

**Barilla vi spiega perché non tutti i tipi
teneri sono buoni d'animo.**

Questa è la prova.



Queste penne sono fatte
anche con grano tenero.
Come vedete, dopo la cottura
si afflosciano e non
rimangono al dente.



Queste penne sono
di grano duro, come vuole
la tradizione italiana.
Vedete, anche dopo la cottura
"tengono", restano al dente.
Ed è proprio al momento
di metterle in bocca che
sentirete di più la differenza.

Barilla difende la qualità.

**Pasta sempre al dente perché fatta
secondo la tradizione italiana.**



4.26 BARILLA. Barilla difende la qualità

- Gioia, 1974-76

(on previous page)

The advertisement, notable for the total absence of the female figure, whether physically whole as testimonial or 'cropped' (Millum, 1975)¹⁴, is indicative of the complex situation of the period, when the middle-class housewife model temporarily loses its appeal. Her absence is significant in that, for a product traditionally targeted at a universally accepted model of womanhood, it belies contemporary claims of the unchanging nature of women's portrayal in advertising. Changing consumer profiles, and changing viewpoints, result in a displacement, albeit temporary for many companies, of the universal ideal. In most cases, such as that of the above Barilla advertisement, the ideal continues to lurk in the background, as evident from the emphatic language that carves out an awareness of the product across media and consumer categories. Focus on the product in the image sees use of the fork as the universal, culinary, quality tester, accessible to all addressees, whilst recalling the notion of appetite, and the savouring of good food in the well-known culturally-loaded expression 'è di buona forchetta'. Symbolic reliance on these cultural and linguistic notions, and on the all-important one of pasta cooked 'al dente', a characteristic generally associated with durum wheat, allows the advertisement to instil a precise link between quality and culinary tradition in the addressee's perception of the brand. The indexical relationship is thus established between the brand and a particular combination of culinary culture relying on the real or perceived presence of the expert 'massaia' that the Italian woman is known to embody. Knowledge possessed by the 'massaia' is communicated by the symbolic fork that in carrying precise, unequivocal connotations across social groups is probably more effective, than a potentially more limiting human figure in widening the advertisement's appeal.

The headline arouses attention and interest by means of parallelism and a linguistic play on words. These rhetorical devices reveal a 'double entendre', where the brand is seemingly compared to a human personality trait, yet, at the same time, takes a distance from the same trait that other brands are associated with. The food-related interpretation of pasta quality relies on the two noun and adjective combinations of 'tipi teneri' and 'buoni d'animo', that whilst signalling a kind, warm, personality, are used in a sort of

inverse parallelism to categorise non-durum wheat pasta brands in terms of 'softness', and durum wheat brands in terms of 'goodness', taste and quality. The adjectives 'tenero' and 'buono', generally related in characterising a person, paradoxically become mutually exclusive when meaning is transferred onto pasta, with 'soft' wheat precluding a correct, traditionally acceptable, and reliable result. The headline also reveals an explicit attempt to not only persuade, but to educate, an uninformed consumer, whose lack of knowledge leads her to ignore the more expensive, yet higher quality brands in the belief that all are alike. The reader is encouraged to interpret the company's guiding words as akin to those of a kind benefactor, as Barilla 'spiega', and demonstrates, with the telling fork-based 'prova' undeniably superior results. Similar to much consumption-inciting, information-providing advertising of the 1930s for national products, Barilla is, ironically, controlled by an American company during this period, and probably more prone, as a result, to use comparative advertising in a notable departure from previous advertising discourse.

Finally of relevance is the use of colour in the advertisement, where the size of the pasta and fork attracts attention, and is quite distinctive in a page apparently dedicated mainly to the image, yet significantly text focused. Also distinctive is the typographically small body copy that only the most doubting of addressees would seemingly read, given the explicit message of the image, and the large headline and lower text print size. The two paragraphs located beneath the forks merely confirm the informational, scientifically-based nature of the poetic claim made in the headline. The 'al dente' concept provides the point of contact for the verbs 'afflosciare', 'rimanere', 'tenere', 'restare', 'mettere' and 'sentire', that in their profusion convince the pliable female addressee of the claim. The longer text, and greater concentration of verbs under the 'al dente' image, further reinforces this difference, as much as the three nouns 'tradition', 'cottura' intended as optimal cooking results, and 'differenza', that in their entirety encapsulate the message of the advertisement. In conclusion, the slogan 'Barilla difende la qualità' is probably the most indicative feature of an advertisement that represents a period of relative immobility after one of tumultuous change, not simply in the marketplace, but also in

terms of women's portrayal in advertising, to the extent that the eternal ideal of domesticity appears to have taken a backseat, albeit temporarily, to an economy undergoing diverse trials and tribulations.

Increased product differentiation, and a focus on specific characteristics that producers make strenuous efforts to communicate in women's magazine advertisements as individual and unique, result in a continual growth of the domesticity myth in various forms, and for various products throughout the 1970s. Despite the presence of product-focused advertisements that characterise the confused ebb of a continual flow in the communication of the housewife model, the domesticity ideal is as alive and well as never before. Although the stirrings of economic revival in the late 1970s, and more decisively in the early 1980s, allow for developments in a new era characterised by the increasing dominance of the television medium, women's domestically centred role remains firmly anchored in Italian middle-class women's magazines to such sectors as food, baby products, and household goods. In final analysis, the use of a predominantly housewife-carer female image in advertisements ultimately begs the question of whether in a post-war period dominated by this middle-class myth of prosperity, one of the most conservative of product categories advertised in women's magazines mediating the multiple changes of Italian society may ever really be advertised in an innovative manner to consumers.

ENDNOTES TO CHAPTER 4

¹ Conceptualisations of the female body see developments following the war years and are, as a result, indicative of a long-term trend that the fashions of the period, and the advertising of make-up, cannot uphold as a degendering process, particularly given North American cinematic and cultural influences, and the precise gendering of girls and women by the regime in various areas of life.

² The period from 1932 to 1936 signals international recovery as prices gradually move upwards and despite a temporary decline in late 1937, much of its effects are eliminated by expanding rearmament expenditure, as countries like Italy invest ever more heavily in arms. Autarchy constitutes a significant feature of Italian life following Mussolini's attempt at obtaining an empire with the invasion of Abyssinia in 1935 and League of Nations economic sanctions. Despite the needs of a country heavily dependent on imports, and with an agricultural economy increasingly deprived of other sources of high-income from exportable foodstuffs such as fruit, autarchy follows on the heels of heavy investment and propaganda for the 'battaglia del grano'. The launch of the 1936 austerity campaign for the amassing of war funds further lowers the standard of living of the majority of the population (Mori, 1995).

³ The body, and its functions, is investigated in detail by Karen Pinkus (1995) in her analysis of advertising under fascism. In particular, chapter three considers 'The Fascist Body as Producer and Consumer', and how notions of the body are moulded by such forces as the modernisation of the media, artistic techniques, the effects of the pact between the state and the business sector, and the policies pursued by the regime during the 1930s.

⁴ Women's role in the war has been analysed and discussed by a number of authors since the 1950s, although in more substantial terms under the influence of the consciousness-raising 1970s, and following the search for historical identity that characterises the 1980s (Ravera, 1978; Ascoli, 1979; Chianese, 1980; Mafai, 1987; Bravo, 1990). In terms of the advertising in women's magazines, the lack of data, and hard copies, in the latter part of the war implies a brief consideration of other forms of advertising influencing women's lives, where political propaganda provides much scope for analysis, albeit not falling within the remit of this research. Given the need to manufacture war goods, the slow-down in other forms of production to necessity levels, the consequential reduction, veering on near absence, of formal advertising channels, alternative channels develop. Advertising becomes largely 'word-of-mouth', primitive and survival-oriented, based on knowledge systems, networking and exchange. The distribution of ration books leads to a drastic reduction of choice, with availability and cost becoming dominant factors, especially in dealing with the black market, and in bargaining with peasant farmers. Women's ability to obtain

exchangeable goods, and advertise their wares, often imply the difference between a family meal and starvation. Conditions vary between cities, villages, mountainous, seaside and country areas, where ability to pay, and social standing, influence quantity and quality, with foodstuffs sought by all. Necessity breeds ingenuity with women resorting to multiple strategies, for example in seaside areas, stepping round land-mines in order to collect shell-fish, and sea water for home-made salt, to be exchanged with peasants for fruit, flour and vegetables. The period is characterised by these rudimentary forms of advertising, and exchange, as the walls papered with posters calling for war bond investments, women's labour, and men's fighting spirit, are replaced by Allied propaganda in the South, and Mussolini's reliance on men, arms, and women's auxiliary service contribution for a final victory in the North.

⁵ This post-war vision of womanhood in a 'ritorno al focolare' scenario is discussed in the previous section, where the social, political, religious, but above all economic pressures result in most middle-class women being totally reinstated in what is widely seen as their natural function. The role played by the Church is significant in this period as well as in the subsequent years.

⁶ Gian Franco Vené's (1988) considerations of family life in fascist Italy are interesting, and revealing of the many aspects of middle to working-class life. In particular, the cooking skills of a good middle-class wife, whether lower, middle or upper, is as much valued as is her ability to fend off hunger with limited resources. The most popular provider of cookery advice, under the pseudonym of Petronilla, in the *Domenica del Corriere*, is Amalia Moretti Foggia, whose ingenious recycling of all possible food parts, including skins, pips and fat, assures her popularity amongst readers. Women's magazines are no less imaginative, with the first issue of *Grazia* (10th November, 1938) providing a complete meal for four, from aperitif to sweet, at 30 lire.

⁷ In terms of advertising content, however, it is important to recall the fact that the post mid-1950s boom, is probably most represented in *Grazia*, where the inexorable increase in the number of pages, as previously documented, sees an intensive use of advertising space by cosmetics, and by domestic appliances in the next decade. The escalating importance attached to image in a society undergoing rapid expansion of the media, the increasing crossing by women from their private cocoons into the traditionally male public sphere, sees an emphasis on appearance, that whilst forming a basis of the formulae of most women's magazines, is present in the more up-market *Grazia*, and in some respects, in the fashion-oriented *Annabella*. The range of products advertised in women's magazines throughout the early 1950s, as much as the advice dispensed on how to enter the 'new' professions (*Grazia*, 25th April, 1953 - 'Come dovete fare per diventare hostess'), sew one's clothes inexpensively at home, attract and keep a man, undergo a development, as *Grazia* emerges as an advertising industry in its own right, maintaining a delicate equilibrium between cosmetics, washing powders, food, and domestic appliances, in the eternal game of

contradictory messages and ideologies. Baby products, sauces, oil, stockings, perfumes, nail varnish, hair products, 'Orlane' and 'Gemey' cosmetics, and the contented husband in Cirio and OMO advertisements (*Grazia*, 1st May, 1955), feature alongside fibres, domestic appliances, Standard bathroom suites and Lambretta motor scooters, as a specific role in purchasing criteria, and the decision process, is attributed to women increasingly targeted for goods requiring a substantial degree of decision-making. The tasteful, elegant bathroom therefore becomes an essential feature of every middle-class home, an objective of the home decorating owner with the time and money to select the most appropriate suites. The advertisement also features the product as a provider of rest and restoration for women, as the concept of self-indulgence gradually insinuates itself into advertisements, notably absent in other magazines, where all these concepts appear alien.

⁸ The 1950s are, indeed, characterised by an eclectic mixture of messages. The appearance of washing powders and liquids in magazine advertisements, sees the reader reminded of her recurrent, non-traditional, social aspirations: 'Stovi' is the ideal washing product for the 'massaia moderna', an apparent contradiction in terms. Notably, the miracle properties attributed to products are virtually absent, as the woman's understanding, and familiarity, with real quality is paradoxically assumed as given, despite a lack of real knowledge in various sectors of the population, frequently unfamiliar with the urban jungle. As a result, the message focuses on price, and the essential, yet ephemeral, factor of social acceptability, that as analysed by Gioacchino Forte (1966), is the most persuasive of all. The salient feature of these advertisements is their role in identifying, and appearing to meet, social and ego needs. The need to belong, and feel appeased, is reflected in that category of advertisements that paradoxically stimulates emulation: the elegant hostess seated at the elegantly laid table knows that Ritz 'Premium' crackers are the only acceptable bread substitutes for her guests (*Gioia*, 13th November, 1955). The fad of reduced bread consumption by women is the means used by the perfect hostess to reveal her taste, style, and knowledge, in a world characterised, ironically, more by family get-togethers, than by the implied, or pictured, dinner parties.

⁹ The advertising and promotional strategies utilised by Barilla are common to the period, attempting to establish and maintain customer loyalty by a number of means. Free gifts, calendars, postcards, and other paraphernalia, usually bearing the company's logo or designs, become an important promotional tool, and ensure loyalty to the outlet. Such is the originality of extras, collection schemes, and gadgets, that some, such as the Perugina 'Four Musketeers', create a veritable frenzy amongst consumers. Exhibitions, shows and stands are also a common form of promotional activity that consumers usually visit for the free gifts, demonstrations and the ingeniousness of the displays.

¹⁰ A particular development of the 1960s advertising scene, and one that features Barilla as protagonist, requires a mention as an element that continues to dominate the industry in the future: television advertising. The 1957 introduction of the early evening 'Carosello' makes it a feature of daily life, and a part of popular culture, as advertising is portrayed as 'spettacolo' in a uniquely Italian way. The aim is not simply to present products, but to present them in such a way that the viewer is provided with an element of emotional involvement and entertainment. Culturally 'Carosello' is associated with bedtime for children, and as a break for adults, given that the advertisements portray such figures as the singer Mina, and Dario Fo, known as a comic actor, and as yet, minimally ideologically involved in particular movements. The uniqueness of the concept has been noted by Fo himself:

Si può ben dire che la storia della pubblicità televisiva si divide in due capitoli ben distinti: l'epoca del Carosello e quella dello *spot*. Girare i Caroselli mi divertiva moltissimo. Erano *sketches* veloci, ma compiuti e con un loro senso interno, dove c'era modo e spazio per mostrare il proprio stile, il proprio marchio e la propria maschera, oltre a quello del prodotto da pubblicizzare. ... Nel Carosello l'attore mostrava la propria maggiore o minore simpatia, mestiere, *serve* comica. ... Oggi nello *spot* l'attore, o il personaggio chiamato ad agire, vende, e per intero, la propria faccia. ... Perciò, passato il tempo dei Caroselli, Franca ed io non abbiamo più accettato di offrire la nostra immagine per la pubblicità in TV (Fo, 1994, p.240).

Many of the advertisements targeted at women feature women in the roles of housewife for household products, or food, with American cinema techniques used to portray mildly annoying domestic scenes that the woman manages to resolve through her use of the advertised products. A typical image of women in the economically booming Italy of the 1960s is 'Bettina', a young bride, and able housekeeper, portrayed by Barilla in 1965, in the wake of an Americanised advertising attempt to transform women into the ideal housewives with perfect homes, washing, meals and family. 'Bettina' represents the 'massaia', wife, mother, nurse, psychotherapist, cleaner, sewer, cook and maid, but with a hint of the office worker, and friendly neighbour (Belli, 1994, p.244). Portraying a multi-faceted 'superwoman', she may be seen as an attempt to attract a wide socio-economic category of women consumers for habitual purchases of household products. In a period of increasing competitiveness, yet divergence of women from the traditional middle-class housewife model, whether through need or choice, this modernised version of the housewife is both typical and atypical, reiterating the strategy used in other media forms such as women's magazines.

¹¹ The notion of serving is particularly linked to the woman's maternal role in advertisements, and as such sees strategic use of the hands in advertisements for baby goods and foods. The 1960s are increasingly characterised by advertisements focused on the mother, and the array of products needed to guide her

through childcare. The increasing availability of convenience goods at mass market prices implies greater freedom for women from time-consuming household chores like food preparation. The fact that this very advantage is frequently not mentioned in advertisements is symptomatic of an attempt at not alienating or limiting the range and number of consumers, as such a statement of product advantages may communicate a product aimed more at the working mother than at others. The range of product offerings also increases throughout the 1960s as more and more small and medium-sized companies appear in response to expanding market opportunity, such as the case of the baby goods and sanitary company Artsana that expands its product range for 'Chicco' from 50 to 400 products between 1962 and 1966 (*Grazia*, 12th June, 1966).

The strategy of companies like Buitoni to target women as a general consumption category without operating a high degree of product differentiation based on consumer type and lifestyle is probably based on the fact that, unlike other countries, there is no longer a significant difference in the food consumption habits of different social categories, the fact that pasta is a staple food, and, finally, the limited variations in lifestyle in a country still striving to reach a middle-class standard of living. A 1962 advertisement for 'pastina' from a popular magazine of the period (*Vitalità*, 15th December, 1962) shows a family scene with the typical four-person family that becomes ever more the norm even in Italy, and an older relative, probably living with the family. The most significant feature of the advertisement is that while it does not appear to target the female consumer, but the family as a consumption unit, the hand holding out the energy-filled plate is undoubtedly female and married, thus revealing a gendered and class-based target market. The wide product range catering to all tastes is evident in the advertisement offering pasta with glutine for added energy, and vitamins, whilst other advertisements (*Grazia*, 13th March, 1960) offer the same product glutine-free as two children are featured gazing up adoringly, presumably at mamma, and as other two female hands emerge holding the pasta to help growth as 'gli anni dello sviluppo sono anni difficili'. This 'trademark' allows 'mamma' to be slotted into the average consumer stereotype of middle-class, married housewife and mother with bread-winner husband.

¹² The pull between modern and conservative forces reflects a period of transition and change, to the extent that the paradox of advertisements based on the tradition of amassing 'corredo' components lies in the decisively modern overtone of vast choice, synthetics, colour and speed in place of the gradual, painstaking accumulation of white linen. The concept is also, frequently, one of virginity that reflects religious stances in countering the move towards greater self-expression and self-fulfilment embodied in various women's movements and in particular with the role played by increasing numbers of women in the workplace. The white-gowned bride of Bassetti advertisements may be considered the norm for that category of home and family products, and have been constantly used in advertising to portray not simply the concept of initiating a new life experience, with all the essential products, but also the notion of purity

associated with marriage. Historically at the basis of the Church's constant admonitions to women to cover themselves, and thus avoid sinful gazes, purity is, as Efrat Tseelon notes in her analysis of the link between traditional conceptions of women, and how women look and perceive their appearance:

Central to the notion of chastity is the requirement of virginity. Virginity is the angelic state that has existed in paradise before the Fall. But in Christian theology virginity is not merely abstinence of sexual behaviour. It is chastity of body and mind in every form: desire, thought, speech and look. And it extends beyond the subject's own mind. In the requirement *to appear pure* as well as *to be pure*, modesty is located not only in the woman, but also in the way she is perceived by others. Her responsibility extends beyond herself to the eyes that are looking at her as a sexual object (1995, p.13).

The paradox in advertising of the period lies in the increased exposure of women's bodies in advertising beauty products, even though exposure frequently entails a rear or shadowed image instead of a frontal view. Nakedness, even when of a limited nature places the woman in the role of seductress, whilst a white, bridal covering brings forth the concept of virginity and a subjection to a fiercely Catholic view of womanhood. The concept of purity is a dominant factor of young women's lives until marriage begins to pall by the 1960s with greater, often unspoken sexual freedom available, even if pregnancy outside marriage remains a social taboo in most of the country. Nevertheless, advertising continues to use this image given the strong romantic hold that the concept of marriage has on women.

¹³ The 1960s see much attention devoted to household products as the 'mass consumerism' sweeping other countries like Britain and the U.S. in the 1950s take a definitive hold of Italy. The range of national and multinational products as advertised in 1963 (*Confidenze*, 20th October, 1963) for VDB supermarkets featuring a wide variety of household detergents, personal products and packaged foods, with the buyer participating in a points collection scheme for prizes, as increasing competition between suppliers and brands established brand awareness and loyalty by weaning the customer away from local markets. The growth of supermarkets coincides with changes in social roles as the new female entrants into the workplace have less time to spend on the main household chore of shopping, and with the participation of men in the imported concept of the American-style weekly shopping trip, are encouraged to acquire the habit of obtaining all they needed from the same source. Nevertheless, by the early 1970s, many of these trends are still limited to the North of Italy, where rapid emulation of American cultural concepts prevails over more traditional attitudes in the South, thus leading to market extension campaigns by such companies as Barilla. The reduction in levels of 'benessere' from North to South play a part in the development of supermarkets, as the concept generally requires a higher income level given the advantages associated with buying large quantities, the incentives offered by supermarkets, and the need

to transport shopping home by car. These factors determine a greater expansion in the North initially, and as noted in a 1963 RAI documentary on the rise of supermarkets ('Benessere: I Luoghi del Consumo 1945-1999', RAITRE, 15/4/1999), a 'drogheria' in Bologna on the eve of its hundredth year converts to a self-service, mini-supermarket 'superette' format, offering a wider range of goods, and abandoning the 'are you being served?' queue system. This trend fuels advertising in women's magazines, launching new products, reinforcing precarious buying habits, and firmly establishing the need for supermarkets. Despite these developments, the older 'massaia' across the country relies on her local market for human contact, the bargaining game and relationships, all factors that the efficient supermarket cannot substitute in Mediterranean cultures.

¹⁴ Utilised by Trevor Millum (1975) in his analysis of women's images, the 'cropped' or segmented body part, such as the hands, suffice to communicate gender. The part stands metonymically for the 'sexual' woman, and is crucial to the meaning of the advertisement.

CHAPTER 5: FIAT - THE ITALIAN UTILITY VEHICLE

5.1 CAR ADVERTISING IN TURN OF THE CENTURY WOMEN'S MAGAZINES: THE CASE OF FIAT

Automobiles have always featured as a significant factor in the Italian economy, both in terms of production and consumption, with Fiat frequently representing the sector in its entirety. The company's growth in the first decade of the twentieth century during the Giolittian economic miracle allows for the expansion of product use to more people, albeit within the confines of the wealthy classes. Car ownership and upkeep, in fact, entails considerable expense at the turn of the new century, where the 16,000-17,000 Lire cost of a new car combined with a 9,000-10,000 Lire outlay in maintenance expenses, appears well beyond the reach of much of the middle class. These costs are indicative of the nature of the production strategies of companies like Fiat. High quality and low volume, based on artisan-level workmanship, limited mechanisation and a high number of man hours per car, results in products tailored to meet the tastes of a small number of wealthy buyers in a highly restricted market. Up to 1904, Fiat's products are typical of this market situation, demonstrating a marginally growing production output from its inception in 1899, with the 350 vehicles produced in 1904 being a small increase only from the 250 produced in 1901-1902 (Castronovo, 1969, p.202).

Established by pioneering bankers and entrepreneurs, Fiat was to form part of a self-contained group of four vehicle manufacturers based in Turin (the others were Rapid, Taurinia and Itala), the city therefore playing host to the rapidly growing mechanical industry. The 1905-1911 period of rapid industrial acceleration, and economic take-off, sees an expansion of this industry and of Piedmont industry in general, with the introduction of innovative technologies and management systems. In particular, as outlined by Valerio Castronovo (1969) in his study of the region, increase in demand for mechanical systems caused by the nationalisation of the railways, combined with city hall control over the tramways, and the growth of the vehicle industry resulting from

accelerated investment, become decisive factors of growth. The 1905-1906 mobilisation of saving sees an investment influx into the new sector of vehicle manufacturing, allowing Fiat to cash in on these new investment opportunities, especially in view of the company's high press profile, successes in international motor races, and a new law providing government funds for public sector vehicle suppliers. The ensuing consolidation of market position, supplier networks and share value allows Fiat to ride out the 1907-1908 stock market crash and subsequent crisis.

The resulting financial and industrial concentration of the sector is based on a drastic reduction in the number of competitors from a peak of seventeen in early 1906 to five in this period, of which only Itala remained a viable source of competition. Furthermore, the U.S. inspired management techniques and participation in suppliers' networks allow the company to lower production costs significantly and ensure elasticity of supply in tune with market demand. Based on scientific management, Taylorist principles of production, standardisation becomes a reality in Fiat, so much so that production continues rising from 1,100-1,200 vehicles in 1906 to 2,630 in 1911 (Castronovo, 1969, p.220). Indeed, the company's dominance of the sector is such that its output accounts for about half of that of the national sector. Under the foresighted guidance of Giovanni Agnelli, and with the use of innovative management strategies, the production of the initial 'utilitario' vehicle in 1906 allows the emergence from artisan-based production by the end of the decade, and the launch of the first mass produced car. The 1912 'Zero' meets the needs of the middle-class buyer, albeit at the upper end of this category, solid and with a distinct style, at an accessible market price and maintenance cost, becoming a forerunner for Fiat cars well into the post-war period, such as the 1919 Fiat 501 (Marin and Mattei, 1961).

Indeed, by 1905, Fiat is advertising as a car manufacturer with very basic script advertisements in women's magazines such as *La Donna*, signalling market expansion into the upper-middle-classes and the use of women's magazines for a range of non-household products. In fact, in *La Donna* advertised products are not merely limited to

personal care and household goods, but reflect the booming industrial sector, the magazine's wide middle-class readership and women's expanding roles and expectations in society at a time of continuous social ferment. Women are faced with new social and personal realities, expanding employment possibilities in a number of new professions, increased education and the complementary role of protagonist in a growing middle-class. This latter factor, combined with more status aspirations, frequently derided in artistic poster advertisements for the rich, allows continually targetting of women as purchasers for self and family, and apparently even involved in decision making in the purchase of goods such as cars.

Typically, such advertisements are dominated by the image of an elegantly dressed couple in the car, to denote the style and status associated with the product, followed by the company's full name - 'Fabbrica Italiana Automobili Torinesi' - instead of initials. The centrality of *La Donna* as an advertising medium for car manufacturers is evident by 1912 as advertisements for other companies such as Siat and Lancia are advertised to this consumer group. The latter uses a fashionably dressed woman holding up a Lancia flag as an image which becomes a recognisable brand symbol (see Figure 5.1).

5.2 FIAT ADVERTISING FOR THE 1920s AND 1930s WOMAN

The importance of Fiat as a car manufacturer undoubtedly increases during the war and in its aftermath, with the company's products steadily coming to represent the average Italian's dream of a regular 'mille lire al mese' income. The inter-war period sees prolific advertising by Fiat, as the company curries favour with the government and financial institutions, leading to a near domination of the market by the 1930s with the autarchic policy of national production and consumption. In terms of the advertising directed at a prevalently female public by means of women's magazines, the limited number of more consumption-oriented magazines allows for little choice.



LANCIA & C.
Fabbrica
di Automobili

TORINO
Via Monginevro, 99
Telegr. Lanciauto
Telefono 27-75

5.1 LANCIA. Provate le automobili - *La Donna*, 1912

(on previous page)

The 1920s sees advertising of vehicles heavily concentrated in the monthly *Lidel*, whose upper-middle-class target could generally meet the financial investment required in purchasing one or more vehicles. Throughout the 1920s, almost every issue of the magazine contains one or more Fiat advertisements amongst other vehicle advertisements.

They frequently feature the young, modern 'flapper' or 'maschietta' at the wheel with aviation goggles and cap (15th October, 1924). The lack of script leaves the images open to a certain degree of interpretation as women are featured as active consumers, driving fast cars much like their male counterparts and enjoying the freedom of their status and finances. The advertisements complement articles in magazines such as *La Donna* and the yearly *Almanacco della donna italiana* dedicated to the feats of women drivers, pilots and professionals, undertaking new, and unusual activities, not generally associated with the female sex. Appeal to the well-heeled 'liberated' woman of this class does not, however, allow the canons of beauty and elegance to be forsaken, as the 'new' 1920s woman in this form of advertising appears to dedicate as much time to her appearance as to her sporting and social activities. The importance of this female image, whether as driver, passenger or participant in an outing, lies in the establishment of an indexical relationship between the car and this version of womanhood, evidently considered as carrying favourable connotations for the product at that time. Significantly, the advertisements were also frequently featured on the back cover of the magazine *Lidel*, as the 'coffee table' effect allows reinforcement of the image in addition to the primary reader's sole gaze.

Important advertisements of the period that exemplify the use of *Lidel* and other forms of advertising media as billboards, are for the Fiat 'balilla', where women are an invariable element associated with the style and class of a car marketed as readily accessible to everyone, or rather to every middle-class consumer in the expanding ranks of this social class. Following a post 1929 attempt by Fiat at imposing a more efficient organisational structure and production within the Italian vehicle market (Castronovo, 1971), the new

product appears emblematic of the company's renewed drive, with the woman at the centre of advertising discourse. Nevertheless, in terms of the advertising conducted, the active body postures adopted by the woman striding towards or away from the car in Fiat advertisements, such as in the 1934 advertisement by Marcello Dudovich (see Figure 5.2), are infrequent in women's magazines. Indeed, by the early 1930s, the earlier 1920s magazine advertisements featuring the 'maschietta' who is confidently in the driving seat, are beginning to give way to a more passive form of magazine advertising.

As shown in Figure 5.3 the 1932 advertisement for the 'balilla' depicts (*Lidel*, August 1932), the car is no longer a means of the positive self-expression embodied in the bob-haired 'maschietta', but has become an integral part of the elegant woman's lifestyle. In fact, the advertisement is strategically located on the left-hand page alongside the contents page, where lifestyle, fashion, elegance, home and leisure pursuits effectively complement and reinforce the advertisement's message: the 'balilla' is an indispensable feature of the *Lidel* reader's lifestyle and social presence which involves free time to be spent with the car and on the beach. As the advertisement states '... tutte con la Balilla quest'anno alla spiaggia!'. This can be contrasted with the Alfa Romeo advertisement appearing at the same time in 1932 in *Lidel*, where the image of the car is presented on its own along with the price list and contact details of the company in Milan (see Figure 5.4). For the well-heeled reader the car may be merely thought of as a means to an end. However, for the aspiring middle-class buyer the function of status symbol becomes paramount, signalling the attainment of a new social level. Thus, aspiration to go up the middle-class ladder may be cited as an essential feature of the Fiat 1932 Balilla advertisement in *Lidel* (see Figure 5.3), where the car becomes proof of having climbed another rung of the social ladder, much in line with middle-class status symbols like the radio set, telephone or the maid, which feature in other advertisements of that pre-war period (see the figure of the maid, for example, in the 1938 advertisement for salt in Figure 4.14 in Chapter 4). The added guarantee of the Pirelli tyre manufacturer's name used in the Fiat Balilla advertisement in Figure 5.3, reinforces the security and desirability of the vehicle for prospective buyers.

La nuova **BALILLA**

per tutti



eleganza
della Signora

5.2 FIAT. La nuova balilla per tutti - 1934
(Ganapini and Gonizzi, 1994, p. 121)
(on previous page)

FIAT

Balilla

*Autte con la Balilla,
quest'anno alla spiaggia!*



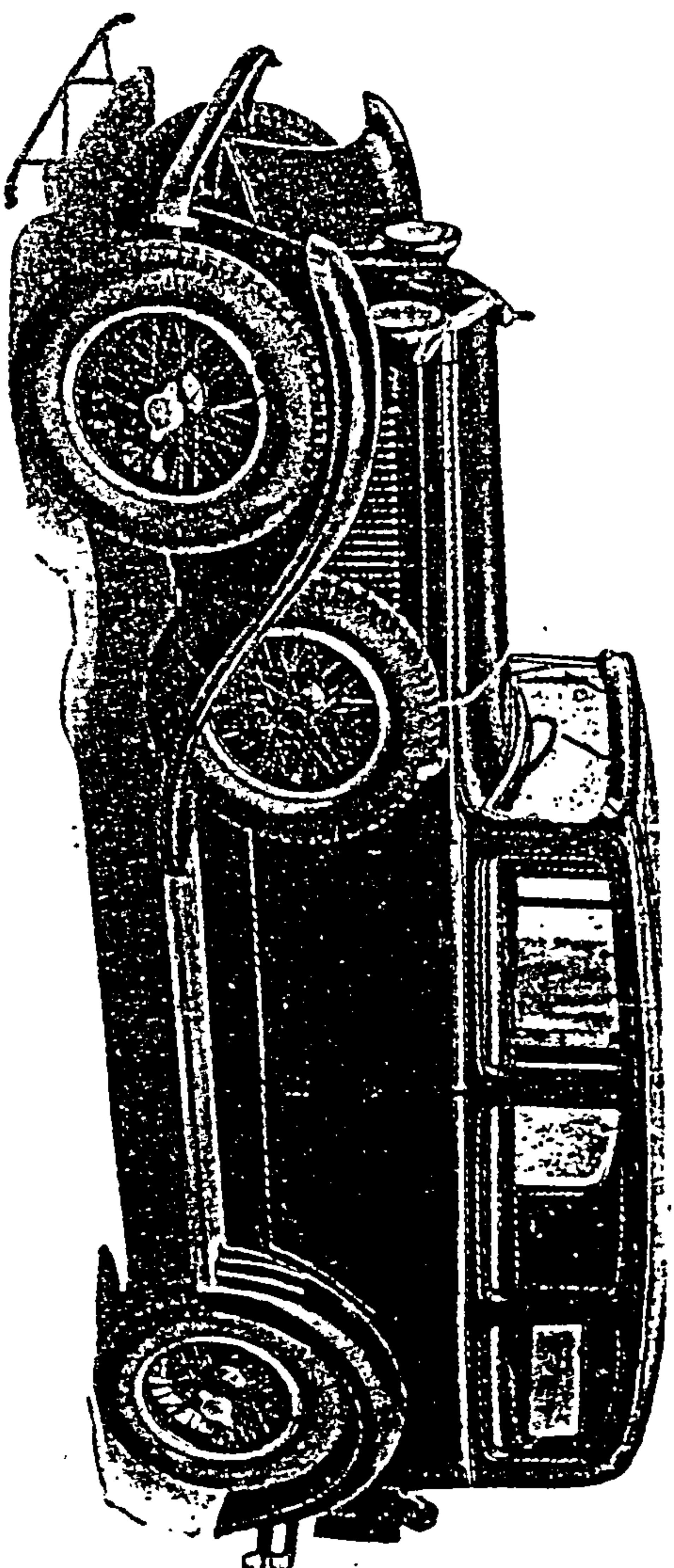
NEUMATICI PIRELLI

5.3 FIAT. Balilla.

Tutte con la balilla quest'anno alla spiaggia!

- *Lidel*, 1932 (on previous page)

Alfa Romeo



Guida Interna 6/7 posti "Carrozzeria ALFA" - "6-c Turismo"

LISTINO PREZZI - 15 Giugno 1932 - X

Per vetture complete di 6 ruote gommate - di tutti gli accessori d'uso e cristalli infrangibili
Franco Sede, Filiali o Concessionari

6 c. TURISMO	
GUIDA INTERNA 4-5 posti, con baule, carrozz. ALFA L. 39.000	
GUIDA INTERNA con separaz. 6-7 posti carrozz. ALFA L. 39.500	
6 c. GRAN TURISMO (doppio asse a cames)	
TORPEDO 4 posti o SPYDER 2-4 posti L. 43.000	
GUIDA INTERNA 4-5 posti, con baule, carrozz. ALFA L. 45.000	
6 c. GRAN TURISMO COMPRESSORE	
GUIDA INTERNA 4-5 posti, con baule, carrozz. ALFA L. 68.000	
6 c. GRAN SPORT	
SPYDER 2 posti L. 51.000	
8 c. 2300 GRAN SPORT	
SPYDER 2 posti L. 80.000	

S. A. ALFA ROMEO - MILANO

CAPITALE L. 80.000.000 inter. versato

Direzione ed Officine di costruzione: VIA M. U. TRAIANO, 33

5.4 ALFA ROMEO 1932 - *Lidel*, 1932
(on previous page)

Technically, the use of photography in this advertisement (Figure 5.3) rather than design lends an air of undoubted modernity to the advertisement and to the product, in the general context of advertisements still dominated by script and drawings. This is shown in the Alfa Romeo advertisement in Figure 5.4, for example, which featured at the same time in *Lidel*. Indeed, hand drawings rather than photographs regularly dominate in women's magazines of this period, resulting in the relatively greater visual impact of advertisements containing photography, such as that shown in Figure 5.3. Expense and other reasons may be linked to lack of development of photographic techniques in advertising at this time.

Also preference for artistic forms of expression in advertisements based on a long-standing tradition, may explain the presence of photography only in a minority of advertisements. The models' poses are meant to be those of a holiday snapshot, whilst performing the function of 'showing off' the vehicle, rather than demonstrating its functions. The car appears to be marketed at the female driver as the use of 'tutte' denotes, whilst also reminding women that trips to the beach are a group affair, with the independence and autonomy depicted by the previous generation of advertisements only marginally suggested at here. Marketed as the first financially and stylistically accessible family car, the vehicle appears as predominantly for women, a 'runabout' for outings in a hectic social and seasonal calendar, seemingly contrary to the fascist regime's rapidly-forming views of women's role, function and place in society. Discussion of ambiguity in advertisements of the period is undoubtedly linked to the fact that portrayal of certain images, especially regarding the female population, had to tread a fine line between appealing to a middle-class market that did not strictly adhere to fascist visions, and the prevailing climate of renewed conservatism regarding female roles. The advertisement's concentration on physical appearance and absence of family members, especially children and male adults as protagonists, is especially indicative of the attempt at appealing to a particular segment of the middle-class population without openly flouting evolving social and political perspectives of womanhood. Yet, the women appear free from social taboos, constraints on their freedom and family responsibilities as reflected

in the absence of the above subjects, and most notably from their carefree facial expressions and physical posture. The freedom to enjoy and to express this enjoyment is, thus, aptly represented. As a result, the advertisement attempts to establish an indexical relationship between a specific, and in some ways more ambiguous middle-class version of womanhood and the brand, by removing her from behind the wheel of the car, given the association of the act of driving with stereotypical male notions of power, drive and speed. Indeed, women's role in this activity, as represented by advertisements, undergoes a transformation, not merely as a result of evolving visions of womanhood, but notably as certain gendered stereotypes begin to filter through to the advertising and media industries. The increased association created between notions of gender and certain products, according to typical gender and product characteristics is probably best reflected in the case of the car, where the power-wielding 'maschietta' is supplanted by the passive socialite. Nevertheless, in bowing to the dictates of the profit margin, women continue to be associated with the product, and are used to communicate a particular target market profile.

The emphasis attributed to the stylistic elements of make-up, jewellery and fashion is significant, functioning as distinct class and target market markers, as much as the models' personal characteristics. This emphasis is further highlighted by the use of two particular photographic techniques: the slight haziness of the background, and the location of the two women in the attention-seeking optical dimension of the upper left - lower right diagonal centre. The confident aura of the two models is also reinforced by the gaze of the male onlookers in the distant background, and yet is countered by the women's apparent lack of awareness of the onlookers. The male gazes lend an essential dose of legitimacy to the women's behaviour in a society based on male criteria of acceptability, whilst the women laughingly direct their gaze towards an off-page left-hand camera angle, thus effectively minimising the significance of the presence of others who may not belong to the same social class. The use of such class and behavioural delineators in more sophisticated advertisements of this type, especially those directed at women, may be regarded as a further sign of image ambiguity at a time when class

aspirations functioned as an important component of advertisements. Yet they are vilified by Mussolini viewing middle-class comforts as a contrast to motivations for profit, based on explicit middle-class aspirations.

The advertisement is indicative of the degree of integration and resistance experienced by growing concerns like Fiat, that in attempting to tap into profitable markets, have to operate within certain socio-economic and political constraints. A similar effect is also at work within the female population, where increased advertising of products, media and film influence from across the Atlantic. Notions of self-identity allow for the reception and interpretation of such images that were neither purely 'fascist' on the one hand, nor openly liberated on the other. The limitations exerted on the 'liberated' images are fielded to a significant degree by image and language that permit notions of identity and social presence to filter through to women of the middle and other classes.

Mussolini's view of the middle classes concords with a long-standing cultural tradition of currying favour, whilst attempting to control this social group's increased presence. In accordance with a general policy of balancing conflicting social groups, the attempt at absorbing the middle classes into the life of the nation state by neither fully accepting nor completely denying their presence, reflects a nationalistic policy of integrating all citizens into a single national experience, and of providing a common identity that would tie the masses to the regime. A fundamental part of the equation lies in the role of culture, from the intellectual to the popular, as a leveller of social disparity, reflected in control of the media, and later in that of cinema (Cannistraro, 1975). Paradoxically, attempts at cultural uniformity, to be largely found in the organised activities of the 'dopolavoro' and mass organisations, contrasts with culture's inherent function, whether intellectual or of the print media at large, as a means of social distinction for the middle class. The role of this class was to change over time. Originally its members were drawn to the political alternative provided by fascism. As indicated by Renzo De Felice (1974), the use of national policies, and of mass organisations for a young age, allowed the widening of mass consensus in the 1929-1936 period, as Mussolini built on the social

and political stability gained as a result of the support of the saving-oriented lower-middle and middle-middle classes. A political passivity rather than active support, emblematic in Alberto Moravia's 1929 *Gli Indifferenti* (1986), was, however, soon to characterise the middle classes. Unlike Nazism, the Fascist State in Italy appeared unable to penetrate deeply into their daily routine and personal conscience, remaining essentially an ideology of appearances.

This ideology, linked to the new mass product of the Duce's image, viewed as particularly significant by Gian Paolo Ceserani (1981; 1988), is based on Mussolini's consideration of people as political consumers, and his obsession with portraying an industrialised and efficient nation. The 'hedonistic' attitude prevailing in this rapidly evolving consumer society, and particularly in the middle classes, combines with an industrial-urban development that goes hand-in-hand with consumption and non-participation in the rural, and more significantly, in the population 'battles', thus providing a focus for Mussolini's targeting of urban society. Ridicule of middle-class lifestyle as a source of laziness and vice, is effectively combined with the cult of the Duce, and with such popular slogans as 'Contro la vita comoda!' reflected in Mussolini's non-middle-class daily routine and personal behaviour. Elimination of drinking and smoking, sleeping eight hours, hard work and physical exercise appear to contrast sharply with consumption aspirations, not only of the middle-classes, but of all.

Aspirations become increasingly oriented towards entertainment and leisure interests, as the importance attached to the media increases, and foreign influences, particularly American, provide different visions of personal identity and social class aspirations. Italian women become the focus of an official ideology that diverges, for the working-class from reality, and for the middle-class from concepts of consumption and entertainment that sees the home-maker, wife and mother as a source of industrial revenue. The influence of the United States, primarily to be found in Hollywood productions but also in the print media, lies in imparting notions of self-identity and social presence, given a fascination with the American way of life and the meeting of

individual expectations by means of mass consumption. This latter factor, as indicated by Victoria De Grazia (1991), encourages new collective and individual identity models to emerge that transcend previous class and gender models. Indeed, recognition of middle-class women's role as consumers for self and others increases in this period, as their purchasing power allow them to 'add extra value' to the role of capable household manager left them by the regime.

The conflicting nature of the internal and external ideologies and influences continues to be felt in advertising, where even the home and family *La massaia* contains advertisements for driving schools in the North, if not for actual cars, throughout the 1930s. These advertisements signal middle-class women's greater access and choice of services, and presumably of related products, as the modern 'massaia', steeped in household chores and child care, is by no means considered beyond the scope of this type of advertising. As a result, despite the lack of car advertisements in various magazines, and in the modern *Grazia*, *Gioia* and *Lei* of the second half of the 1930s, the presence of related services and the advertising of cars in other media showing the female model alongside the vehicle (Ceserani, 1981), allow women to be continually targeted as car users and consumers.

Despite the constant pressure to lower consumption, the emergence of new habits result in the formation of a mass consumption society in this inter-war period, as entertainment and leisure activities become available to those who can afford them, thus fuelling different perceptions of identity, linked to women's consumption of commercial culture. Women's magazines are a case in point, where content moulds notions of identity and womanhood. Despite the regime's attempts at redefining concepts of beauty, the widespread use of American images of beauty, based on the slim, made-up, elegant, seductive woman prove a far cry from official propaganda of the 'earth mother'. Thus, by the 1930s, Mussolini's 'donna nuova', based on a revival of a Catholic and traditional ideal of perfect wife and mother, emerges at the epicentre of multiple social, cultural and employment possibilities, diverging from an official rhetoric, that appeared unequivocal

in substance rather than in form. The lack of a univocal stance on the cultural influence of the United States probably reflects the ambivalence of fascist culture towards Americanisation, which is seen as 'one of the main mythical metaphors of modernity' (Gentile, 1993, p.7), and so both terrifying and fascinating. Attempts at control, however, undoubtedly reflect the view held that:

... American economic and political imperialism was less dangerous than the moral contagion engendered by the fascination which the 'American way of life' exerted on Europe. This was the main target of moralistic anti-Americanism, which was perhaps the most widespread. It denounced the imitation of the American lifestyle or the preference for American products, considering these alarming symptoms of an incipient infection, which corrupted Italian customs and had negative economic consequences (Gentile, 1993, p.10).

Pulled towards the two poles of attraction represented by evasion and consumption (Dittrich-Johansen, 1995), the inter-war period sees the Italian middle-class woman's search for an individual identity conditioned by the contrasting images of the regime's idealised 'moglie-bambina', and the 1920s 'garçonne', rapidly replaced by the seductive 1930s Hollywood versions of womanhood.

5.3 VEHICLE ADVERTISING IN THE POST-WAR WOMAN'S MAGAZINE: A MARGINAL PRESENCE

The presence of the car as a product category remains a relative monopoly of magazines like *Lidel* in the inter-war years, and in the immediate post-war years is almost completely absent from women's magazines, as advertising struggles to resume, and the 'back to the home' campaign results in the domination of inexpensive home and personal care products. As the 1950s progress, and the number of advertising pages in the principal women's magazines such as *Grazia* increase, it can be seen that women as vehicle consumers are noteworthy in persisting only in as an almost absent category. Advertising for petrol does, however, appear in women's magazines, as in the daily and

weekly press, with a degree of secondary product advertising for cars, where the car is readily identifiable. Notably, much of this advertising is linked to magazines such as *Confidenze*, targeting a younger age group, compared to the more staid *Grazia*, or the middle to lower-middle-class *Gioia*, where advertising for cars is of a more limited, if not negligible, nature. The car also features in advertisements for other products as the main prize in one of the numerous product prize draws of the period, as the joint advertising of the product and the car see the latter becoming the goal, as the woman or young couple portrayed in the advertisement experience the emotion of elation when winning a family car. An example is the vermouth Gancia advertisement, featuring the possibility of winning a Lancia car in a prize draw held each month (see Figure 5.5).

A 1963 fuel advertisement (*Confidenze*, 20th October) for Agip's 'Supercortemaggiore', is representative of various fuel advertisements of the period. It identifies women as car users despite a lack of specific car advertisements in the women's magazine medium (see Figure 5.6). Indeed, car and fuel advertisements targeting women paradoxically tend to feature in other more general interest or 'attualità' magazines that are read by women.

However, these general interest magazines are obviously not regarded as an almost exclusive female source of reading compared to women's magazines. The significance of the fuel advertisements in women's magazines relates to the advertising of the vehicle, which is afforded a central setting with recognisable bodywork or brand logo. In this case, although given minimal importance in the advertisement, the car is a Lancia, reflecting a presence of this brand, as much as others, in the prize draws and product advertisements of the period. In this 1963 advertisement, pride of possession is no longer a male prerogative, as denoted by the headline 'ogni giorno una macchina nuova', as a young woman pushes open a garage door, supposedly on her way to work in the busy Roman metropolis (as indicated by the license plate). The image and words 'ogni giorno' reinforce a prevailing concept of pre-marriage employment for young women, who take pride not simply in their personal appearance but also in their vehicle. Other fuel advertisements in the press feature a mother driving her children or even alone in the car.

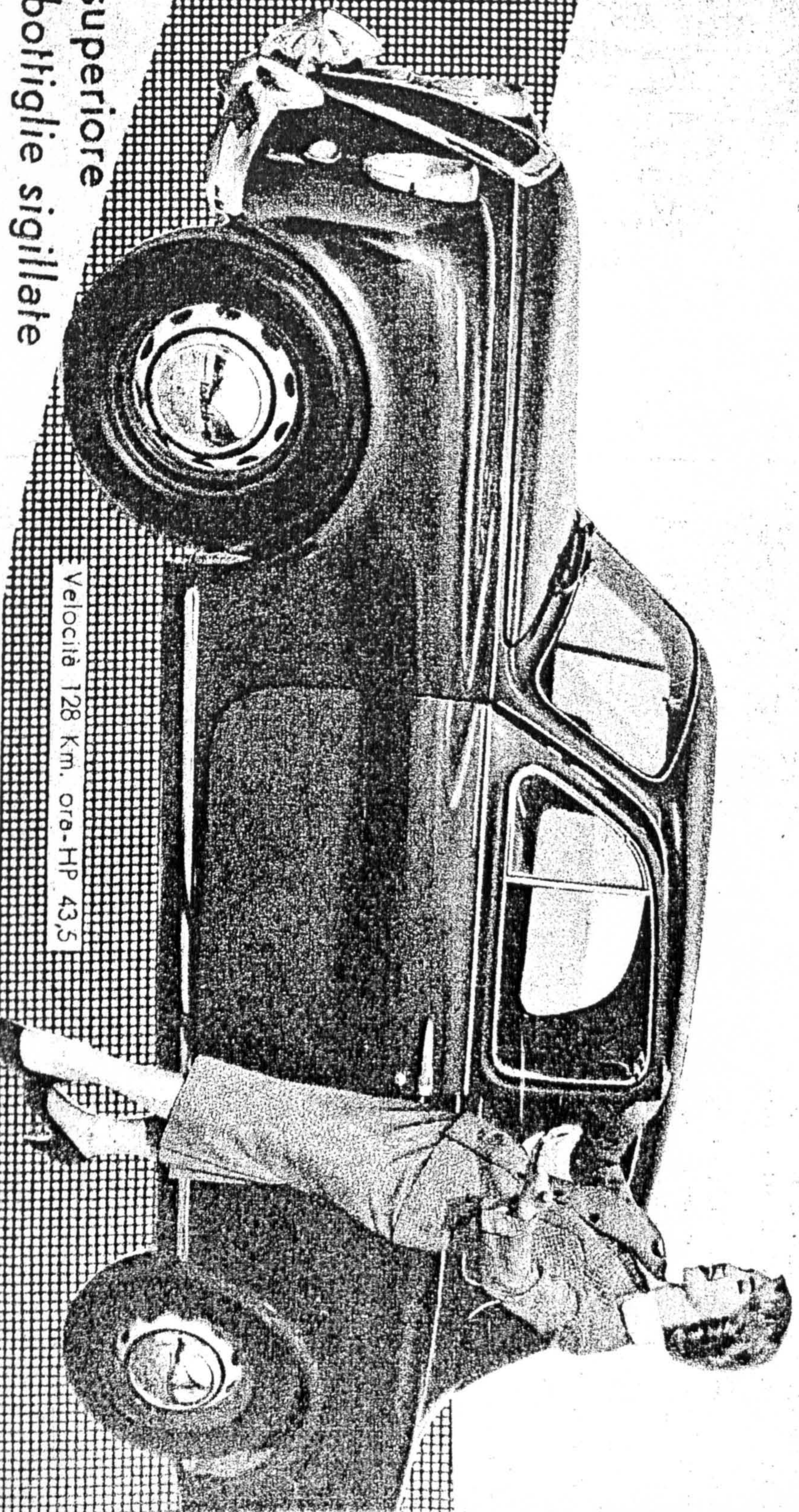
bevetate e vincerete! bevete Vermouth Gancia e vincerete un'Appia Lancia

Il limpido, puro,
squisito Vermouth Gancia
vi offre ogni mese
un'Appia-Lancia 2^a serie...

Comprate subito una bottiglia di Vermouth Gancia
e spedite
il Dischetto della Fortuna.



qualità superiore
solo in bottiglie sigillate



Velocità 128 Km. ora-HP 43,5

L'Appia Lancia sorteggiata dalla Gancia il 31 Marzo 1956 è stata vinta dal Sig. ESPEDITO CAPASSO di Foggia (Soc. SME, Via Bari

5.5 VERMOUTH GANCIA and LANCIA

- *Grazia*, 1956

(on previous page)

Ogni giorno

l'orgoglio
della
macchina
nuova



con

UPERCORTEMAGGIORE

la potente benzina italiana



5.6 SUPERCORTEMAGGIORE

- *Confidenze*, 1963

(on previous page)

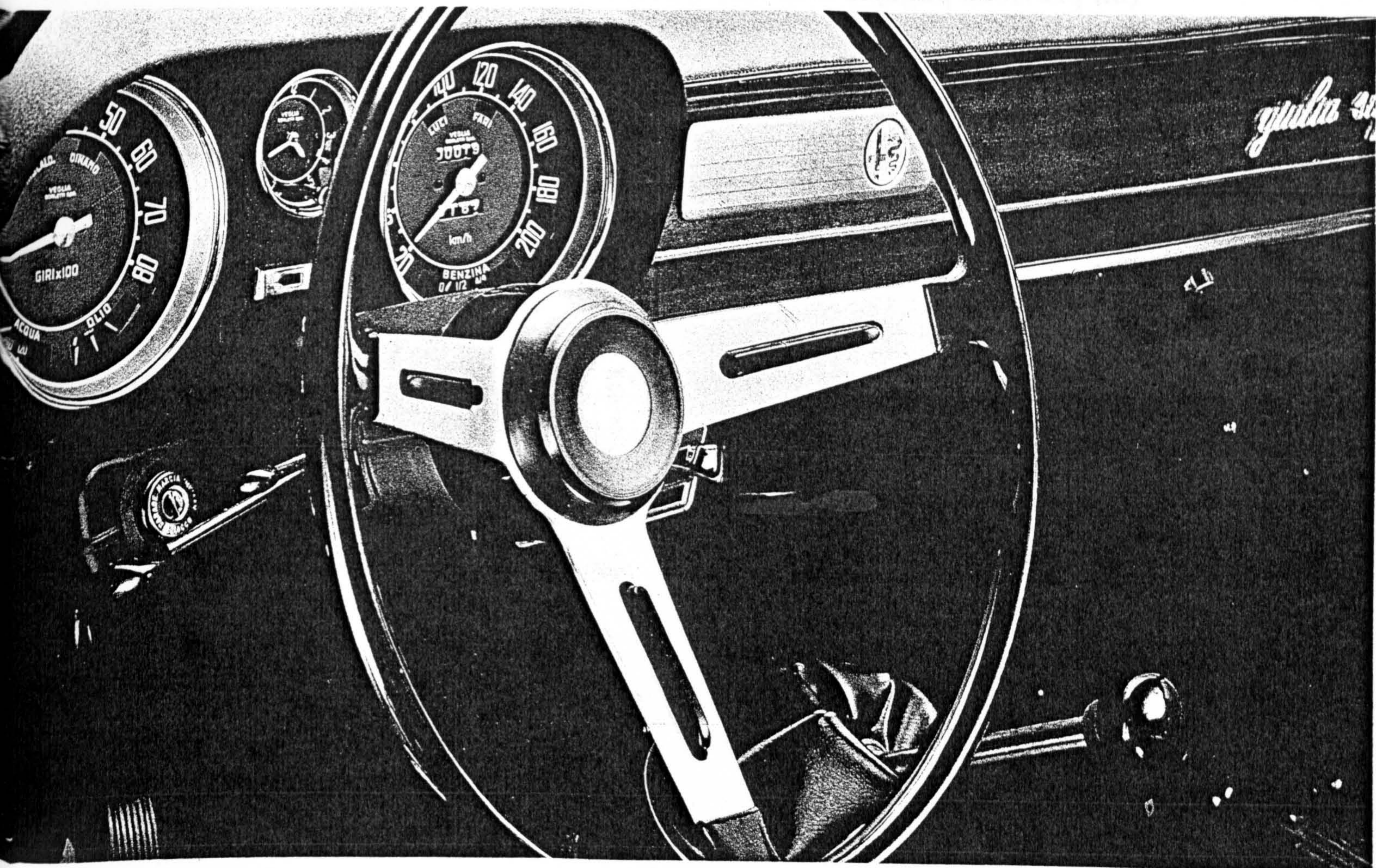
The most incisive aspect of the advertisements is the presence of a woman in all of the advertisements, as women are recognised as influential in the buying decision, and Italians are encouraged to buy a domestic brand of fuel, following exploration and discovery of various energy sources from natural gas and the creation of the State-owned holding company ENI (Ente Nazionale Idrocarburi). In order to convince Italians to 'Buy Italian!' as part of an overall advertising campaign, advertisements promise cheap fuel that lasts longer, and portray women in the roles of active consumers. The *Confidenze* fuel advertisement seems to go further by communicating an essential quality frequently omitted in vehicle advertisements for women, where the emotion of possessing and driving a chosen vehicle takes a 'back seat' to apparently more appealing factors such as economy and safety in consideration of use by the family. The woman thus emerges gradually as a consumer in her own right, albeit more often in the familiar role of mother catering to family needs.

Although not strictly a car advertisement, the linguistic and image emphasis attributed to the vehicle make it as much an advertised product as the fuel itself. It may be argued that the latter almost becomes secondary as women are transformed into active car consumers and fuel buyers, becoming actors in a previously male-dominated sphere of influence. The increasing presence of car, fuel and oil advertisements by the late 1960s in varying degrees in different women's magazines may be considered inevitable, as the socio-economic realities of women's increased social presence seep through to advertisers and producers. Although women's magazines are no longer rigidly limited to the home-beauty-fashion formula characterising the post-war economic recovery and subsequent boom, development of advertising in other product areas remains particularly weak, with vehicles proving a case in point. The general lack of advertisements featuring women as automobile buyers and users is relevant in this period as in others (Kotler, 1988; Frith, 1995)¹ where women are not viewed as dominant consumers of this product category. The increase in car production, and in particular in the 1954 launch of the Fiat '600' utility car permitting instalment payments, accelerating economic growth, and the transformation of the car into an essential good (Lepre, 1995) makes the lack of

advertising to an 'up and coming' consumer category all the more of a paradox. Nevertheless, the 'Supercortemaggiore' advertisement is not only significant as an indicator of women's higher profile in marketing terms for the vehicle manufacturing and fuel distribution industries, aptly considered as part of a strategy to attract female consumers, but also for male purchasers searching for an appropriate vehicle for their daughters or wives, at a time when decision-making for such 'male' defined products would still have largely been in the hands of men, and when family finances could be stretched to a second car. Nevertheless, the presence of car advertisements in other general interest weekly 'rotocalchi' not targeted exclusively at the female consumer is interesting, as women appear to be categorised as consumers in terms of the specificity of the magazine purchased. The situation is compounded by the fact that women are the principal readers of other general interest magazines, but as not the dominant majority, may be targeted in magazines that are presumably also read by one, if not the main decision-taker: the man of the household.²

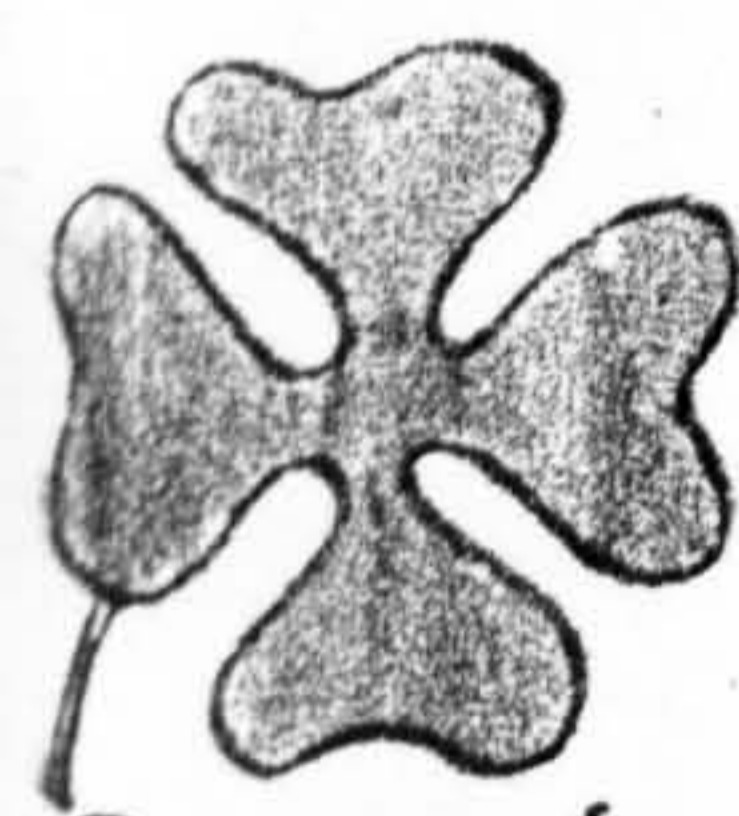
The feminist movement originating in the late 1960s, and escalating in the 1970s, to encompass ever more areas of daily existence may be identified as a factor that contributes to the mutation of advertising in women's magazines. The breadth, depth and content of advertisements develop, harnessing and reflecting women's more transparent contribution to public and private life. By 1968 car advertisements are already attributed a higher profile in women's magazines with full-page advertisements in the large 26 x 33 cm issues of *Grazia*. Alfa Romeo's 'Giulia' competes (see Figure 5.7) with striking double page, attractive, colourful advertisements for the Fiat '500L', where the white background and use of striking pink, orange, light green, and yellow hues may be considered typically feminine colours for and denote the vehicle as particularly suitable for the female driver. In the advertisement the woman is invited to try the new model in all sales outlets, whilst encouraged to participate in the game of constructing the multi-coloured paper model with the colourful cut-out design (*Grazia*, 22nd December 1968).

Giulia



3/68

**una macchina
senza il cuore in gola**



La Giulia tiene la strada perchè ha vinto migliaia di corse, frena subito e bene perchè un'Alfa Romeo fa così da sempre. E' costruita "a struttura differenziata", cioè con il criterio della massima incolumità per chi viaggia.



Si può provarla a velocità piena, o viaggiare a ritmo di crociera, sull'autostrada o in montagna: è sempre tranquilla e sicura di sé, non fatica e non affatica.

Alfa Romeo



La serenità che la Giulia infonde a chi guida e a chi viaggia: anche questo è conforto; come la stabilità, i sedili comodi, le finiture di lusso e il baule da grandi viaggi.

Giulia: da L. 1.245.000

5.7 ALFA ROMEO. Giulia - *Grazia*, 1968

(on previous page)

Reminiscent of discourses targeting the woman as child, the car is portrayed as a new toy in a step-by-step cut and paste construction process for mother and children, and for the woman desiring a comfortable runabout:

Gioco della Fiat 500L

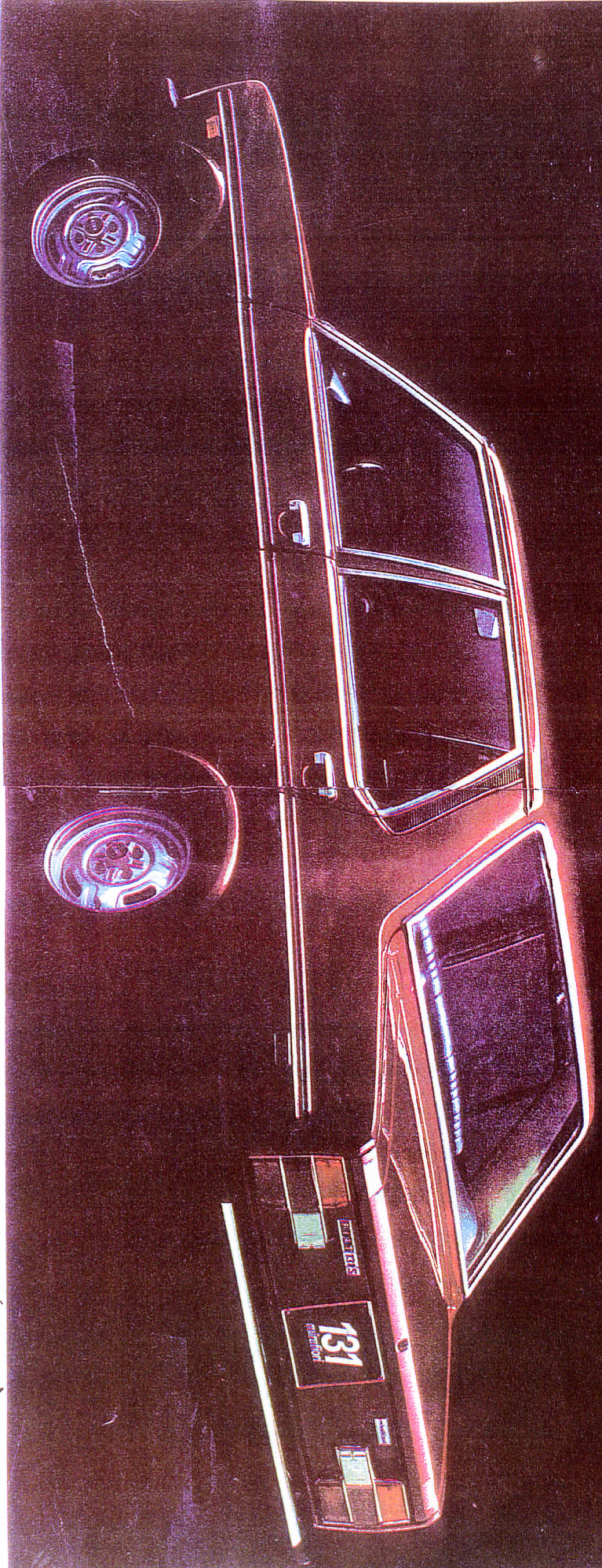
1. C'è una nuova 500L <<vera>> per voi. Quella per circolare bene in città, fare le commissioni, consumare poca benzina, parcheggiare facilmente, ecc.
2. Andate a vederla alla Filiale Fiat o alla Commissionaria Fiat. Vedrete come è migliorata: sedili, imbottiture, tappeti, Cassetti portaoggetti, borse, colori.
3. Su questa pagina invece c'è una 500L da costruire. Un gioco per i bambini.
4. Un gioco anche per le bambine. E, se lo volete, anche un po' per voi.

The 'car for all the family' message is repeated, despite an absence of human figures, by use of the words 'bambini' and 'bambine'. Significantly, although the car is a typical male toy, girls may also participate in the game and so women are invited to take part in a purchasing 'game'. In the conservative *Grazia*, even in a period characterised by a second feminist wave, the middle-class woman is targeted as mother and lifestyle setter, leaving little leeway for other discourse in as yet minimally advertised product category.

Car advertising in women's magazines, nevertheless, does develop over the subsequent years to the extent that by the mid 1970s, even the magazine *Gioia*, long considered one of the most Catholic-oriented and conservative women's magazines accepts the new social and advertising reality, where the magazine's survival and the ability to attract advertising revenue are as much an issue as ever. Figure 5.8 shows how a December 1974 issue of *Gioia* portrays a double-page advertisement for the Fiat '131 mirafiori' (11th December, 1974). The degree of space afforded the advertisement, still relatively rare in the early 1970s, is further compounded by the absence of human figures, the detailed body copy utilised, and the dark colours of the vehicle and the background, considered typically male and in sharp contrast to the underlying attention-drawing text.

131 mirafiori

La nuova 1300/1600
Bella e con tanta sostanza
Robustero sicuro pacido semplice
Qualunque sia il tuo stile di vita
Non ha riprese, consumi poco
Tra 10 anni la cambierai con un'altra Fiat mirafiori
Se lo chiederai a qualcuno, ti dirà: Fiat 131
Una macchina così sono soldi spesi bene.

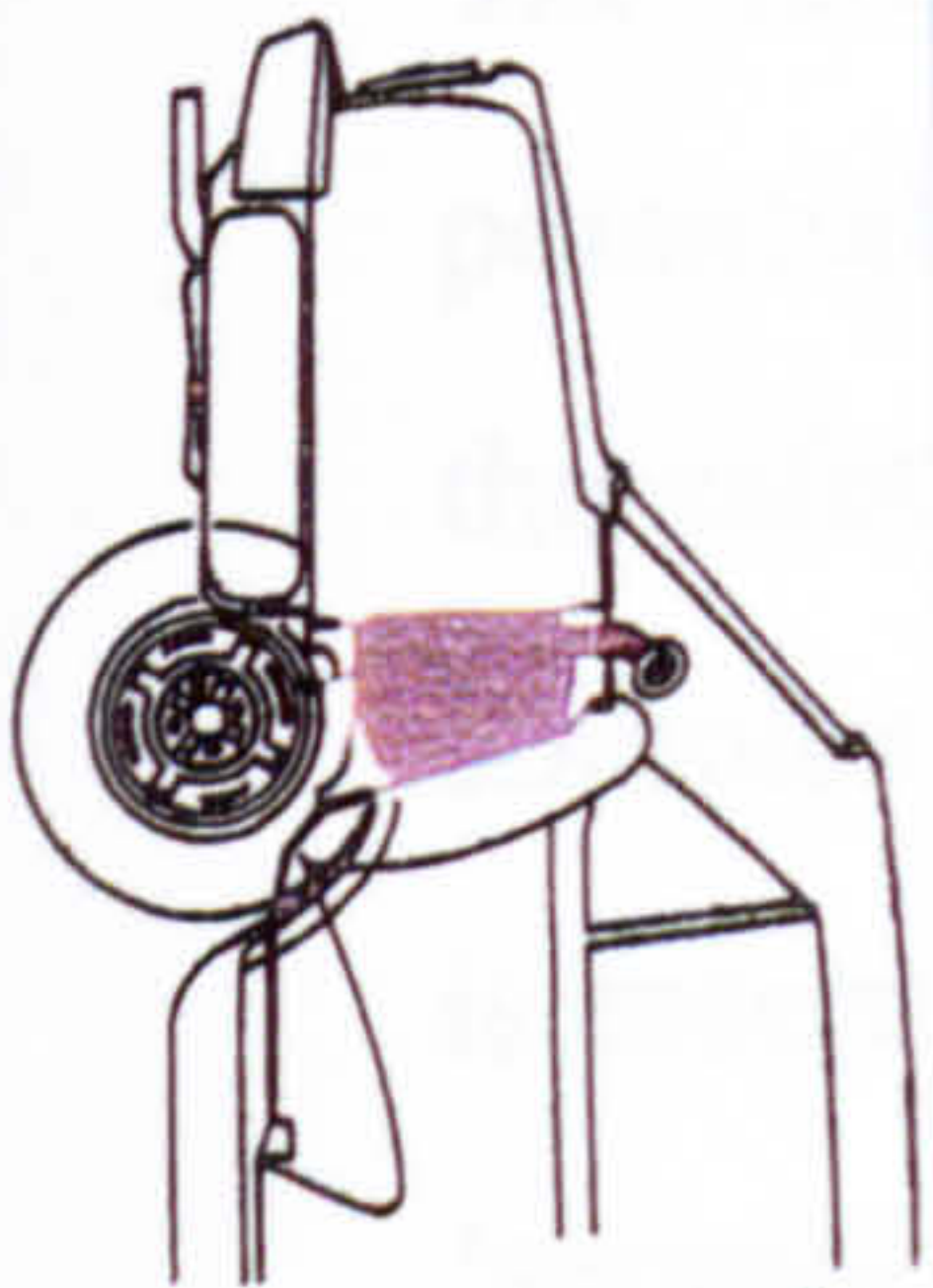


Nella 131 mirafiori trovate applicati i più avanzati risultati della tecnologia Fiat nel campo della economicità di consumo, della protezione antiruggine, della sicurezza, della facilità di manutenzione e di riparazione.

Le 11 versioni
2 porte, 4 porte, familiare 5 porte,
in allestimento normale o Special,
con motore "1300" o "1600".
Vasta scelta di optional.



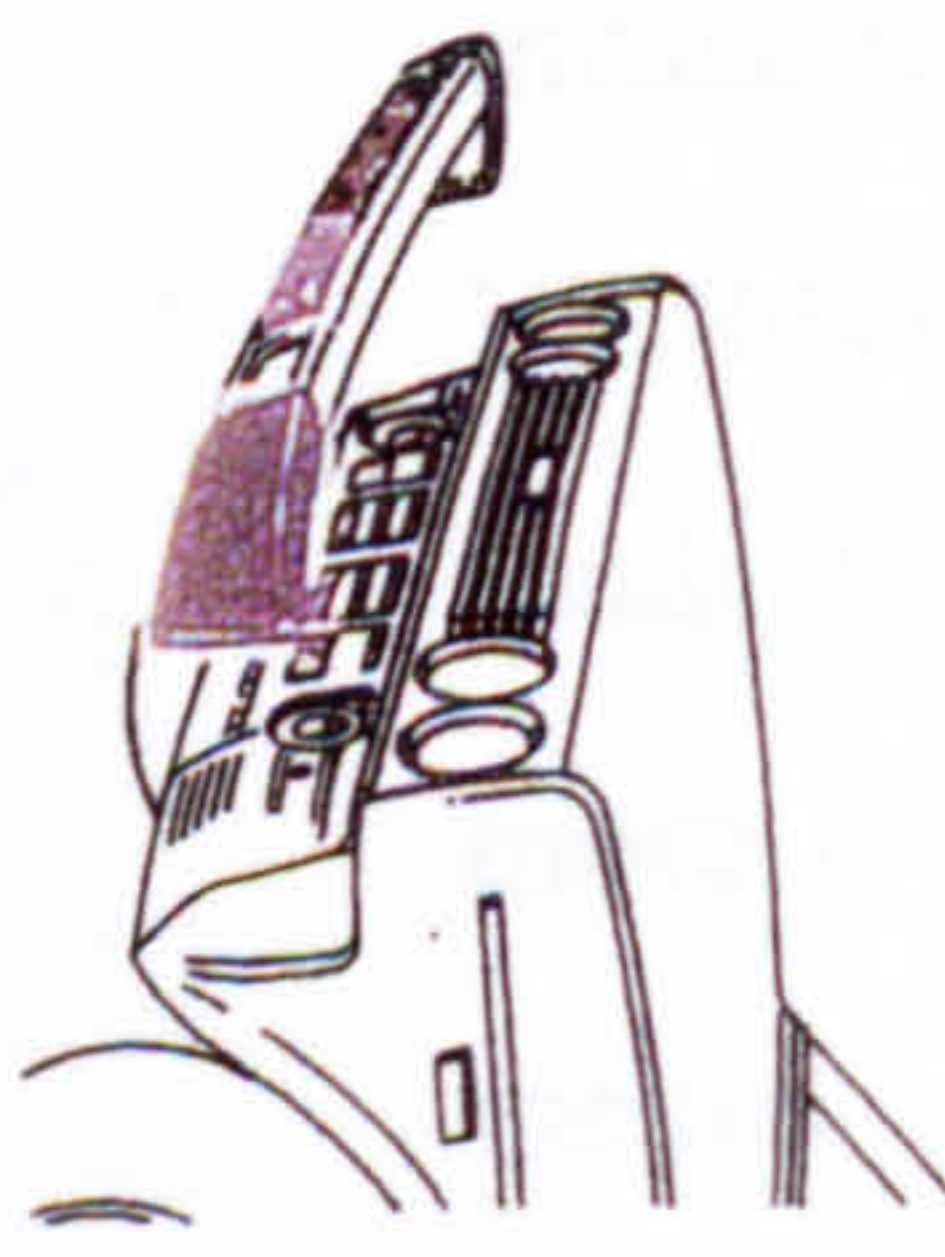
Protezione antiruggine
Un denso strato di cloruro di polivinile abbraccia come un "guscio" di materiale plastico l'intero sottococca i passaruota e la fascia infra-



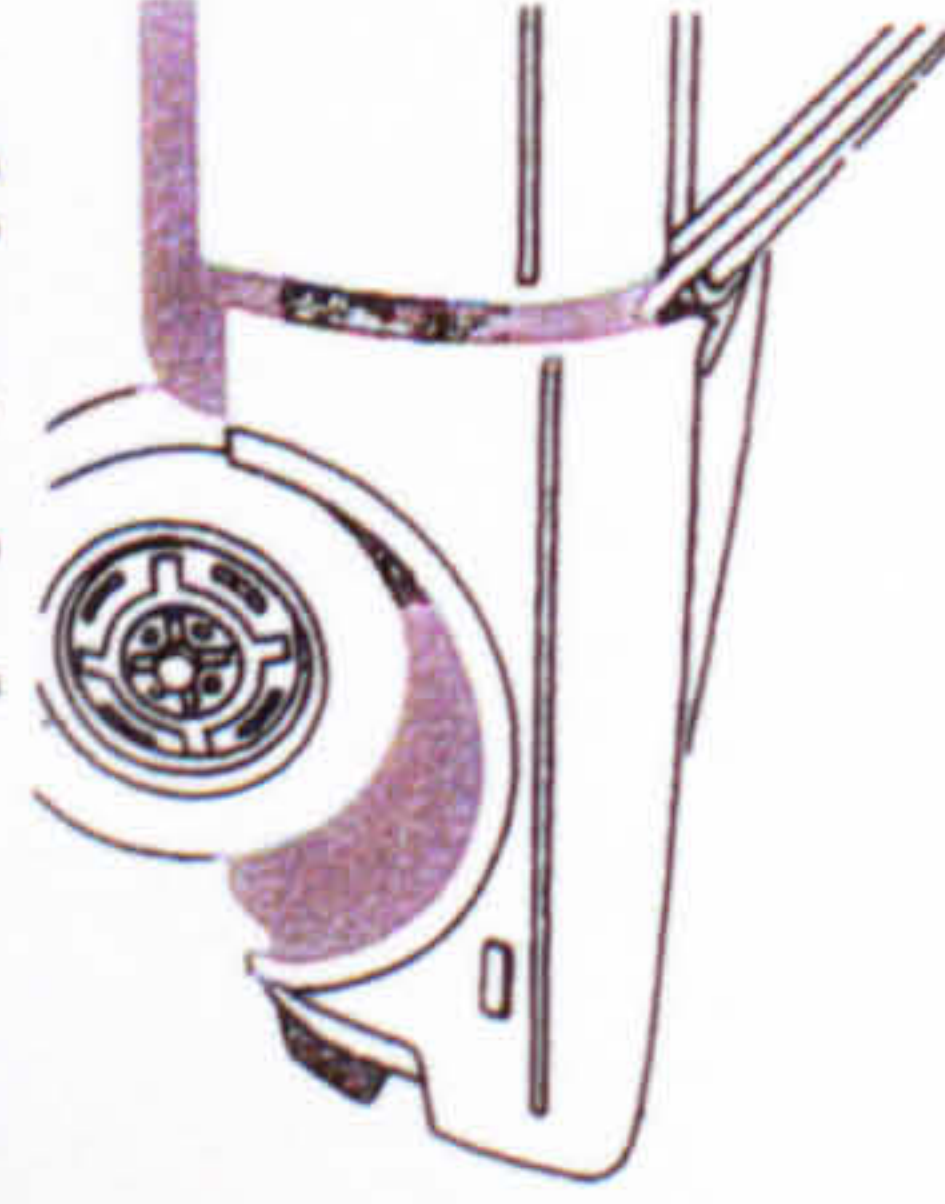
Serbatoio in zona di sicurezza
È stato collocato nella posizione più protetta dagli urti: dietro lo schienale del sedile posteriore. Inoltre una paratia d'acciaio (sola l'abitacolo di sicurezza



Scocca rinforzata di sicurezza
L'abitacolo è reso indeformabile da 3 strutture orizzontali di lamiera sciolata in corrispondenza del pianale, del centru delle portiere e



Paraurti arretrabili
Possono arretrare di 6 cm senza danno alla carrozzeria. A richiesta paraurti ad assorbimento d'energia che sopportano urti a bassa velo-



Parafanghi anteriori imbullonati
È più facile la loro sostituzione. minore il fermo-macchina.

Le prestazioni "1300": 65 CV (DIN) - 150 km/h



5.8 FIAT. 131 Mirafiori - *Gioia*, 1974
(on previous page)

Compared to Figure 5.7, these factors are certainly more reminiscent of media targeted at a prevalently male rather than female audience, and one that may influence the initial impact and interpretation of the advertisement. Furthermore, the magazine's relatively large format (approximately 25 x 35 cm) also lends added impact to the advertisement, amidst the fashion, cosmetics, home products and Christmas liqueurs. In the mainframe photograph, the vehicle is exhibited in all its glory, ready to be admired by the potential driver, yet complemented by detailed drawings depicting essential anti-rust, safety and protection features. The initial impression is of significant change, and some may argue progress, in terms of the advertising directed at women, with the female buyer finally judged worthy of a professional sales pitch generally to be found in such magazines as *Panorama* dominated by male readers.

The language appeals to a buyer's sense of economy in the vehicle's fuel saving potential, at a time of fuel crises and price increases. The language fluctuates between the safety and economy aspects for the careful buyer, and technical features of a more complex nature in terms of another buyer profile. As a result, whilst the upper right text is essentially poetic in nature, utilising adjectives such as 'bella', 'robusta', 'sicura' and 'semplice' in order to direct the addressee to purchase, stating that long-life, low fuel consumption, and instant recognition of needs by mechanics, are guaranteed, the language used in the lower body copy is of a more informational nature, providing the technical details of these qualities.

The former section is undoubtedly aimed at the female reader, softening language and soothing worries to render more acceptable to a female perspective what could be regarded as a typically 'hard' male product. This latter section transmits a different message to the woman reader, frequently less familiar with terminology like 'sottoscocca' (under bodywork), 'cloruro di polivinile' (polyvinyl chloride) and 'padiglione' (upper roof section), who sees the purchasing decision transferred to her more technically-informed male counterpart. The woman's magazine thus becomes the means with which to attract the woman's attention towards a product, as she is

increasingly acknowledged as influential in the buying decisions for investment goods, but rarely permitting her to complete the decision function. However, the advertisement probably represents the reality of most family situations where vehicle purchasing is a joint affair, with the male importing greater technical knowledge into the interpretation and decision. Significantly, the advertisement does appear to overcome the product category and language content limitations advanced by authors of the time such as Milly Buonanno (1978), where an idealistic feminist perspective of what advertising should be rather than its potential improvements in terms of the female addressee are targeted for discussion.

Buonanno's analysis (1978), based on a hypothesis that a highly differentiated advertising message permeates different channels and media, sees the subdivision of the women's magazine sector according to socio-economic profile. Frequency analysis of advertising content reveals concentration of advertising on a range of 'typical' products, with cars notable for their absence in the frequency table, probably indicating their insignificance as a category. Furthermore, the advertisements denoting women in an indeterminate manner regarding the product roles considered (mother, housewife, wife-girlfriend, personal care, work) are eliminated, thus leading to inclusion of advertisements with a high frequency of certain images and not of others, despite the fact that the less frequent images may prove influential on the reader not only in terms of the image, language or other factors utilised in the advertisement, but by their very rarity or uniqueness. Car advertisements are undoubtedly an exception, as evident from samples of various women's magazines during the 1970s, and became increasingly so as the socio-economic readership level of the magazines increases or decreases out of the middle-class range. Indeed, this form of vehicle advertising is not limited to the advertisement analysed, but appears as part of a general, if minimal trend in women's magazines with the staid *Grazia* featuring various advertisements for cars, such as 1974 double-page product focused advertisements for the Lancia 'beta coupé'. Advertised as a combination of all that had gone before in terms of speed, elegance and style in the company's range, the advertisements focus on the models, technical and mechanical

features, speed, stylistic elements and low fuel consumption. As a result, Buonanno's view that only certain aspects of women's condition are represented in largely outdated advertisements appears reductive and difficult to agree with, as much as the conclusion that '..... Fra i contenuti della stampa femminile, quelli pubblicitari sembrerebbero gli ultimi a resistere al rinnovamento' (1978, p.91).

Other studies of the same period (Pezzuoli, 1975; Dal Pozzo et al., 1977) contain a similar view, pointing to a continual lack of novelty, in terms of the magazine and advertising content, with few redeeming qualities ever found for an advertising formula concentrated on the home and beauty. By the early 1980s (Di Cristofaro Longo, 1986; Garroni et al., 1986), women continue to be seen as instruments used by advertisements lacking in substance and novelty, where the social changes of the 1970s feature as a mere parenthesis in the press, given the continual adaptation of stereotypical roles to prevailing commercial needs. The lack of historical continuity of many of the studies, the limited time range considered, and the underlying thought processes conditioning output and analysis, do not allow for substantial agreement with the findings, where women are influenced by multiple social factors and media, and not only by current issues of magazines, but also by past issues, and in particular by those issues that they have regular access to, such as those kept at home or found in public waiting or meeting places. Factors linked to external influences, the pressure exerted on magazines to produce advertising-based revenue, the prevailing socio-economic and cultural climate influencing women's buying decisions, not simply for goods requiring substantial investment such as cars, but also for more heavily advertised goods in women's magazines, as much as the prevailing ideologies affecting women, and their public image at any time, are conspicuous for their absence in many of these studies.

Finally, it may be affirmed that car advertisements undoubtedly form part of an overall consumerist package aimed at socialising the reader to the role of consumption, and as outlined by Buonanno, to a 'common ideology' based on acceptance of one's condition, combined with aspirations to a higher standard of living. This is especially the case of

1930s car advertisements, though less so of those in the 1920s where aspirations are limited, and are mainly held by those women with the finances to own and drive a car that symbolises their freedom. However, more questionable is the author's view that the advertising in women's magazines reinforces traditional female roles, almost in negation of the continual expansion in the type and range of products advertised to women in the post-war period, and the fact that for many women such products as the car represent the means of escape and emergence from traditional roles, and not simply as the means of becoming ever more absorbed by pre-ordained roles. As a result, the advertisements may also be seen as a reflection of the changes taking place, a recognition of women's emerging social and employment identity, where direct reference in terms of language or image to pre-conceived notions of personal status is lacking in the 1974 advertisement, unlike others within the same or other magazine issues, thus projecting the advertisement into that undefined category so studiously avoided by Buonanno in her analysis. By allowing a certain degree of personal addressee interpretation in terms of the product's positioning in the consumer's lifestyle, this very indeterminacy avoids specific consumer category limitations, and resulting specific ideologies of women's roles, whilst reflecting a total focus by the advertising message on the product.

ENDNOTES TO CHAPTER 5

1 Katherine Frith's analysis of the use of Mother Nature (1995) in advertising isolates the ideological codes within advertisements when considering the social and historical context. According to the author, 'the oppression of women and the oppression of the environment are linked' (p.195), with this link evident in advertisements, and especially in the advertising of cars, where dominance over nature and 'a patriarchal disdain for the feminine, which is equated with nature' (p.192) is revealed. As a result of which, one may assume from the analysis that the frequent use of these images, in support of such dominant ideological perspectives of women's social position, leads to a form of advertising that automatically excludes a female audience and women as potential car buyers.

In Kotler's view (1988), the husband has regularly been considered the dominant decision-maker for cars. In quoting a 1970 U.S. study (p.180), purchase of a car was found to be influenced primarily by the husband in 68% of cases, and by the wife in 3%. Even where the wife apparently appeared to have greater influence over choice of aesthetic features such as colour, gender decision rates remained unchanged. Significantly, as noted by Kotler, 'an automobile company would take these varying decision roles into account in designing and promoting its cars' (1988, p.180). By the next decade, women were purchasing and owning cars to a much greater extent, a fact that still went largely unreflected in advertisements.

The typical advertising content of many advertisements, ideologically limited in nature, resulted in advertisements, implicitly or explicitly, targeted at a male audience, whether in terms of language, content or media. The small runabout mainly for female use was the only exception, and in Italy, the woman was regularly featured with family members in advertisements, especially offspring, and rarely alone enjoying the freedom provided by her car.

2 An example regards a 1962 advertisement for the Fiat '1100D' runabout (*Vitalità*, 15th December 1962), where in the brightly coloured-full page advertisement, the young model is featured striding through autumn leaves. The sense of youthfulness is provided by the woman, and the bright red car whose open door indicates spontaneity of youth, whilst the feeling of freedom and vitality provided by the woman's countenance does little to reinforce certain culturally typical attributes of passivity attached to femininity. Nevertheless, the woman appears to be at one with nature, where unlike car advertising directed at male buyers, technical details and conquering natural elements are not part of the discourse. Significantly, such an advertisement is targeted at the financially independent woman, or the woman with a certain spending power, that only marginally features in the advertising in women's magazines.

CHAPTER 6: THE ENIGMATIC MASK - BEAUTY BY ELIZABETH ARDEN

6.1 INTRODUCTION: COSMETIC ESSENTIALS IN PRE-WORLD WAR ONE MAGAZINE ADVERTISING

Concepts of beauty have long been marketed to women as essential to daily life, social acceptance and in recent decades, professional success. Women are encouraged to make every effort within their means, and even beyond, to adhere to socially acceptable canons of beauty, a fact often reiterated in terms of integration or deviance in advertisements. In a country long dominated by the myth of the Mediterranean beauty, Italy is no exception with most of the adult, and not so adult female population, resorting to beauty aids, with facial products usually at the top of the list.

Historically in advertising terms, the active market allows for a mushrooming of small, but rapidly expanding producers, at the end of the nineteenth century. Numerous small print advertisements for beauty colognes, creams and salts may be found throughout the pages of *Margherita. Giornale delle signore italiane* (1878-1921) at the turn of the century, usually with a focus on the quality-quantity-price ratio given the conservative nature of the middle-classes in this period (Ceserani, 1980b). Although text-based advertisements dominate throughout the pre-World War One period, female images are occasionally used, associating elegance, sensuality or other qualities to the product, as in the case of 'Rêve d'Ossian Parfum Penetrante' (*La Donna*, 5th November, 1905) where the image of a maiden with long flower-laden hair denotes the product's ability to enhance a woman's powers of seduction. Occasional exceptions of this nature indicate an attempt at introducing new techniques with the female image into advertisements, where recognition of the power of image, well-rooted in poster advertisements, begins to penetrate women's magazines. Indeed, the back cover of the first issue of *La Donna* (1st January, 1905) sees use of image, with two young women in the full-flowing, loose, fashionable clothes of the Milan and Turin 'Liberty. London and Paris' boutiques, whilst a mere two years later photography is introduced, with an inside front cover (*La Donna*,

5th June, 1907) exhibiting a model dressed in oriental style holding up a box of 'Tot' digestive tablets. Replicas of the roadside poster advertisements for the 'Mele' clothes shops are also common in this first decade, with women the undeniable protagonists.

The pre-war years see an alternate presence or absence of the female figure in advertisements, with some advertisements merely featuring the product, albeit with an increasing use of realism and photographic techniques, whilst others utilise distinctive female models as an advertising hallmark, and others progress further towards incorporating the model's face and bust into the message. In the same year a number of such examples indicate the fluidity of advertising discourse to women as perfumes increasingly emerge as distinct from mere Cologne water. In *La Donna* of 5th November 1912, 'Profumi Vender', as shown in Figure 6.1, concentrates on the packaging appeal of its cosmetic products, while 'Profumi Bertelli', as shown in Figure 6.2, features a Renaissance Venus smelling a flower in the same issue of the magazine. The more adventurous advertisements increase in detail and persuasion, with 'before and after' facial illustrations corroborating the effects of the 'scientific treatments', such as in the advertisements for 'Crema Lysiana' (*La Donna*, 5th November, 1912) and the beauty clinic 'Institut Récamier' (*La Donna*, 5th February, 1912). 'Waldorf Astoria Cresus Perfumery' products, as shown in Figure 6.3, daringly asks of women 'Volete essere più bella?' in a large half page advertisement (*La Donna*, 5th February, 1912) detailing facial, hair and teeth products alongside a poster epitome of 'Liberty' beauty.

By the war years, toiletries and cosmetics for women are increasingly communicated as essentials, for regular individualised consumption, rather than as occasional luxuries, in line with financial constraints and war limitations. Personal enhancement, as the means of pleasing oneself and others at a private level, is not as yet a dominant discourse, although the message content of diverse advertisements, which focus on products as hygienically essential, reflects changing consumer attitudes and the attempt by producers to tap into an as yet unawakened market. Women's gradual but inexorable emergence from the home base into a variety of public roles is reflected in various advertisements.

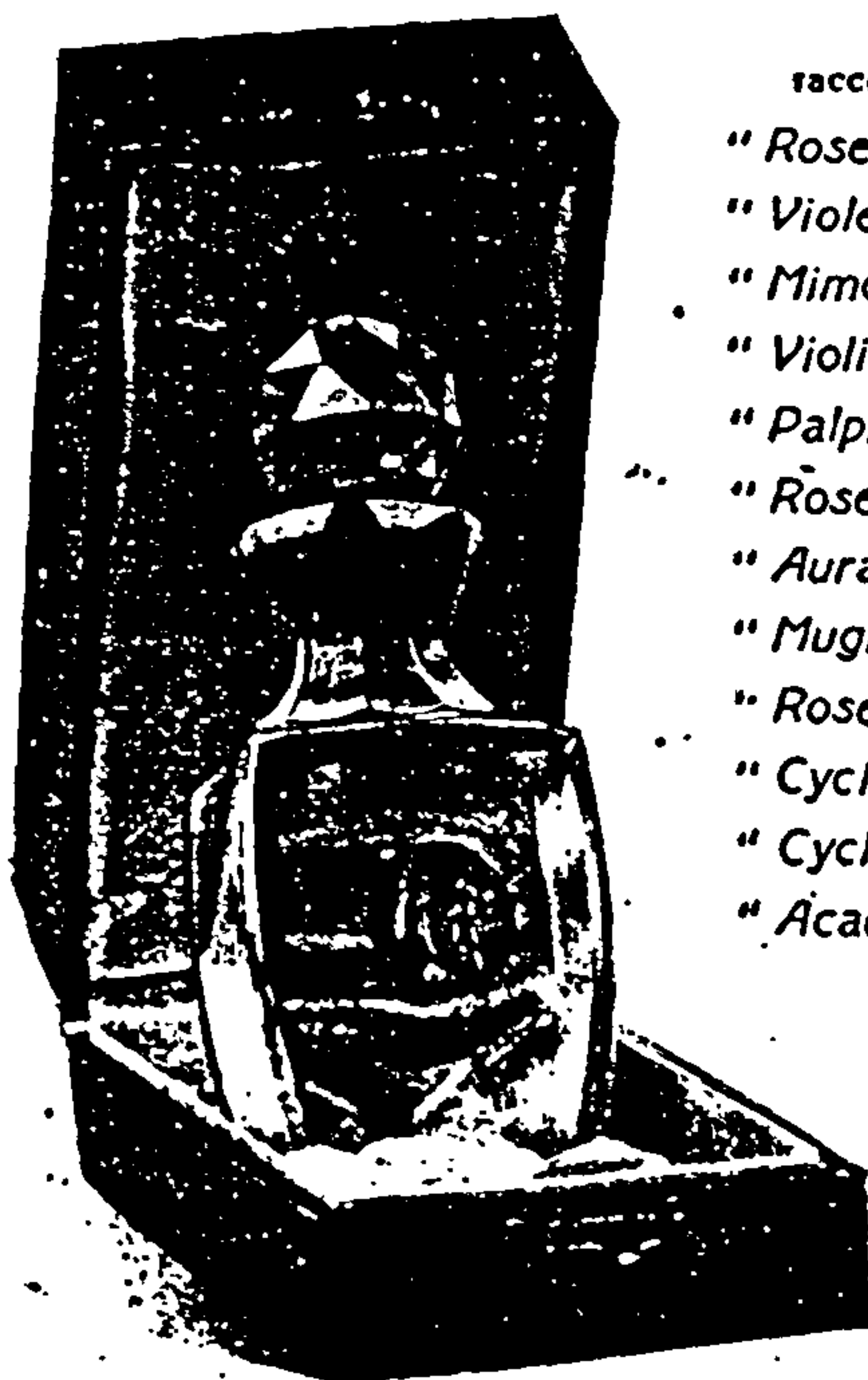
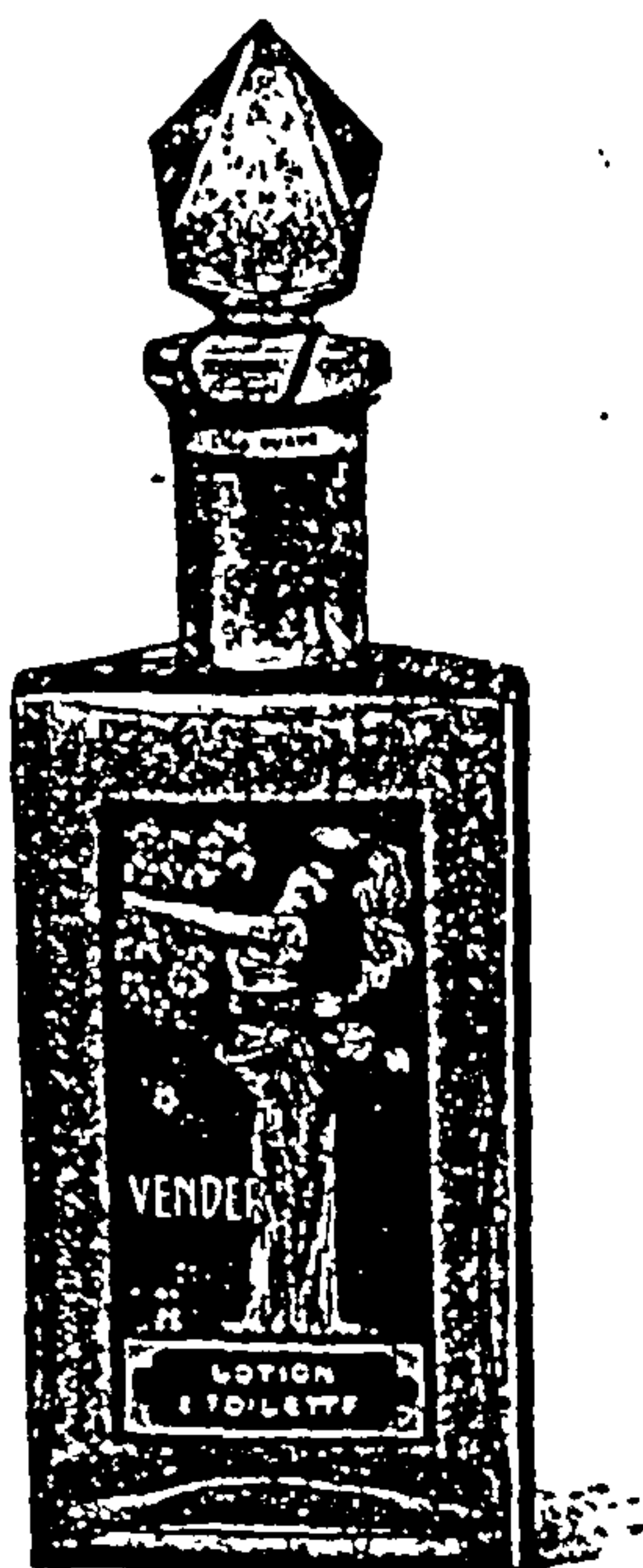
Profumi Vender

attraenti e soavi profumi di moda



" REGINÆ ..

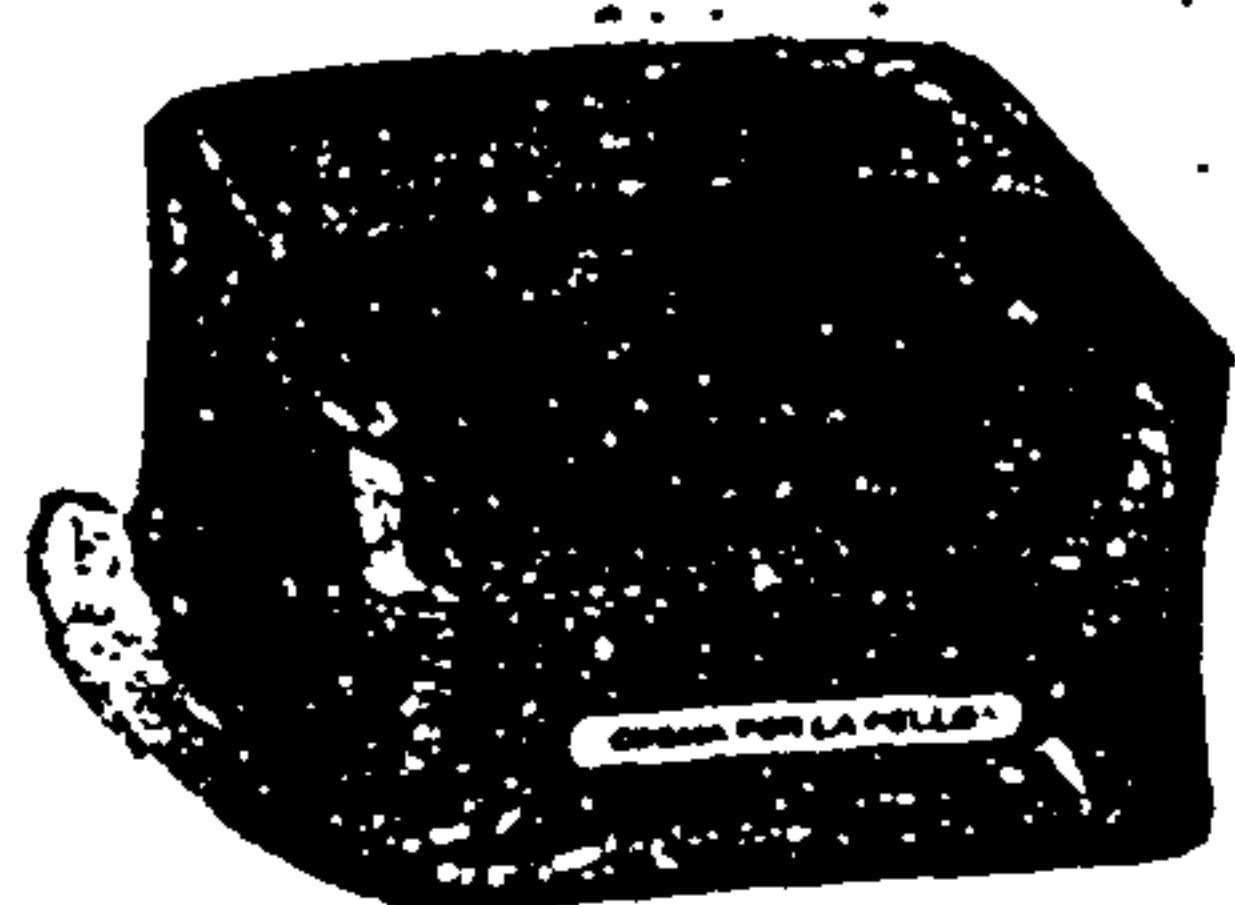
delicato sentite dai
fiori prediletti dalla
nostra amata Regina



" GHIRLANDE
di VENERE ..

raccomandiamo:

- " Rose Supreme ..
- " Violette tenace ..
- " Mimosa di riviera ..
- " Violier delitia ..
- " Palpito di fiore ..
- " Rose di spino ..
- " Aura amorosa ..
- " Mughetto soave ..
- " Rose attraction ..
- " Cyclamen alpina ..
- " Cyclamen desirée ..
- " Acacia blanche ..



CREME per la pelle
BRILLANTINE
CIPRIE
LOZIONI

in confezioni d'uso
e di lusso

Cologne Imperiale
Lavanda Antica



Chiederli dai migliori profumieri, nei grandi magazzini, ed in mancanza al
Deposito generale VENDER, via Canova, 37, Milano.

6.1 PROFUMI VENDER - *La Donna*, 1912

(on previous page)



**PROFUMI
BERTELLI**

VENUS - ROSE

GRAND PARFUM

AMBERGRIS

VIOLETTE

HÉLIOTROPE

LILAS - TRÉFLE

EAU DE COLOGNE

CÉLESTE - CYCLAMEN

EFFLUVES PRINTANIERS

ACACIA, ecc.

CATALOGO A RICHIESTA

SOCIETÀ

A. BERTELLI & C. - MILANO

6.2 PROFUMI BERTELLI - *La Donna*, 1912

(on previous page)

Volete esser più bella?

Adoperate le preparazioni scientifiche della Waldorf Astoria Cresus Perfumery

Deposito Generale in Italia: **F. MANTOVANI - Via Correggio, 26 - MILANO**

In vendita presso i principali Profumieri

PER IL VISO

Skin Food Face Cream L. 2,—

(Crema alimento dei tessuti)

È un vero alimento per i tessuti della pelle dalla quale è rapidamente assorbito e la quale nutre sostanzialmente, contribuendo in tale modo a stradicare le rughe, a togliere le ingenuaglianze e a impartire morbidezza e apparenza giovanile. È un'imitazione chimica del latte in forma sintetica, senza avere gli inconvenienti di esso.

Face Powder-Cipria velluto L. 1,—

(Extra vellutina).

Ha l'azione benefica del polline naturale del Giglio di cui è la perfetta riproduzione sintetica. Adattisce alla pelle in modo meraviglioso e, impedendo al viso un bel vellutato della gioventù, ne accresce il fascino.

Zonic Lotion L. 1,50

(Lazione tonica astringente).

Tonifica e rassonda la pelle così rendendola più resistente alle rughe e contribuendo a prevenirle. Usata dopo il massaggio impedisce alla pelle di allargarsi e infiacchirsi.

PER I CAPELLI E BARBA

Breolene L. 1,25
 }
 " " } " 2,—

È una nuova specie vegetale della famiglia della cera ricotta in crema usando la petrolina come solvente. Ha azione lubrificante sui peli, che rende lucidi e flessuosi, è specifica contro la forfora. Previene la caduta dei capelli e ne aumenta il volume.

Crystallized Brillantine L. 1,25

Da usarsi per ottenere delle belle ondulazioni durevoli e per evitare il danno del ferro caldo ai peli. Imparte un lucido splendido, morbidezza e flessuosità.

Agli ordini provenienti dall'Estero aggiungere al prezzo delle diverse preparazioni L. 3,50 per il porto del pacco e l'imballaggio.

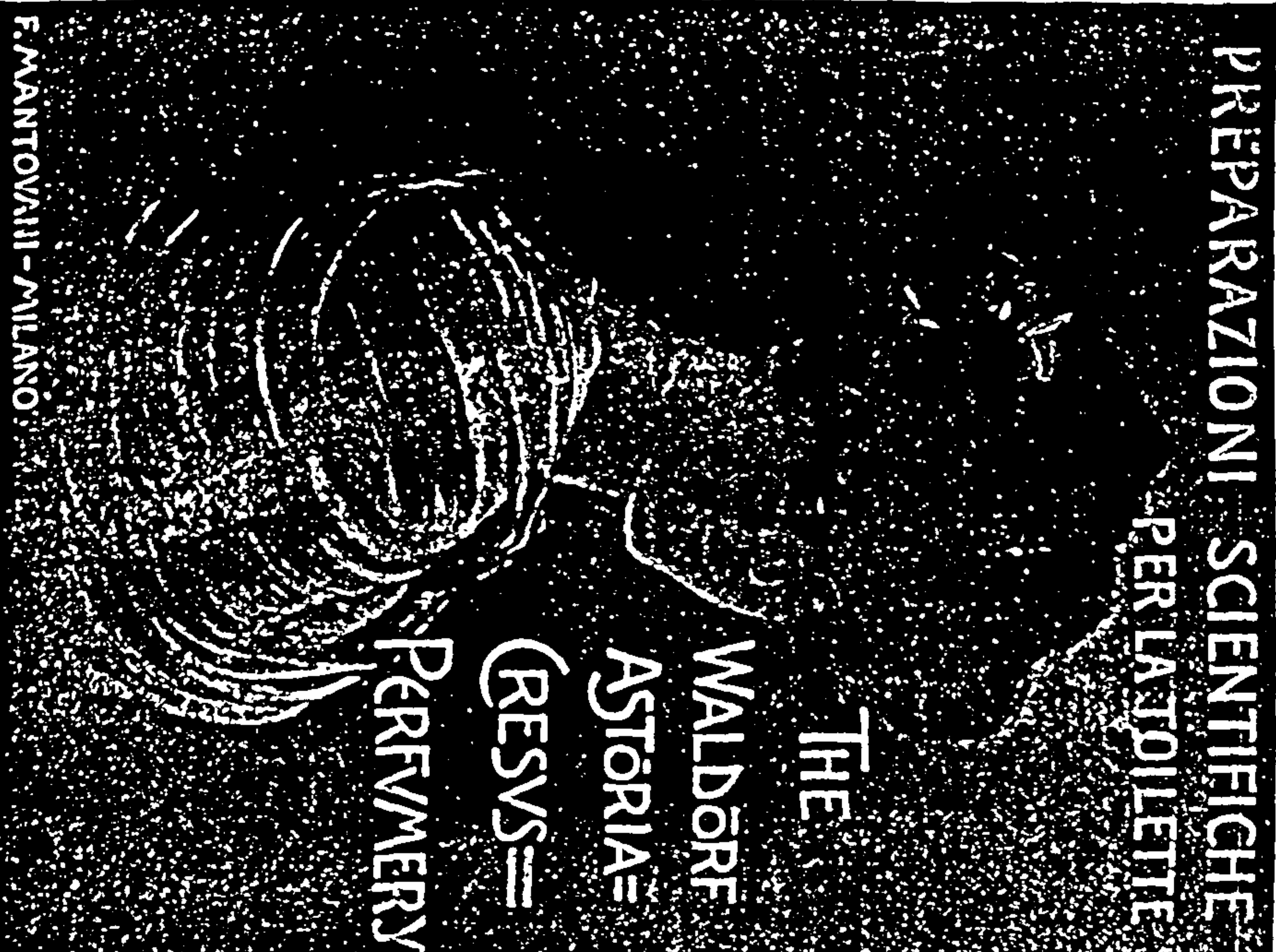
Per spedizioni in Italia aggiungere L. 0,15 per pacchetto di cipria velluto. — L. 0,25 per vasetto di "Crema Nutro Skin Food". — L. 0,60 per le altre preparazioni.

È uscito dalla stampa lo splendido lavoro: Le preparazioni scientifiche per la Cura della Carnagione e della Bellezza, dove un capitolo (il capitolo III) è dedicato alle leggi della Bellezza, e viene dato gratis e franco di porto in ogni parte del mondo a coloro che ne fanno domanda a F. MANTOVANI, Via Correggio, 26, Milano — Agente della Waldorf Astoria Cresus Perfumery.

PREPARAZIONI SCIENTIFICHE PER LA TOILETTE

THE WALDORF ASTORIA (RESYS) PERFUMERY

F. MANTOVANI - MILANO



Mustache Water L. 1,25

(Acqua per rasare i baffi).

È un vero progresso sugli antichi pieghaffi o sul ferro caldo. Soltanto il turacciolo si tira un pochino già bagnato nell'acqua che al passarsi rapidamente sui baffi senza altra operazione; dopo un minuto i peli dei baffi hanno preso consistenza e si può dar loro la piega che si desidera e che conservano, senza presentarsi rigidi, ma bensì una naturalezza simpatica ed energica.

Estratti Suc de Fleurs L. 2,—

Sono profumi estratti direttamente dai fiori, cioè il succo dei fiori. Abbiamo il succo di Rosa, di Gelsomino, di Violetta e di Margherita in eleganti flaconi, racchiusi in graziosi astucci.

PER I DENTI

Cisteryl liquid L. 1,25

(Elixir dentifricio).

Ha un potere antisettico quattro volte più forte dei migliori dentifrici conosciuti e non intacca minimamente la mucosa delle gengive e della bocca. Mantiene i denti bianchi e sani. Non tossico, completamente solubile, basta usarne meno della metà di qualsiasi altro dentifricio per avere un effetto molto più forte. È quindi il più economico.

Ha gusto piacevole, gradito e il primo dentifricio preferito dai bambini.

Cisteryl Paste L. 1,25

(In tubi).

Dà la bianchezza ai denti in modo lento e progressivo senza minimamente intaccare lo smalto. Ha potere alcalino neutralizzante gli acidi che minacciano lo smalto dentario. È un ideale terapeutico per la bocca e per la conservazione dei denti sani e bianchi.

Cisteryl condensed Paste L. 1,25

(Pasta in scatole).

È preparata cogli stessi principi della pasta in tubi, ma più condensata, in scatole, per coloro che preferiscono tale forma di confezione.

Le richieste accompagnate da vaglia anticipato si indirizzano al signor F. MANTOVANI - Via Correggio, 26 - MILANO.

6.3 WALDORF ASRORIA CRESUS PERFUMERY

- *La Donna*, 1912

(on previous page)

Generally they are of an implicit nature, as revealed in the development of the perfume sector, and the much counselled use of 'Acqua di Colonia' as a versatile essential, with the added benefit of contained cost, given the many privations to be faced during war: 'E' necessario sapere. Molti sacrifici comporta il tempo in cui viviamo, ma n'è uno dinanzi al quale ogni Signora si ribella, quello di privare la sua toilette di un flacone di Acqua di Colonia' (*La Donna*, 5th September, 1915). Advocated use of toiletries is undoubtedly also linked to lack of regular running water, access to bathrooms and washing facilities, as the many advertisements for bathtubs and washing containers from the turn of the century are complemented by advertisements for toiletries. Women continue to be targeted as cosmetic and toiletry users, more so apparently, as their purchasing power increases with their new employment possibilities, public presence and social responsibilities, emphasising their role as keepers of the family's hygiene and cleanliness. Nevertheless, the war-time addressee is continually reminded that although the country needs her, beauty can never be sacrificed, as her foremost duty is always to herself. The advertisement with the caption 'L'undicesimo comandamento' for 'Acqua di Colonia Seguin' beckons with the image of a small coloured child servant spraying his mistress:

'Per la signora elegante ed accorta, l'undicesimo comandamento è il seguente: *Non invecchiare*. E ben sa che lo può seguire appuntino coll'igiene e colla cosmesi' (*La Donna*, 15th October, 1917).

The advertisement effectively underlines the centrality of youth in cosmetic advertising, a timeless strategy repeatedly reiterated by text and image.

6.2 ELIZABETH ARDEN ADVERTISING IN THE INTER-WAR YEARS: THE 'CLINICAL' MASK

The post-war era witnesses an advertising rebirth focussing on consumption and self-enhancement in women's magazines. The period is characterised by a desire for domesticity by the returning heroes, and women's reinvented home-based role, as

unemployment fuels the ranks of the housewife/mother. In this period, the advertising of cosmetics by most producers develops rapidly within magazines targeting a middle to upper-middle class readership such as *Lidel* and *La Donna*. The more exclusive, rapidly expanding international cosmetic concerns such as Elizabeth Arden and Helena Rubinstein are a case in point. The extensive use of text in the full-page magazine advertisements is characteristic of both producers' advertisements, effectively setting them in a separate category compared to other cosmetic advertisements of the 1920s.

The Elizabeth Arden advertisements featuring in *Lidel* (1919-1935) from the late 1920s employ an image and text that rapidly individualise the advertising campaign. The use of a woman's face with bandaged head and elaborately made-up face may be considered a hall-mark of the company during this period. Through use of this clinical image, women are encouraged to associate cosmetic use with a rigorous medical approach, and the very act of product application with a scientifically proven process. The bandaged head allows concentration on facial features, with consumers associating the model's perfection with the product range, and the concept of product use with the attainment of similar individualised benefits. The white gown merging with the background, once more to be associated with a hospital environment, reinforces the strength of the message, as Italian women are stimulated to link the benefits obtained from cosmetic use with those deriving from medical professionals. This image is regularly utilised with minor alterations to the object held, varying from cotton-wool to mirror or box. The images are significant in terms of the fact that the position of the arm suggests that the object is being held by another person who does not feature, implying that of a professional beautician, to reinforce the advertisements' bilateral message of personalised beauty treatments through product use, and the availability of salon experts in various geographical locations. Further, the model's direct gaze is much akin to a mask, reflecting an effective use of the notion of constructed femininity, with women encouraged to project themselves as objects to be gazed upon (Berger, 1972). The made-up facial mask is constructed to hide individuality, protecting the woman, whilst providing a studied image of self. The use of this mask exemplifies an advertising

strategy for cosmetics seemingly unused by other cosmetic houses at the time. Yet it was to become a dominant feature of cosmetic advertising later in the twentieth century.

The Elizabeth Arden advertisements perform a progressive function, from the more 'educational-informational' advertisements of the late 1920s, to the more persuasive, with reduced educational content, by the early 1930s. It may be argued that the case study advertisement is located at the centre of this education-persuasion continuum. The use of elaborate and precise instructions in previous advertisements, as shown in Figure 6.4 in the 15th June, 1928 issue of *Lidel*, for example, sees explanation of step-by-step procedures and fine details of product contents and agents. Women are taught how to cleanse, tone and moisturise in order to achieve a pure, translucent complexion, whose impurities otherwise may not be hidden by make-up and face powder. The intricate details of 'how to' perform daily skin maintenance gives way to the case advertisement as shown in Figure 6.5, appearing in April 1932 in *Lidel*, where the rhetorical question in the headline 'Perchè rattristarvi?' is put to the reader. Rhetorical as this interrogative form is, it does not expect a direct answer given that the issues of complexion and appearance are well-known to the reader and are a presumed source of daily anxiety. The question mark in this direct speech form allows the addressee to associate with a form usually used in spoken language, thus permitting an immediate contact to be established between the advertisement and the reader. The question may also be considered as reminiscent of an 'agony aunt' type of language generally used in women's magazines when dispensing advice, a fact reinforced by the nature of the language used in the body copy, that fluctuates between identifying the problem and offering solutions. However, unlike 'agony aunt' columns or overtly persuasive advertisements, the language used is neither harsh nor seductive, but presents the product range in a matter-of-fact manner, as essential in solving a range of physical, social and psychological difficulties, whose roots all lie in facial complexion. Finally, the use of the 'voi' form rather than the more formal and politically non-fascist 'lei' serves to cement the established link between the addressee and Elizabeth Arden, herself, the 'agony aunt' of cosmetic woes, to whom the advertisements constantly refer.

pori grossolani e antiestetici del viso non si possono eliminare e nemmeno nascondere mediante l'uso di belletti e ciprie.

Elizabeth Arden raccomanda i seguenti preparati per la cura domestica della pelle:

Crema detergente (Cleansing Cream). Una crema leggera, pura che si liquefa al solo tepore della pelle, penetra nei pori ove si discioglie e allontana tutte quelle impurità che danno origine ai comedoni e alle ruvidezze della pelle. Ammorbidisce la pelle e la rende liscia e sensibile. Si da usarsi ogni mattina e ogni sera come prima operazione al viso e al collo. L. 25 e 40.—

Corroborante della pelle Ardena (Ardena Skin Tonic). Tende e rafforza la pelle imbiancandola. Leggermente sbiancante e astringente si applica contemporaneamente e dopo la Crema Detergente, allo scopo di sollecitare la circolazione, raffinare e chiarificare la pelle. L. 25 e 50.—

Astringente speciale (Special Astringent). Si applica con la mano spalmando forte il viso e il collo dal basso verso l'alto. Solleva e rafforza i tessuti, ridona l'elasticità ai muscoli, appiana i contorni, distende la pelle. L. 50.—

Alimento Orange per la pelle (Orange Skin Food). Questa crema sostanziosa e nutriente va spalmata copiosamente sul viso e sul collo alla mattina e alla sera. Appiana le rughe e le pieghe, donando alla pelle un aspetto liscio e curato. Eccellente per un viso sottile, rugoso o non più giovane e come mezzo preventivo contro l'appassimento della pelle. L. 25.— e 40.—

Crema per i pori (Pore Cream). Una crema astringente, priva di grassi, che chiude i pori, ne riattiva il funzionamento e rende delicata la pelle più grossolana. L. 25.—

Crema Velva (Velva Cream). Nutrimento delicato per una pelle sensibile. Raccomandabile anche per un viso pieno, giacchè nutre senza ingrassare. L. 25.— e 40.—

Crema pallida (Bleaching Cream). Una crema sostanziosa e sbiancante preparata con succo fresco di limone. Lenisce la pelle e ne mitiga la tinta troppo bruna o bruciata dal sole. L. 30.—



“Cosa si può fare contro una pelle ruvida e grossolana?” domandano ogni giorno numerose signore a Elizabeth Arden. E la sua risposta è sempre questa: “Innanzi tutto non preoccupatevi di nascondere semplicemente questa grossolanità della pelle mediante l'uso copioso di cosmetici che non possono nulla contro il difetto che vi affligge. Per eliminare l'aspetto grossolano dovete eliminare l'inerzia dei pori”. Quindi Elizabeth Arden spiega il trattamento scientifico di questo difetto molto comune e raccomanda in modo speciale alla vostra attenzione il metodo di detersione del viso.

Prendete un batuffolo di ovatta, bagnatelo prima nell'acqua fredda e spremetelo, inumiditelo con il corroborante Ardena Skin Tonic, immergetelo quindi nella Cleansing Cream e strofinatelo sul viso e sul collo. Tutta la polvere e i corpi estranei che allargano i pori e li anneriscono, costituendo appunto la radice del male, verranno con ciò allontanati. Prendete ora un altro batuffolo di ovatta, inumiditelo col Corroborante Ardena e picchiettate il viso e il collo. Questo leggero massaggio produce una corrente di circolazione purificatrice che rischiarà e rinfrescherà la pelle. La proprietà leggermente restringen-

te del Corroborante Ardena rimpiccolisce i pori aperti. Per i pori grandi, specialmente sul naso e sul mento ove essi sono più inerti, adoperate la Pore Cream. Se applicate questa crema prima d'andare a dormire, lasciatevela tutta la notte. Badate soprattutto alla qualità di tutti i preparati da toilette di cui fate uso. Richiedete il libro di Elizabeth Arden “L'ideale della bellezza” che vi spiegherà in che modo potete seguire in casa il metodo scientifico di Elizabeth Arden per la cura della vostra pelle.

I preparati Elizabeth Arden sono in vendita presso:

MILANO

Rimmel - Largo S. Margherita
La Rinascenza - Piazza del Duomo

BOLOGNA

A. Mazzolini
Via Marsala, 13

FIRENZE

H. Roberts e C.
Via Tornabuoni, 17

TORINO

A. Cantone
Via Pietro Micca, 15

NAPOLI

H. Roberts e C.
Via Vittoria, 21-23

ROMA

Armando Materozzi - P. in Lucina, 4-5
H. Roberts e C. - Corso Umberto, 417
Zabban & C. - Piazza di Spagna, 42

LONDON

25 Old Bond Street, W. 1

GENOVA

Ottavio Caleri
Portici XX Settembre, 224 R
Piazza De Ferrari 7 R
(Portici Accademia)

PADOVA

A. G. Bertini
Via VIII Febbraio

VENEZIA

A. G. Bertini
Merceria Orologio, 217
Ascensione 1302

PARIS

2 rue de la Paix

CANNES

3 Galeries Fleuries

ELIZABETH ARDEN
NEW YORK - 673 FIFTH AVENUE

Tutti i diritti riservati

BIARRITZ

2 rue Gambetta

6.4 ELIZABETH ARDEN. I pori grossolani

- *Lidel*, 1928

(on previous page)

Perchè rattristarvi?



La linea del vostro naso, l'ovale del vostro volto forse non corrispondono agli esemplari della bellezza classica. Ma perchè rattristarvi? Voi potete essere attraente lo stesso ed acquistare un fascino tutto particolare . . . Non di rado le belle statue non presentano che una bellezza fredda e passiva . . . Quel che conta è il fascino attivo che deve sprigionarsi dalla vostra persona

La Pelle. È questo l'elemento più importante che bisogna curare. Essa parla da se. Una bella carnagione suscita da sola l'ammirazione generale. Perchè? Semplicemente perchè essa dice qualche cosa: essa significa freschezza, purezza, salute, in una parola: fascino

PER COMINCIARE, CHIEDETE I SEGUENTI PRODOTTI:

CLEANSING CREAM—Libera la pelle da ogni impurità, penetrando nei pori meglio dell'acqua e del sapone

ARDENA SKIN TONIC—Rinfresca, purifica e tonifica la pelle dandole il fascino e lo splendore della salute

VELVA CREAM—Specialmente indicata per carnagioni delicate o per visi rotondeggianti. Assicura alla pelle una grande freschezza eliminando l'impressione della grassezza

Elizabeth Arden conosceva questo segreto quando si dedicò al perfezionamento del suo metodo per il trattamento della pelle: e questo spiega perchè tutte le donne intelligenti si servono dei suoi Preparati. Esse infatti si rendono conto dell'inestimabile valore di una bella carnagione

Voi potete seguire il loro esempio. Miss Arden ha scritto un interessantissimo libro,—"Alla Ricerca della Bellezza,"—che vi indicherà esattamente il metodo da seguire per accrescere il fascino della vostra persona. Chiedetelo nei migliori negozi ove si trovano in vendita i suoi preparati e non esiterete nella scelta

ORANGE SKIN FOOD—Indispensabile per le persone di media età o per carnagioni che abbiano la tendenza ad invecchiare precocemente. Colma e spiana le rughe rendendo più morbide le linee del volto

ANTI-BROWN SPOT OINTMENT—Stimola la circolazione, ringiovanisce l'aspetto, ravviva la carnagione ed elimina la traccia degli anni

ELIZABETH ARDEN

ROMA 65 VIA CONDOTTI

LONDRA

NUOVA YORK

PARIGI

BERLINO

(Proprietà letteraria)

6.5 ELIZABETH ARDEN. Perché rattristarvi?

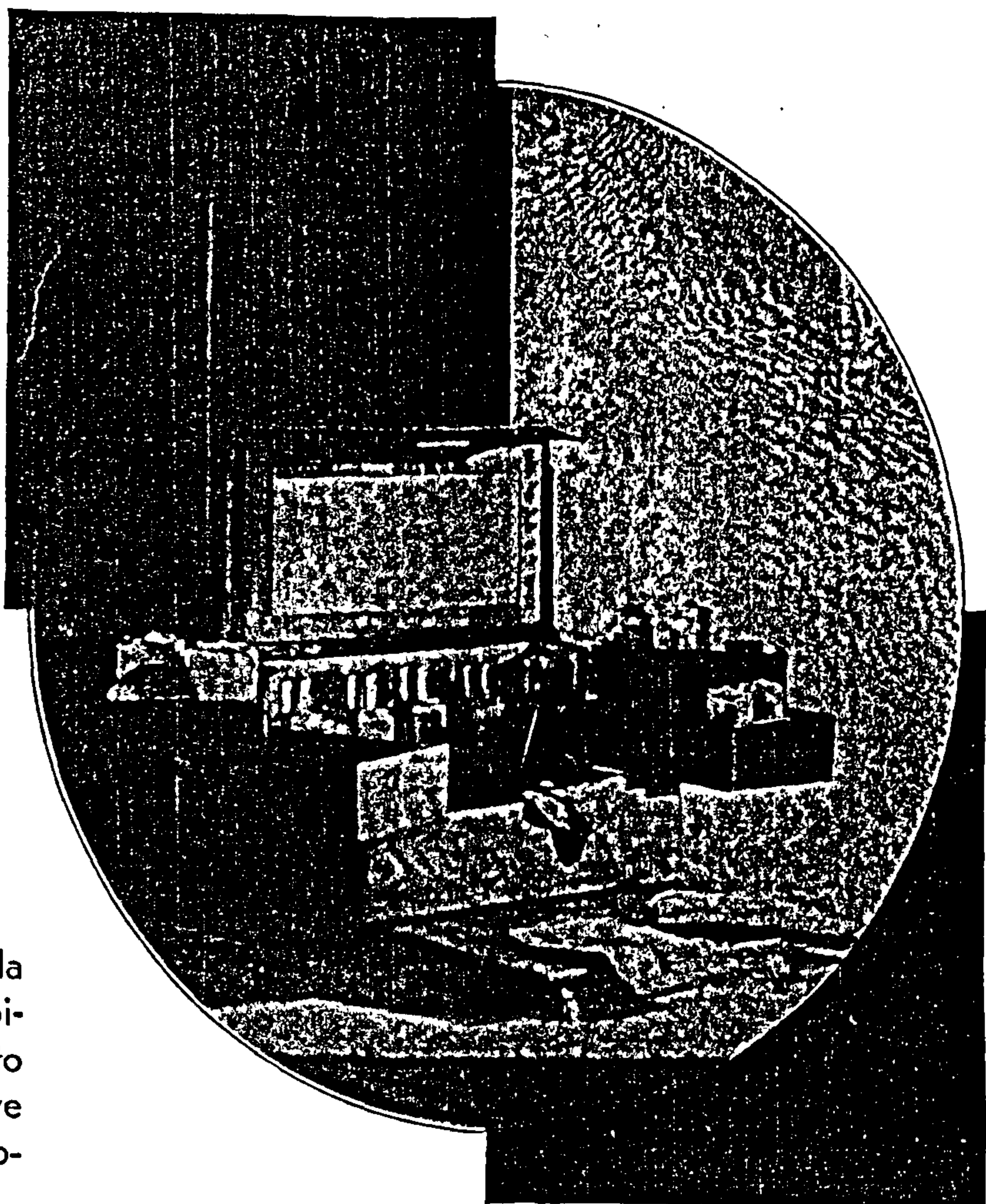
- *Lidel*, 1932

(on previous page)

This reflects the function of personalised advice provider and helper, through her beauty salons and publications. The recognition of this intimate relationship in the use of 'voi', as for example in the 1931 *Lidel* advertisement, 'Un piano per la vostra bellezza' (see Figure 6.6), results in a precise cultural and linguistic stereotyping of the woman of a certain well-heeled middle-class extraction with whom to establish this rapport. Notably, the subject pronoun is not used in a large number of advertisements, where the impersonal form or lack of direct reference to a buying subject dominates. Rather it denotes the very attempt by the producer at establishing empathy. Use also varies across the middle-class spectrum, from the lower-middle to middle-middle-class readers of *Gioia*, or the housewife's magazine *La massaia*, to the reader of the middle to upper-middle class *Lidel* and *Lei*, according to the product and the desired effect. A variety of product advertisements utilise this form of address in *La massaia*, as establishing empathy with the housewife appears fundamental for food and household products. Similarly, the reader is frequently addressed directly in cosmetic product advertisements, for example in *Lei* (23rd April, 1935), where, despite the magazine's name denoting both a more formal style of address, and the subject pronoun 'she', the 'voi' form used in advertisements such as those for 'La Nuova Cipria Coty', attempts to establish a precise link between a desired feminine image and the readers' lifestyle: 'Per voi che amate gli sports e la sana vita dell'aria aperta, la nuova cipria Coty è indispensabile. Finissima, pura, morbida, essa aderisce perfettamente all'epidermide ...'. Likewise, a later advertisement for 'Gibb's Cipria' (*Gioia*, 14th February, 1943) actively exhorts readers to: 'Scegliere la tinta più adatta ... per il colorito del vostro volto ...'.

The use of the attention-seeking headline in the Elizabeth Arden advertisement is calculated to allow for a prompt unnecessary reply, given the rhetorical nature of the question, and the prolific use of this problem solving strategy in advertisements. Paradoxically, women are told that charm ('fascino') is an active character-based factor, and not the result of a passive, cold, statue-like beauty. Use of a post-positional adjective 'attivo' referring to 'fascino' allows an automatic transfer of meaning onto the woman: she who looks after her skin, is active and will be rewarded with widespread admiration.

Un piano per la vostra bellezza



La Bellezza è cosa troppo importante perchè la si possa conseguire per puro caso. Bisogna stabilire un piano ben definito per ottenerla e questo piano, formulato da specialisti autorevoli, deve essere applicato con metodi e trattamenti appropriati, sotto la guida di persone competenti

Nei Saloni di Elizabeth Arden, assistita dagli espertissimi "artefici di bellezza" della Scuola di Miss Arden, Voi potrete fare il Vostro programma con assoluta fiducia nei risultati

Per curare regolarmente la Vostra pelle, per mantenerla sana, fresca e meravigliosamente viva, Vi si consiglierà un famoso metodo tonificante per i muscoli e per la pelle. Per rendere la Vostra pelle più morbida e per darle un'apparenza serica e vellutata, Vi si consiglierà l'Ardena Firming Treatment. Per correggere i pori ed eliminare le eruzioni cutanee, Miss Arden ha creato il classico trattamento della Ardena Masque. Vi sono poi speciali trattamenti per rendere più belli il collo e le braccia e vi sono segreti che accresceranno il fascino della Vostra bellezza

Questo Vi spiega come le Signore siano liete di poter trascorrere anche intere mattinate nell'atmosfera riposante dei Saloni di Elizabeth Arden, dove ogni ora che passa reca per tutti un nuovo elemento di grazia. Dietro ogni cosa c'è sempre Miss Arden, attenta, instancabile, accesa da un immenso entusiasmo per la bellezza e desiderosa soprattutto di corrispondere in pieno alle esigenze delle Signore che si affidano a Lei per moltiplicare il loro fascino ed aggiungere grazia alla loro persona. È questo interessamento particolare di Miss Arden che attira irresistibilmente le visitatrici, rendendole sicure dei risultati. Chi entra nei Saloni di Elizabeth Arden non ne esce mai delusa. Miss Arden attende anche Voi

PER PROTEGGERE E SVILUPPARE LA VOSTRA GRAZIA

● VENETIAN LILLE LOTION — Finissima lozione che corregge l'untuosità della pelle, dando a questa un aspetto morbido e vellutato. In otto gradazioni Lire 30,55

● ARDENA POWDER — Completate la Vostra toilette con una leggera passata di questa polvere di cipria trasparente, di indescrivibile purezza Lire 60,—

● ARDENA PROTECTA CREAM — Assicura alla pelle una protezione assoluta contro il freddo, il sole e l'umidità. Eccellente per gli Sports. Evita la ruvidità della pelle, le scottature di sole e le irritazioni. Ottima anche come base per la toilette di sera. In quattro gradazioni Lire 65,—

● NOSHINE — Prodotto finissimo per evitare la lucentezza della pelle e per mantenere il naso vellutato per tutto il giorno. In un grazioso astuccio nero comodissimo per la borsetta Lire 20,—

● Il libro di Elizabeth Arden "Alla Ricerca della Bellezza" vi guiderà sul metodo da seguire per applicare a casa i consigli di bellezza della grande Specialista americana

ELIZABETH ARDEN

691 FIFTH AVENUE, NEW YORK Elizabeth Arden S.A.I

ROMA, 65 VIA CONDOTTI

PARIGI BERLINO MADRID LONDRA

Proprietà letteraria

6.6 ELIZABETH ARDEN.

Un piano per la vostra bellezza

- *Lidel*, 1931 (on previous page)

Anxiety and sadness are thus linked to passive acceptance of nature's gifts, seen not as gifts but as imperfections to be corrected. Notably, this underlying 'philosophy' inherent in cosmetic advertisements has varied little over the decades, with the advertising used by international cosmetic houses such as Elizabeth Arden changing marginally in form according to historical period and cultural setting, but little in terms of substance. With women in need of a helping hand, symbolised by the ever-present hand in the advertisements, the emphasis shifts from the previous negative register of impurities and anti-aesthetic pores to a positive register, where the addressee is no longer provided with revealing advice, but is presumed to have acquired a certain cosmetic knowledge, thus making excessive explanations superfluous. Use of synthetic language forms and a focus on particular problems results in the advertisement relying to a significant degree on intertextuality, reinforcing a previously transmitted message, albeit with a slightly varied image and a different 'hook' in the problem-solving function performed by the copy.

The intertextuality function may be seen as particularly significant given the progressive nature of the advertisements, and the fact that later advertisements appear to rely heavily on previously acquired information. The lack of instructions in other cosmetic advertisements of the period, makes this factor all the more significant, as women gain knowledge of the products, and of their specific application, from particular sources. The only other international company to attempt an information-advertising strategy of this nature appears to be Helena Rubinstein. Thus as shown in Figure 6.7, the ample advice provided, based on the company's advertised products, meshes with the need to procure Mme Rubinstein's personalised advice based on a visit to the Rome 'beauty clinic' (*Lidel*, 15th June, 1928). Use of the French language for brands signals a means by which to distinguish the company's products, whilst the optical distribution of text and use of different typescript attempts to compensate for a nondescript image. Subsequent advertisements by this manufacturer also rely on text to a greatly reduced degree, as the 'how to' message appears to have been considerably consolidated, despite a notable limitation in the number and frequency of advertisements, compared to Elizabeth Arden.

Nove Precetti Essenziali per la Bellezza

dettati da Helena RUBINSTEIN

TRATTAMENTO PER CURA
GIORNALIERE IN CASA PROPRIA

Per pelli normali.

Pulire ogni sera il viso con la CRÈME PASTEURISÉE che purifica e ammorbidisce i tessuti. Togliere il sovrappiù della crema e stendere sulla pelle un leggero strato di SKINFOOD VALAZE che schiarisce e affina l'epidermide. Tre volte alla settimana lavare il viso con i GRAINS DE BEAUTE VALAZE. Per tonificare e rinforzare l'epidermide usare avanti di truccarsi il volto la lozione SKIN TONIC.

Per pelli grasse.

La sera lavare il viso con i GRAINS DE BEAUTE VALAZE preparato inoperabile per pulire a fondo i pori e per combattere l'eccesso di secrezioni sebacee. Far seguire da un'applicazione di SKINFOOD VALAZE. La mattina servirsi della CRÈME PASTEURISÉE per purificare l'epidermide, alternare con lo SKINFOOD VALAZE e terminare con lo SKIN TONIC VALAZE. Nel corso della giornata usare la LIQUIDINE VALAZE che sopprime l'aspetto lucido del viso e restringe i pori.

Per pelli secche.

Pulire il viso ogni sera il CERAT NOVENA o la CRÈME DE NENUFHAR VALAZE prima di applicare la CRÈME GRECQUE VALAZE (ANTIOSOROS) preparato nutriente per eccellenza. Al mattino usare lo SKINFOOD VALAZE per schiarire e affinare l'epidermide e terminare con il TONIC SPECIAL VALAZE.

Le ciprie e i cosmetici Valaze.

Le ciprie Valaze e i cosmetici per le guancie e per le labbra sono reputati per la delicatezza delle loro sfumature e per la loro finezza. Composti di sostanze perfettamente pure essi proteggono l'epidermide più sensibile. La TABLETTE INDIENNE VALAZE dà alle ciglia e alle sopracciglia un aspetto lucente pieno di seduzione unito con la SEVE CILIAIRE VALAZE rende le sopracciglia folte e aiuta la loro crescita facendole anche diventare più scure.



Ho sempre affermato che non esistono al mondo due epidermidi identiche e reputo che ogni pelle abbia delle esigenze speciali e che ogni persona desiderosa di avere un colorito perfetto e impeccabili linee del volto debba sottomettere la propria pelle ad un regime conforme alla sua natura. Nondimeno si possono stabilire nove precetti fondamentali, essenziali ed invariabili che si applicano alle epidermidi più diverse.

1. Studiate la natura della vostra pelle.
2. Vegliate all'attività dei tessuti.
3. Pulite radicalmente la vostra epidermide almeno due volte al giorno.
4. Tonificate e fortificate i tessuti ed i muscoli.
5. Proteggete la vostra pelle dalle intemperie.
6. Alimentate la vostra pelle e, se è necessario, rendete più chiaro il vostro colorito.
7. Non mescolate mai i prodotti di bellezza di differenti marche; la vostra pelle non potrebbe assimilarle.
8. Usate solamente cosmetici scientifici e in armonia con i vostri prodotti di bellezza.
9. Continuate in casa vostra la cura quotidiana della bellezza.

Scegliete fra i trattamenti di bellezza studiati scientificamente dalla più celebre specialista di bellezza del mondo quelli che meglio convengono alla vostra epidermide.

Una visita alla Clinique de Beauté d'HELENA RUBINSTEIN ove sarete sempre la benvenuta, vi permetterà di avere la diagnosi esatta del vostro caso. Conoscerete così i trattamenti di bellezza Valaze, universalmente reputati come i più efficaci ad attenuare le imperfezioni della pelle e conservare la bellezza del vostro volto.

PREPARAZIONE
PER CURA SPECIALI

Punti neri e acne.

PATE SPECIALE VALAZE contro i punti neri preparata per le pelli molto sensibili. Pulisce profondamente i pori e fa sparire rapidamente i punti neri. CRÈME VALAZE CONTRE L'ACNE; CRÈME MEDICALE antisettica e curativa. Combatte l'infezione e protegge le parti intatte. REFINING LOTION VALAZE. Diminuisce la secrezione sebacea, restringe i pori dilatati e affina l'epidermide.

Pelli sensibili e muscoli rilassati

EAU VERTE stimolante per pelli secche.

EAU QUI PIQUE stimolante per pelli grasse. Rigeneratore attivo delle funzioni dell'epidermide è di un effetto immediato per il colorito scuro e disunito. Rinforza la pelle e la prepara alle ulteriori cure tonificanti.

GEORGINE LACTEE d'una efficacia sicura in tutti i casi di rilassatezza dei muscoli.

Crema nutritiva

CRÈME GRECQUE VALAZE e ANTIOSOROS, penetra nei tessuti li rigenera, li rende più elastici previene e combatte le rughe incipienti e la zampa d'oca.

CRÈME DE PLANTES VALAZE Crema nutriente e stimolante ad un tempo, dà eccellenti risultati dopo l'uso della EAU VERTE e dell'EAU QUI PIQUE.

Crema e lozioni astringenti.

EXTRAIT VALAZE astringente balsamico, lozione di un'efficacia notevole contro le rughe e il gonfiore degli occhi conserva alle pelli delicate la loro giovinezza e la loro freschezza. EMAILINE VALAZE crema astringente per pelli normali e grasse; particolarmente efficace dopo l'uso dell'EAU QUI PIQUE.

I prodotti "VALAZE" di HELENA RUBINSTEIN si vendono in:

PARIS

52, Faubourg Saint-Honoré

MILANO

F.lli Biancardi - Corso Vitt. Em. 24

GENOVA

Profumeria Vitale - Via C. Felice 41

BARI

Lorenzo Pepe - Via A. da Bari, 24

ROMA

Clinique Rubinstein - C. Umberto 40
Profumeria Goeta - Via del Tritone 54

VERONA

A. Zago e C. - Via Mazzini 18

LONDRES

24, Grafton St-Mayfair

NEW-YORK

41 West-57th Street

TRIESTE

G. Andreuzzi - Corso Vitt. Em. 5

PALERMO

Russo Balabanare - Via Paternostro 84

SPEZIA

Dottor Quilico - Via Chiodo N. 5

FIVENZE

C. Biracchi - Via Calzaioli N. 5
Sorelle Papi - Via Cavour N. 91

MODENA

E. Rossi - Via Emilia

CLINIQUE DE BEAUTÉ

Helena Rubinstein

ROMA - Corso Umberto 40

VIAREGGIO

Sorelle Papi

SALSOMAGGIORE

Profumeria Malheri

IVREA

Gibellino Marengo

SIENA

Profumeria Soldatini

DA RITAGLIARE

Riempire questo questionario diagnostico e mandarlo per posta a
Mme HELENA RUBINSTEIN,

Roma - Corso Umberto, 40

Prego di inviarmi senza alcun impegno da parte mia le istruzioni complete per la cura quotidiana della mia pelle.

Segnate con un tratto il vostro caso particolare

() Pelle secca.	() Ectodermi.
() Pelle grassa	() Pelli ruvide.
() Pelle normale	() Colorito giallastro.
() Rughe.	() Punti neri.
() Zampa d'oca.	() Pori dilatati.
() Doppio mento.	() Bollicine, acne.
() Occhi gonfi.	() Infiammature.
() Flaccidità.	() Mani aride, rosse.

Nome

Indirizzo

6.7 HELENA RUBINSTEIN.

Nove Precetti Essenziali per la bellezza

- Lidel, 1928 (on previous page)

Indeed, for the latter, continual recall of established products and advertising of new lines, forms part of a concentrated advertising campaign in *Lidel* and *La Donna*. Intertextuality consequently becomes an essential factor, where gradual introduction to a limited number of products and applications (*Lidel*, 15th March, 1928), sees women exhorted to use only 'pure' products: 'Protegete la vostra pelle mediante preparati di assoluta purezza'. Emphasis on the purity of the products may also be noted in advertisements by other manufacturers in this inter-war period, where the many additives contained in cheaper cosmetics, especially in the standard face powder and cheek blusher used by most women, are a frequent cause of skin problems for the wearer. Detailed product content, shop locations and prices are provided, as the head-swathed model is portrayed with a beauty box, presumably containing all essentials, handed to her. Significantly, the same advertisement in *La Donna* portrays the model without the box, as the total emphasis dedicated to the facial features reflects the need to communicate the product's real effects to an older and more conservative reader.

Elizabeth Arden advertises assiduously in these magazines, issue after issue, with minor variations in image. The headlines and step-by-step details vary minimally in terms of language as women are repeatedly told, in a variety of ways, that: 'Beletti e Ciprie sono ripieghi. Curate la vostra pelle se volete mantenerla sana e renderla naturalmente bella, tersa e liscia' (*Lidel*, 15th October, 1928). The frequent use of the image of perfect beauty in these initial years of advertising by the company reinforces the consumer's perception of a particular image of the product and of the cosmetic manufacturer. It also allows the consumer to associate the advertisements, despite ensuing changes in the following decade, with this nun-like image of physical, and perhaps spiritual, perfection. Indeed, the continuous use of an image that may also be termed religious, given the fact that it recalls a nun bereft of her black wimple, may also lead the consumer to associate product use with a version of beauty that transcends the mere physical. The 1930s see the advertisements becoming more product and service-focused. An entire range of beauty products are advertised, as the addressee is encouraged to purchase a complex dressing-table beauty case, but above all to attend to all her needs in one of the many

'beauty salons', staffed by experts trained in the Elizabeth Arden school (*Lidel*, 15th March, 1931). The reliance on intertextuality in this advertisement is based on the limited advertising space given to the brands and to product use, as persuasive language dominates the advertisement, and reinforces previously transmitted notions regarding personal care and a desired facial complexion. By the mid 1930s, the increasingly exclusive *La Donna* features the individual products located within pictorial stars in the advertisement, as the range is associated with the increasingly utilised notion of stardom (January 1935). Although lacking in a specific declaration or testimonial, this advertisement relies on another form of intertextuality, apart from the notions of beauty previously transmitted by the single manufacturer, as the addressee is encouraged to recall the significance of product endorsement by stars. This type of endorsement, whilst still in its infancy in Italy, had become an confirmed part of American commercial enterprise (Branston, 2000). The reliance on this further intertextuality also signals use of a different form of communication based on 'stardom' both in one's personal life, or in the wider society, as a reflection of aspirations of younger women who see beauty enhanced by the use of cosmetics as a passport to success. Although reflecting a form of advertising with direct testimonials that was to increase in popularity in the post-war period, by the end of the decade, advertising by Elizabeth Arden is once again oriented around providing detailed advice on the application of the numerous cosmetics in vogue.

In conclusion, it is of interest to note that the use of English language brand names persists at a time of evolving notions of language use, a fact undoubtedly linked to the brand's appeal based on a certain 'English rose' freshness, as much as the French language brands are associated with seduction. For those addressees lacking familiarity with the texts preceding the case advertisement, the language, including use of original brand names, and of the image, would merely have added to the enigmatic quality of the advertisement, doubly reinforced by the invitation 'Per cominciare chiedete i seguenti prodotti'. The attraction of the mask, and its signification in bestowing a personal femininity, whilst encoding a socially desirable version of womanhood according to time, circumstance and place for the new addressee cannot be ignored.

As the 1930s progress, cosmetic advertising images, whether implicitly or explicitly, feature a version of womanhood that differs from regime dictates, but generally true to the advertising conducted previously. The underlying image of a woman of few offspring, care and attention to personal health and beauty, oriented towards consumption to meet the needs of self and a family of few members permeates women's magazines, despite contrary propaganda related to its unpatriotic and non-fascist nature. Whilst the propaganda machine works at dismantling the image that many women and most young girls appear to aspire to, the advertising system aptly constructs a consumer-oriented vision through women's magazines for a wide range of personal and home products. Nowhere was this more the case than for cosmetic advertisements, although the years following the closure of *Lidel*, and the concentration of advertisements towards more autarchic products does lead to a certain limitation of this category. In particular, the interest regarding American women that pervades the Italian press from the late 1800s, results in a progressive consideration of these women as representative of modern beauty at its most perfect (De Giorgio, 1993), as users of the most advanced technologies for the home and for themselves and as the embodiment of innovative tendencies (Cott, 1992). By the 1930s, it is readily acknowledged that American women have created a special type of beauty, not of a traditionally classic Italian renaissance quality, but of a modern nature, much sought after by those legions of women aspiring to this model. Stigmatisation by the Catholic press and the regime of this beauty cult, despite the prolific use of make-up by fascist party wives and women, leads to an active stance against use of make-up by the women's Catholic associations, and the adoption of an austere and puritan appearance by many Catholic women. Validation of this position comes with a 1935 ministerial decree banning use of make-up in the public sector, and support of the party line from the feminist Teresa Labriola, as fears of moral corruption originating in the Americanisation of behaviour and lifestyle grow (Gentile, 1993) The centrality of woman's idealised maternal role within the fascist state, reflected in extreme practicality and naturalness of physical appearance, contrasts sharply with the 'body beautiful' cult and use of personal enhancing products like cosmetics that although recognised by the regime as potentially destabilising, result in a feeble attempt to control

the proliferation of images by Italian and foreign companies. American influence again proves decisive, especially for products linked to the intertwined concepts of beauty and modernity, aptly represented by the novel advertising strategies, images and English language brands of cosmetic houses like Elizabeth Arden.

6.3 COSMETIC ADVERTISING IN THE 1940s: FROM LOCAL 'GI.VI.EMME' BEAUTIES TO INTERNATIONAL MAX FACTOR STARS

The war heralds the advent of more 'middle-market' products with limited advertising techniques, as products range from *Diadermina* cream, *Juventus* breast cream and face powder, to small advertisements for *Antirughina* face cream and *Khasana* lipstick and face powder, reminding women that 'La fortuna è capricciosa' (*Grazia*, 8th February, 1940). Smaller advertisements for beauty products and stockings are matched by the historic advertisement-competition '5000 lire per un sorriso' which is featured in 1939 in *Grazia* (see Figure 6.8), the forerunner of the Miss Italia beauty contest and the first professionally-organised promotional tool to be used by an Italian company. Imported from France at the turn of the century, the beauty contest is initially based on judging physical attributes in photographs, while the first real beauty contest in 1911 for 'Regina di Roma' (De Giorgio, 1993) unleashes a spate of similar contests. The 1931 fascist Public Security Law effectively puts an end to beauty contests, as Church and State are in accord over their dishonourable and dissolute nature, with women at the centre of a consolidating ideology. In 1939 the launching of the '5000 lire per un sorriso' campaign by the Carlo Erba company as a means of promoting its products, and in particular the 'Gi.vi.Emme' perfume in unique Murano glass bottles, signals a developing innovative approach to product promotion, and the attempt by various companies at using the media tools at their disposal, despite regime restrictions (Cunsolo, 1955). Asked to send in photographs to the *Tempo*, potential winners are judged by personalities as diverse as the advertising manager Villani, the actor De Sica, editor/producer Zavattini and the artist Boccasile. The competition heralds a post-war renewal of beauty contests, albeit with an emphasis more on body than face, as 'Miss Italia' is *par excellence* a passage to success.

5000 LIRE PER UN SORRISO

RISULTATO DEL CONCORSO - 4° ELENCO DEI PREMIATI

Pubblighiamo, a chiusura delle comunicazioni, alcune fotografie scelte a caso tra le cento classificate al 34° posto. La pubblicazione delle fotografie premiate e segnalate continuerà sulla rivista "Grazia". Tutti i concorrenti riceveranno un opuscolo coi risultati completi del concorso. - La Ditta GI. VI. EMME e la rivista "Grazia", ringraziano tutti coloro che hanno voluto partecipare ed interessarsi del rischiosissimo concorso ed avvertono che tra breve daranno notizia di quello che si organizzerà per il 1940. Una graziosa, piacevole sorpresa è riservata alle concorrenti.



Signora MARIA BARONI
Foto Pittore Felice Pascho, Milano.



Foto Signora Mina Vaccari Scapatta
Valenza Pr. (Alessandria).



Foto MARIA BARISONE
Acqui.



Signora ENRICHETTA VEICH
Sottratti N. 8 - Trieste - Fot. Masetti.



Signora AURORA CEBRELLI
Piazza Roma - Livorno (Pavia).



Signora MARIUCCIA CINTI
Fossano.



Signora PIA BAVA
Via Pietro Micca, 9 - Torino.



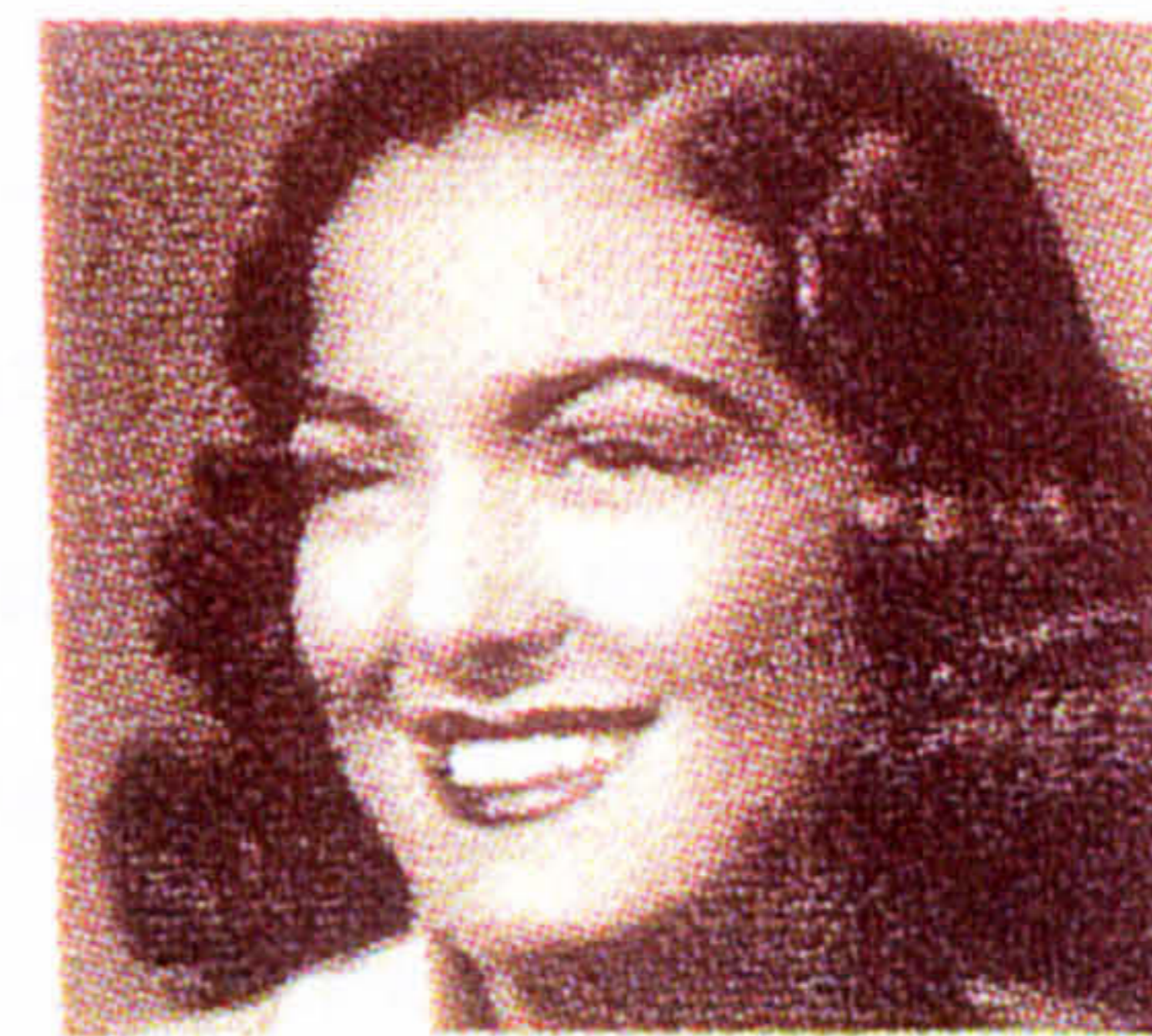
Signora GIULIA CAVALLO
Teramo.



Sig. ALDA STRANIERO
Via G. B. Vico, 4 - Milano.



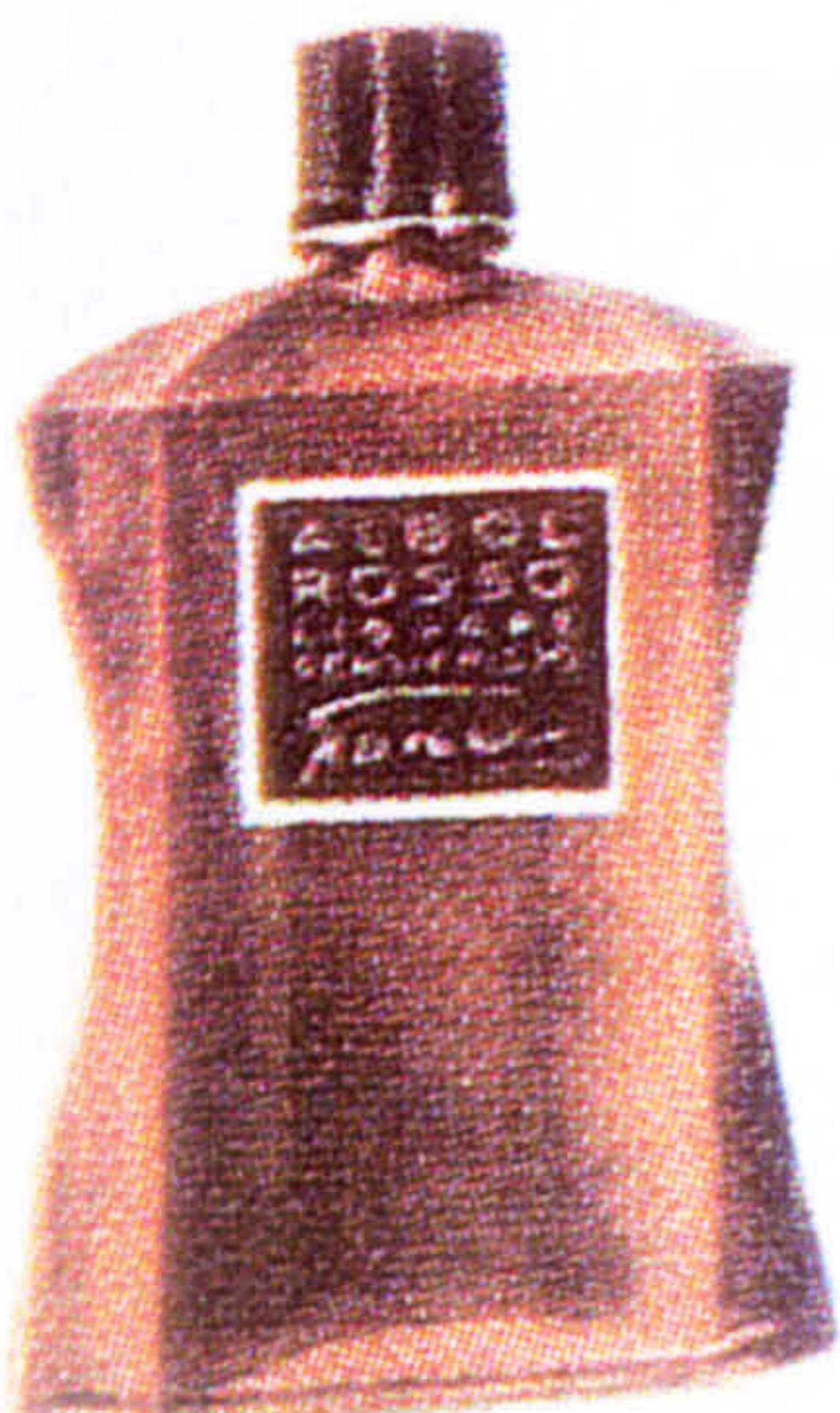
Signora BENEDETTA MUGNAINI
Pozzobonone (Cremona).



Signora NERINA BABUDER
Via S. Nicolò, 2 - Trieste.



Signora LIDJA DANESIN
Via Campo Marzio - Sesto (Udine).



Ve che conoscete l'indiscussa superiorità del dentifricio ERBA - GI. VI. EMME, il più venduto in Italia, integrata la sua azione sciacquandosi la bocca, dopo i pasti, coi liquori dentifrici Albol ed Albol Rosso. Essi sono forti disinfettanti del campo prodottissimo, eliminano i residui di cibi ed i grassi che si depositano in bocca durante la masticazione; lasciano la bocca perfettamente pulita e fragrante. Albol e Albol Rosso sono ottimi dentifrici per chi non tollera l'uso dello spazzolino, ed ha i denti malati e le gengive infiammate. L'Albol è adatto per chi desidera l'aroma forte, l'Albol Rosso per coloro che preferiscono un aroma più dolce e delicato.

Chiedete Dentifricio Liquido ALBOL oppure ALBOL ROSSO Liquore Dentifricio nelle farmacie, nelle migliori profumerie e drogherie di ogni località. Se non lo trovate spedite vaglia a "GI. VI. EMME", Via Ronchetti, Milano. Albol Rosso - Liquore Dentifricio, flacone normale L. 5,50 - flacone medio L. 3,50 Albol - Dentifricio Liquido - flacone medio L. 3,50 FRANCO DI PORTO NEL REGNO



CONCORSO RIVISTA "GRAZIA" - SOC. AN. GI. VI. EMME

Spedizione in abbonamento postale - Milano

6.8 5000 LIRE PER UN SORRISO - *Grazia*, 1939
(on previous page)

The issue of the new range of women's magazines catering to a variety of middle-class tastes and incomes is emblematic in the case of *Grazia*, the new version of *Sovrana* from 1938, an important magazine of the pre-war, and war periods, as it is launched when autarchy is under way, a factor reflected in terms of advertising content for both branded, unbranded and do-it-yourself remedies. As a result, the presence of alternatives, usually referred to in columns and articles, is also significant in terms of their substitution effect based on greater accessibility and generally lower price for the less well-to-do reader. The alternatives suggested seem to allow the same objective to be reached without the expense involved, and generally regard cookery and cleaning solutions, although personal care products may also be manufactured personally with readily available kitchen, garden or pharmacy ingredients, a fact occasionally revealed in articles and in direct contrast with the rampant advertising of branded goods. Although escapist advertising remains the backbone of these magazines, with advertisements for breast-firming and body hair depilatory creams, tanning oil, perfumes, face powders, talc and a host of beauty/health lotions, oils and creams, by 1941, the pre-war concentration of advertising on beauty and female products is integrated by a more marked presence of advertisements relating to women's escalating war work and liberated social status.

However, notably, despite the war, some advertising of beauty products does continue in the issues of a few of the women's magazines available. A particular example is that of the monthly *Bellezza*, that began publishing activity in the initial war years for an upper-middle-class target market, with an emphasis on beauty and fashion. The beauty element is such that in the first seventeen pages dedicated to advertising of a 1941 issue (September), five full-page advertisements are dedicated to beauty products. The presence of foreign and national producers is also evident. For example, as seen clearly in Figure 6.9, the 'Barbara Gould' beauty range offers to the woman 'specialità per le 4 età della bellezza'. This is despite the fact that the emphasis remains on the treatment's ability to provide 'perfetta elasticità' and 'lo splendore e la freschezza della gioventù'.



*La semplicità è la chiave
del trattamento di Bellezza*

Barbara Gould

Il trattamento di bellezza «Barbara Gould», breve, semplice ed efficace, stimola la circolazione del sangue nell'epidermide, ridona perfetta elasticità ai tessuti, conferendo al volto lo splendore e la freschezza della gioventù

I PRODOTTI BARBARA GOULD SONO FABBRICATI A CASALECCHIO DI RENO

CONCES. S.A. 17. BOURJOIS.

SPECIALITÀ

PER LE 4 ETÀ

DELLA
BELLEZZA



•
6.9 BARBARA GOULD.

Specialità per le 4 età della bellezza

- *Bellezza*, 1941 (on previous page)

The male razor 'raselet' is marketed as 'l'unico depilatore della donna elegante'. The beauty salon 'Bicidi Selecta' also exhorts women to think of 'la pelle è la tela su cui dovete dipingere' (see Figure 6.10). Finally, cosmetic advertising's importance is shown by a feature entitled 'Essere Belle', where detailed advice on beauty application is provided with photographs by Elizabeth Arden. Cosmetic application is a science, even for the 'moglie e madre esemplare' in *La donna, la casa, il bambino* (January-February 1942), where 'Misticum' offers ten colours for their beauty routine (see Figure 6.11).

In terms of quantity and quality of advertisements, however, the war brought about a marginalisation of cosmetic advertisements, especially those at the upper end of the brand quality-price spectrum. *Grazia* and *Annabella*, more middle-class magazines, retrench in a new post-war market. The presence of young, sophisticated, made-up women on the cover of women's magazines define concepts of femininity in the post-war period as *Gioia*, *Grazia* and *Annabella* establish a brand identity. The cover models perform the function of showing off the latest fashions, and of advertising products such as jewellery, head-scarves, gloves, clothes and make-up, all necessary for the well-dressed woman and essential in relaying a sophisticated image. The double reinforcement afforded by the cover for the range of products advertised within the magazine, such as in the case of *Grazia*, becomes a distinctive feature, and one that separates this magazine from both the fewer luxury ones and the more popular publications on the market, thus allowing it to combine the reality of some, with the aspiration of others, a winning strategy in these initial years of publishing activity. Nowhere is this philosophy more reflected than in make-up advertising. Increasing use of almost full-page advertisements with famous faces endorsing beauty products becomes a significant advertising strategy of the following years. Typically, as shown in Figures 6.12 and 6.13 (*Grazia*, 13th November, 1948), Veronica Lake and Lana Turner embody qualities said to be available to all women through the use of the full Max Factor Hollywood product range that includes 'pan-cake make-up' and lipstick: sophistication, fascination, velvet complexion, glossy lips, physical attractiveness.



*La pelle è la tela
su cui dovete dipingere*

Frequentate i saloni di bellezza BICIDI SELECTA, i primi ed i soli nei quali vengano praticate cure estetiche rispondenti alla nuova Dottrina dell'Eudermia

L'Eudermia è il punto d'arrivo della Dermatologia e cioè il benessere fisiologico della pelle

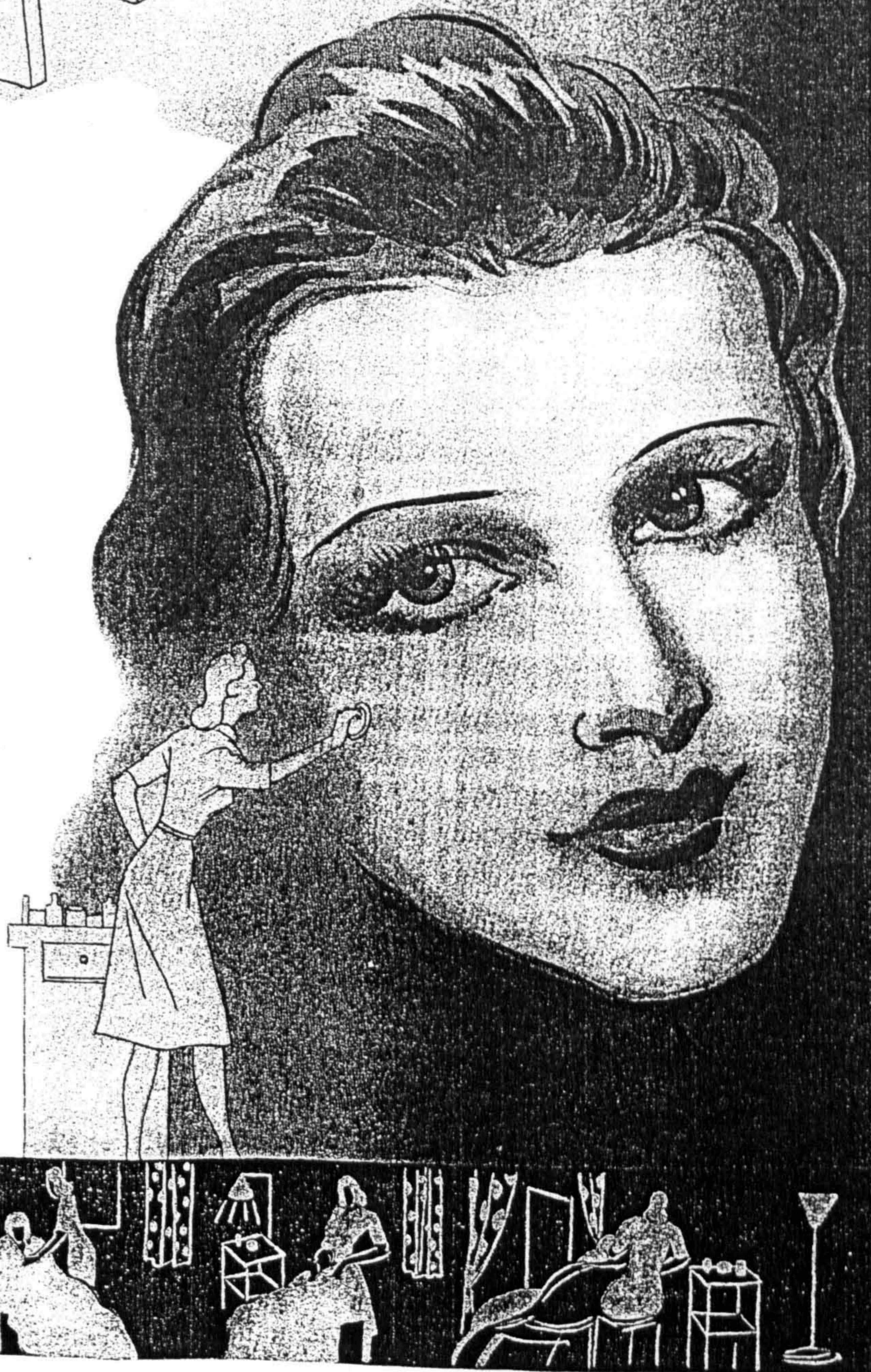
La pelle è la "tela", sulla quale Voi dovete dipingere. Non si dipinge bene su una tela vecchia e sciupata

Frequentate i Saloni di bellezza BICIDI SELECTA

Saloni BICIDI SELECTA: Milano - Corso Littorio 22 (telefono 70.711), Roma - viale Regina Elena 47 (telefono 485-566), Napoli - piazza dei Martiri 53 (telefono 21.706)



BICIDI
SELECTA



6.10 BICIDI SELECTA - *Bellezza*, 1941

(on previous page)

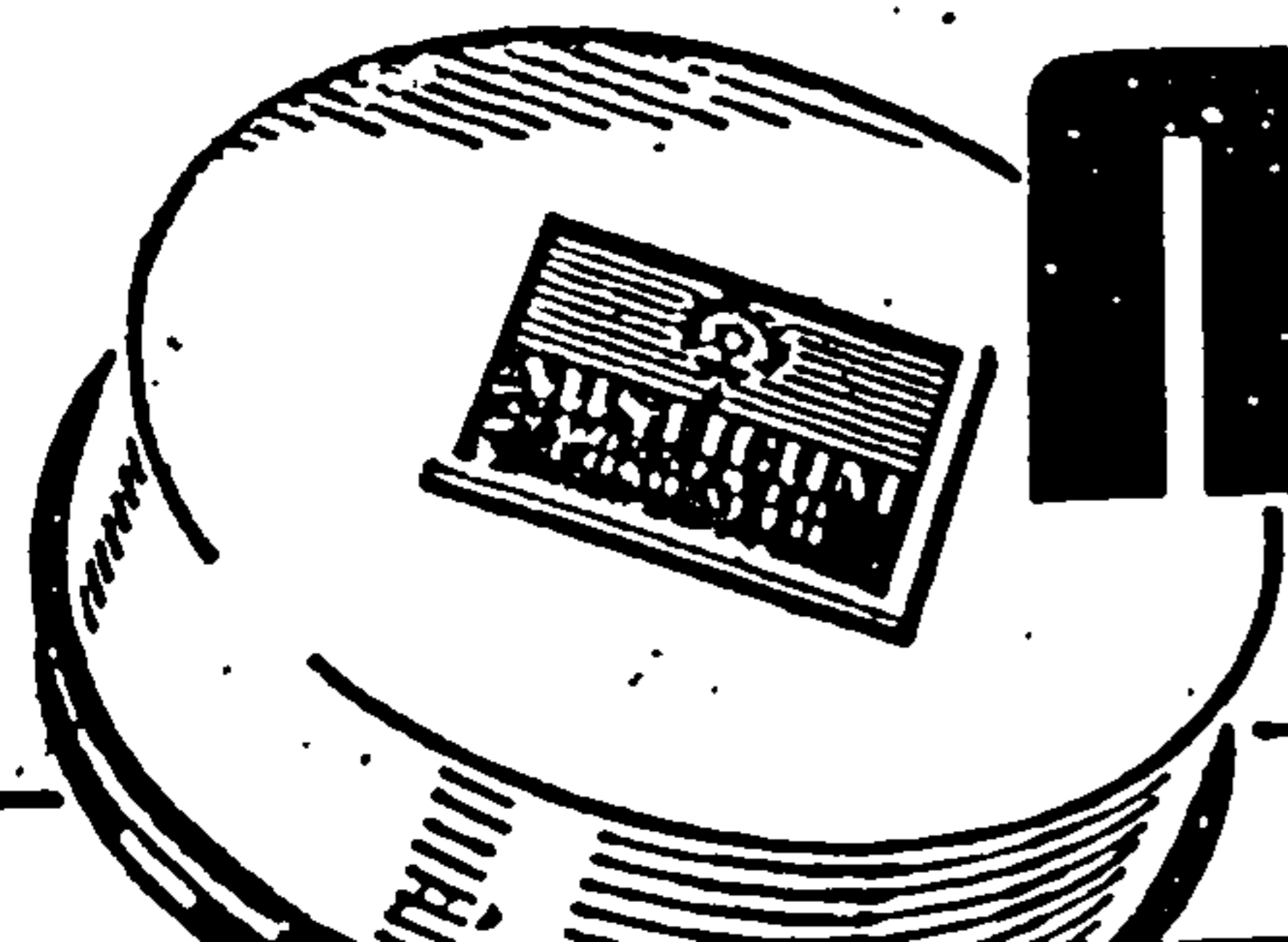
LA DONNA, LA CASA, IL BAMBINO

*Un rossetto scelto
fra questi 10 colori completerà
la vostra bellerra*



- CORALLO
- CLIVIA
- ARANCIO
- PERSIA
- CAPRI
- INDIA
- BRONIA
- ROSSO
PER BIONDE
- ROSSO
PER BRUNE I
- ROSSO
PER BRUNE II

Nella tabella dei colori del Rossetto Compatto Misticum troverete la tonalità che più si addice alla vostra carnagione. Grazie ad una segreta mescolanza di colori, le varie sfumature del Rossetto Misticum si intonano naturalmente col tipo di viso per cui sono state create. Esse costituiscono il vero "rossetto individuale". Provatelo subito; anche le vostre amiche vi confermeranno che avete finalmente trovato il giusto rossetto per il vostro viso.



Misticum

ROSSETTO COMPATTO
per ogni colorito

6.11 MISTICUM - La donna, la casa, il bambino, 1942
(on previous page)

Veronika Lake
in "SAIGON"
film PARAMOUNT

Il prodotto di bellezza
preferito dalle più
affascinanti stelle di
Hollywood

PAN-CAKE MAKE-UP

è indubbiamente la più grande
innovazione nella storia dei
cosmetici.

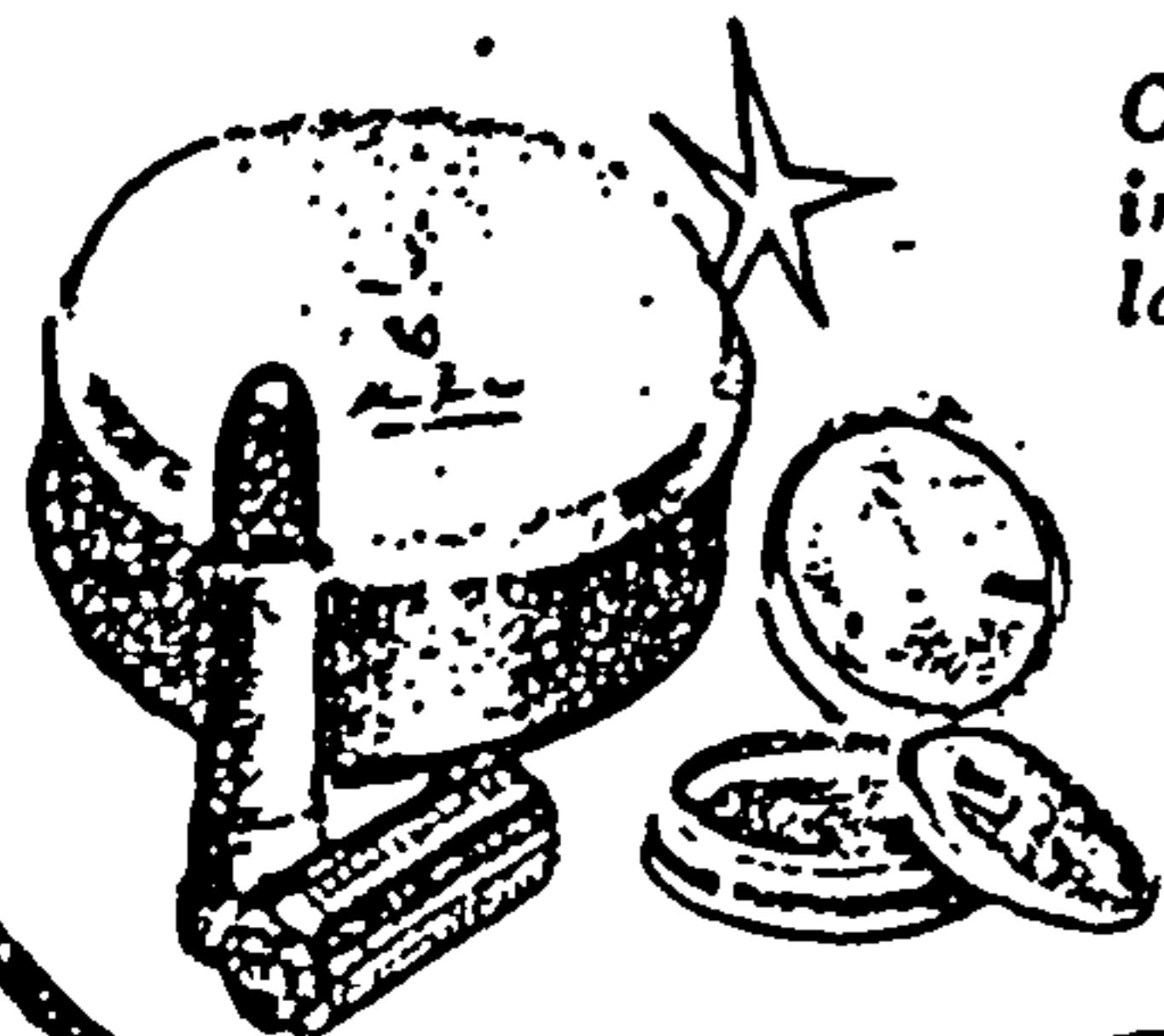
Il PAN-CAKE MAKE-UP è il
preparato originale e brevettato
da

Max Factor

HOLLYWOOD

Ideato per i film in Technicolor è divenuto ora il
ritocco che realmente crea fascino.

- ★ Esso vi darà istantaneamente una bella carnagione
nuova, deliziosa nella tinta morbida, perfetta.
- ★ Renderà la vostra apparenza interessante, attraente,
affascinante. - I piccoli difetti della pelle saranno com-
pletamente nascosti ed il vostro "ritocco" si manterrà
perfetto ed irresistibile per ore senza incipriarvi più volte.
- ★ Gli ottimi olii emollienti in esso contenuti salvaguar-
deranno la vostra pelle dal divenire secca, la manterranno
morbida e dall'aspetto giovanile.



Completate il vostro "ritocco"
in ARMONIA DI COLORI con
la cipria, rossetto e rosso per labbra
MAX FACTOR

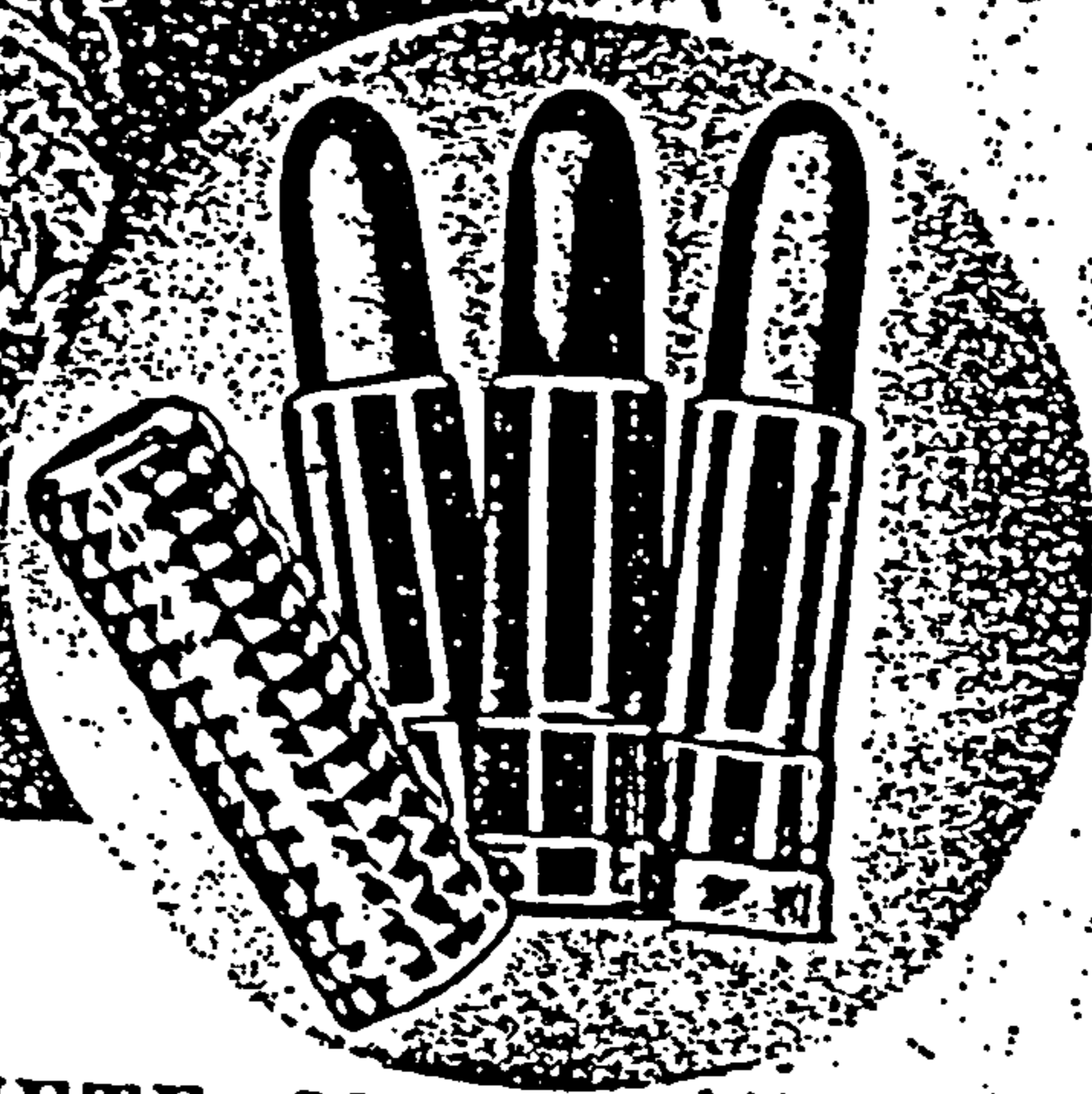
Richiedete al vostro fornitore
di fiducia di prescrivervi
il vostro "ritocco" nella
ARMONIA DI COLORI
MAX FACTOR HOLLYWOOD

MAX FACTOR DISTRIBUTORS - VIA SENATO 11 - MILANO

CONFIDENZE DI LIALA pubblica questa settimana la prima grande puntata, in technicolor, di
VIA COL VENTO

l'ottimismo film interpretato da VIVIEN LEIGH, OLIVA DE HAVILLAND, CLARK GABLE e LESLIE HOWARD

6.12 MAX FACTOR. Veronica Lake - *Grazia*, 1948
(on previous page)



Lana Turner
 affascinante interprete
 de "Il Delfino Verde" e
 "Il Giudice Timberlane"
 METRO GOLDWYN MAYER

Ecco IL ROSSO PER LABBRA
 CHE TANTO AVETE ATTESO...

NUOVI
DIFFERENTI
SENSAZIONALI

CLEAR RED (Rosso Chiaro) **BLUE RED** (Rosso Blu) **ROSE RED** (Rosso Rosa)

Tre meravigliosi colori per voi...

3 rossi esclusivi, 3 alternative incantevoli, armonizzanti con il vostro colorito e con i vostri abiti.

Un nuovo attraente stile

conferito alle vostre labbra che appariranno più morbide, più seducenti.

Il colore permance veramente

e a lungo durerà il suo fascino, in realtà finchè non si tolga il rosso di proposito.

Le vostre labbra non inaridiranno

ma, con questa nuova formula esclusiva, si manterranno morbide ed incantevoli.

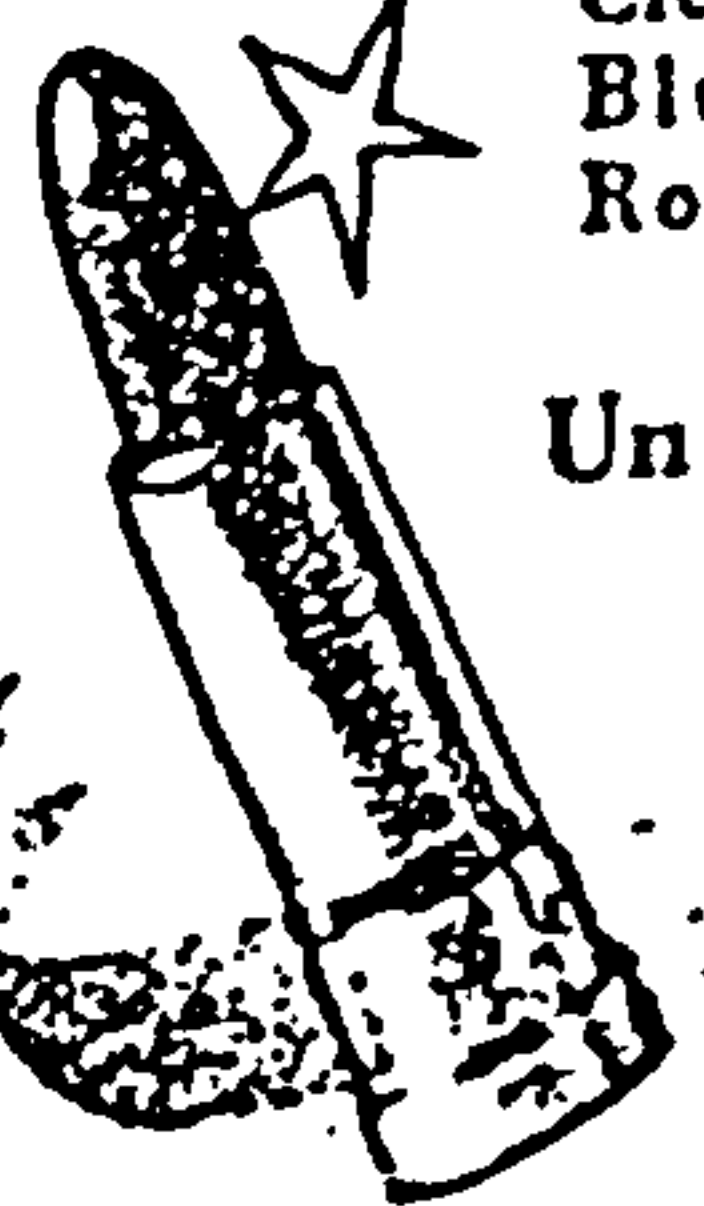
Chiedete questo meraviglioso Rosso per labbra
MAX FACTOR HOLLYWOOD
 oggi stesso!

scegliendo i colori per il vostro tipo

BIONDA	CASTANA	BRUNA	FULVA
Clear Red 1	Clear Red 2	Clear Red 3	Clear Red 1
Blue Red 1	Blue Red 2	Blue Red 3	Blue Red 1
Rose Red 1	Rose Red 2	Rose Red 3	Rose Red 1

Un altro straordinario "primato" di

Max Factor
 HOLLYWOOD



In tutte le principali profumerie

MAX FACTOR DISTRIBUTORS - VIA SENATO 11 - MILANO

ABITI DA GIORNO
 E DA SERA

GIULIA CASARTELLI - Confezioni
 Negozio in corso Monforte angolo via Conservatorio, 17 - Tel. 70298 - MILANO

TAILLEURS :: ::
 SOPRABITI

6.13 MAX FACTOR. Lana Turner - *Grazia*, 1948
(on previous page)

6.4 THE 1950s AND 1960s: THE 'INVISIBLE' ELIZABETH ARDEN BEAUTY MASK

The factor that distinguishes this post-war period in Italian history and advertising is the importance attached to the woman as consumer, purchaser and decision-maker for self and family, albeit for a well-defined range of products. The consumption of beauty and personal care products becomes compelling, as the advertising message contains well-defined notions relating to personal sophistication, lifestyle, aspiration and seduction, all communicated as essential to the average woman's social and cultural 'make-up'. This range of products allows women to develop a unique form of Italian 'feminine mystique' based on the versatile moulding of self-image. For the lower-income categories of magazines this implied possessing, often for the first time in their lives, the possibility of varying their physical features and taking charge of their existence in a radically different way, albeit within the confines of purchasing power. The importance attached to cosmetics, self-appearance and image by women on all rungs of the social ladder reflects a growing awareness of the importance attached to this factor by society, and the power attributed to women by these very instruments. Clothes, fashion, cosmetics, toiletries, accessories are discovered en masse as never before, with the body becoming virtually one of the few elements open to change, versatility and self-expression for women empowered to change their destinies, mould their image and emulate the widening ranks of high profile women, from the emancipated élite politicians and intellectuals to the actresses, singers and media personalities.

As a result, cosmetic advertising in middle-class magazines like *Grazia* and *Annabella* steadily increase in volume and variety throughout the decade, with even the most banal of products being imbued with an aura of sophistication and exclusivity. Beauty, grace and personal care dominate to the extent that even at the start of a new decade, an entire issue of *Grazia* is dedicated to beauty advice (23rd September, 1950), the cover exhibiting beauty parlour, bottles, jars and model. Significantly, the impassive, expressionless face with bandanna swathed hair of this image is reminiscent both of

Elizabeth Arden advertisements thirty years earlier and international Vichy advertisements fifty years later.

Beauty products continue to make their mark over the following years as the pharmaceutical, cosmetic and chemical industries expand, and an increasing number of advertising pages are dedicated to this category of products: the 1st May, 1955 issue of *Grazia* sees thirteen pages out of the seventy-six dedicated to cosmetics, although rarely in full-page format and concentrated in the magazine's initial and final pages, as dictated by custom. A mere four years later (18th October, 1959 issue), thirty-four pages out of one hundred and thirty-two are for cosmetics, many in full, three-quarter or two-third page format, with foreign multinationals omnipresent, as the industry strives to offer the middle-class Italian woman an ever-wider range of products to meet varying physical requirements throughout the day. Indeed, by decade end, the industry dominates magazine space, with an offering of cosmetics in practically each page of the institutional *Grazia*.

Cosmetics and beauty products become the protagonists of women's growing purchasing power, with range, availability and price amplifying as each producer attempts to carve out a distinctive brand image in an increasingly saturated market. The modern, mass concept of cosmetic use by women emerges. Previously costly products give way to accessible brands targeted at different income levels and consumer profiles. The underlying objective is to transform the Italian woman into a modern cosmetic user, as cosmetic-shy, first-time users are targeted along with the 'habituées' following fashion or searching for variation.

Despite the relative absence of the more exclusive pre-war brand names and product ranges like Elizabeth Arden, the developments signal a renewed attempt to tap into target markets by international cosmetic houses. An example may be found in a 1959 issue of *Grazia* (19th October) where the significant role played by this magazine as an advertising vehicle to women in the economic boom years is revealed. The magazine's

front inside cover (see Figure 6.14) sports an Elizabeth Arden advertisement in a strategic and eye-catching position in the magazine. Unlike the heady sophistication manifest in pre-war advertisements, the colourful advertisement is targeted at younger women with newly-vaunted economic independence and a desire for self-enhancement.

The youthful, bright colours of the autumn 'Pink Spark' range of cosmetics in the foreground of the model's features, see the added use of fascinating Anglo-Saxon brand names. The lack of translation does not appear simply as a means of establishing and reinforcing the producer's image, but forms part of a strategy aimed at increasing the brand's appeal, where the freedom of expression perceived as characteristic of girls from countries such as Britain and the USA influence purchase. Emulation, an essential aspect of this younger target market, is the basis for an advertisement founded on a radically different image from the 'casa e chiesa' stereotype and popular ideal for the contemporary Italian girl. The blonde model may be seen as the incarnate of the ideal even by the colour of her hair, but the advertisement goes further by displaying her bare shoulders and upper chest, in direct contrast to much of the more chaste advertising. Thus, whilst the use of the product range is highlighted by the model's heavily made-up facial features and upheld open hand, the advertisement relies more on the direct gaze with semi-pouting lips, a clear invitation to buy and to aspire to the model's product-enhanced beauty. The addressee is placed before a finished version of herself, with use of a system of referrals based not simply on rejection of the norm, and attraction of the exotically and daringly different, but also on a reverse reference to a model that could be also considered a typical Italian girl, given the appearance of the image in a conservative, middle-class, staid magazine. The 'sting' is thus neatly removed from the advertisement's 'tail', where the necessary dose of 'Northern' difference, with all the underlying behavioural considerations, is aptly balanced by integration of other such factors into the overall perception of the advertisement. The attempt to appeal to different age groups, albeit with the same vehicle, is confirmed eighteen pages later (see Figure 6.15) as the older, sophisticated woman thinks ('oggi mi ha guardato!') of the inevitable effect of the same producer's 'Crème Extraordinaire' night cream.

front inside cover (see Figure 6.14) sports an Elizabeth Arden advertisement in a strategic and eye-catching position in the magazine. Unlike the heavy sophistication manifest in pre-war advertisements, the colourful advertisement is targeted at younger women with newly-wanted economic independence and a desire for self-entertainment.

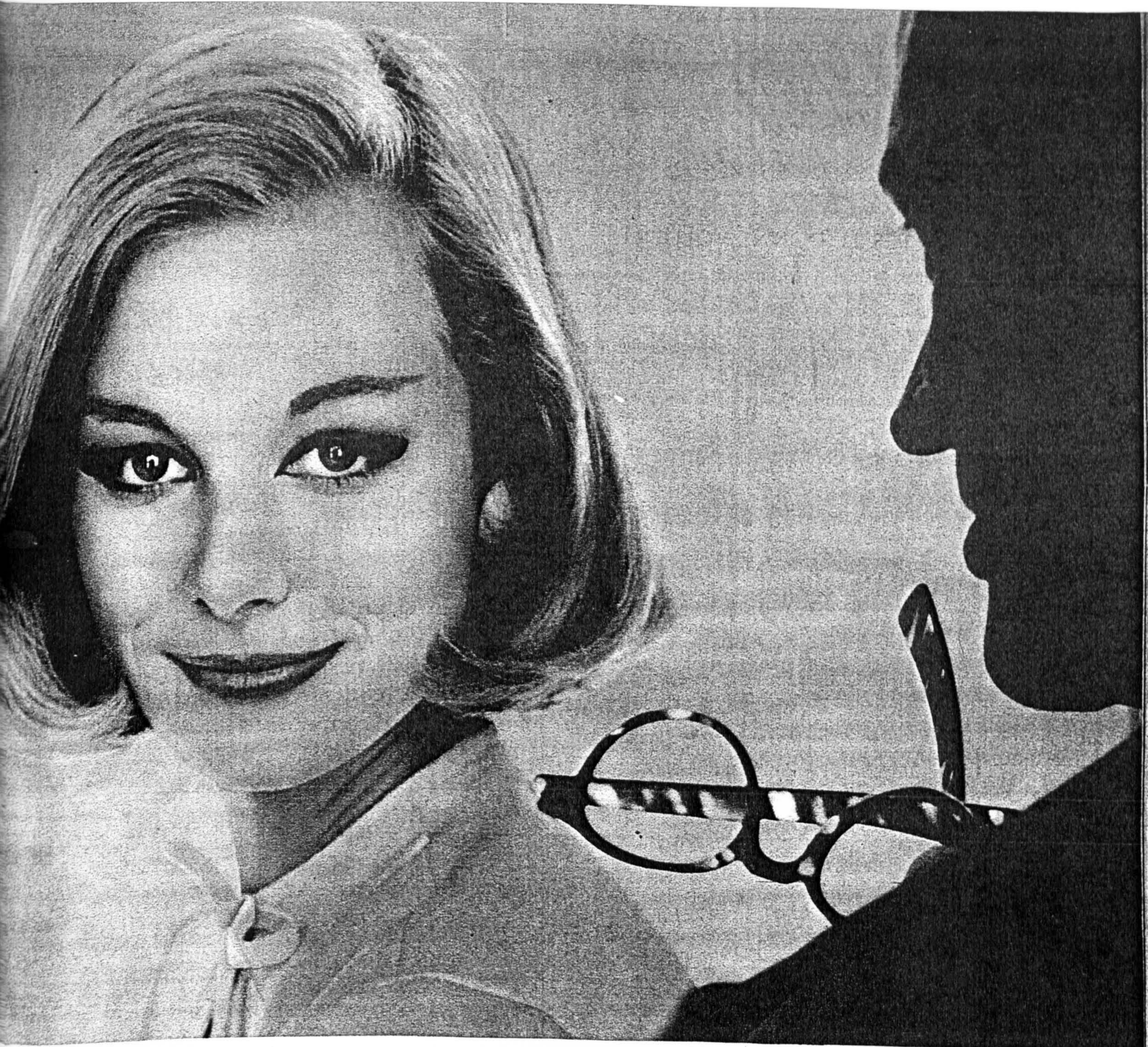
The youthful, bright colour of the autumn 'Pink Spark' range of cosmetics in the foreground of the model's features, see the added use of fascinating Anglo-Saxon brand names. The lack of translation does not appear simply as a means of establishing and reinforcing the product's image, but forms part of a strategy aimed at increasing the brand's appeal, where the freedom of expression perceived as characteristic of girls from countries such as Britain and the USA influence purchase. Emulation, an essential aspect of the younger target market, is the basis for an advertisement founded on a radically different image from the 'classy' stereotype and popular ideal for the contemporary Italian girl. The brand model may be seen as the incarnate of the ideal even by the colour of her hair, but the advertisement goes further by displaying her bare shoulders and upper chest, in direct contrast to much of the more classic advertising. Thus, whilst the use of the product range is highlighted by the model's heavily made-up facial features and upheld gaze, the advertisement relies more on the direct gaze with semi-pouting lips, a clear invitation to buy and to aspire to the model's product-enhanced beauty. The addresser is placed before a finished version of herself, with the use of a system of reference based not simply on rejection of the norm, and attraction of the erotically and dangerously different, but also on a reverse reference to a model that could be also considered a typical Italian girl, given the appearance of the image in a conservative, middle-class, mass magazine. The 'song' is thus neatly removed from the advertisement's 'tail', where the necessary dose of 'Nordic' difference, with all the underlying behavioural considerations, is aptly balanced by integration of other such factors into the overall perception of the advertisement. The attempt to appeal to different age groups, albeit with the same vehicle, is confirmed eighteen pages later (see Figure 6.15) as the older, sophisticated woman thinks ('oggi mi ha guardato') of the inevitable effect of the same product's 'Crema lattescente' night cream.



Pink Spark
il nuovo make-up per l'autunno
rosso per labbra e smalto Pink Spark
ombretto Autumn Smoke
base per cipria Veiled Radiance N. 2
cosmetico per ciglia Castano Scuro

Elizabeth Arden

6.14 ELIZABETH ARDEN. Pink Spark - *Grazia*, 1959
(on previous page)



Una crema da notte che penetra profondamente nell'epidermide, si assorbe completamente, provoca la rigenerazione delle cellule morte ed elimina l'acidità della pelle.

oggi mi ha guardato !

crème extrordinaire

Elizabeth Arden



6.15 ELIZABETH ARDEN. Oggi mi ha guardato!

- *Grazia*, 1959

(on previous page)

Unlike the former advertisement, a male silhouette is pictured appraising the translucent, ageless skin of the woman, as the physical attractiveness of youth is no longer taken for granted, but must be affirmed by male attention. The essential quality attached to male presence is an apt indicator of the importance of male approval, reaffirming women's perceived need for this approval. For the older woman, ability to attract male attention, despite the passing of time, is considered an essential quality to be deemed socially acceptable. The fact that women may not have required this form of recognition goes unacknowledged, as the underlying premise is based on well-defined and accepted social roles. The use of this common format in cosmetic advertisements is symptomatic of the importance attached to the 'male gaze', the consequential ability of the younger female to attract a partner, with marriage and children representing the socially most desirable objectives. The older female must fend off the loss of her looks. In terms of the language used, the headline acts as a recall to situations in which the older addressee could empathise, picturing herself at the centre of a desired gaze. The advertisement aptly uses the technique of the 'gaze', further reinforced by the headline, in which the potential male onlooker is materialised into the advertisement, while the woman's gaze is directed out at the addressee and not in the direction of the appraising gaze. Women's realisation of being looked upon, the automatic and almost inevitable acceptance of male gazing, and the fact that despite the nature of this gaze, women are not necessarily required to acknowledge it, is transmitted by this advertisement, as for those of other cosmetics to this very day, albeit with contemporary variations in addressee interpretation and advertiser intent. Recognition of 'the gaze' becomes superfluous, as women mould their image to the gaze of others, a fact catered for by the product's 'extraordinary' effects, highlighting absorbency and regenerating cells, common in many later advertisements.

The relative rarity of the two full-page Elizabeth Arden advertisements discussed above, their use of colour, photography and heightened content of strategic features is also an indication of the degree of investment required in advertising campaigns of this nature. This is frequently only an option for large multinationals, where apart from the physical point of sale, the principal vehicle for cosmetic advertising still remains the woman's

magazine. In fact, a 1958 survey on women's magazines (*Grazia*, *Annabella*, *Gioia*, *Novella*, *Eva*) by the advertiser's association (UPA) reveals the imposing presence of cosmetic advertisements in terms of overall advertising in women's magazines. Cosmetics and perfumes feature as the principal advertisers on quarter page formats. They are also the second most frequent advertisers after detergents for both half and full page formats. In terms of double page advertisements, cosmetics and perfumes dominate with a significant 71,443 advertisements, compared to 38,915 for prestige products, the second most significant category in terms of this format (Gennaro, 1960, p.74). The significance of advertisements of this nature also lies in the underlying message and image utilised. Compared to other advertisements where direct use and reference to the notion of make-up or cream as 'mask' is made (see Figure 6.16 which shows an advertisement appearing in *Grazia* in 1960), the very subtlety of these advertisements lie in their deliberate avoidance of direct reference to this element. Nevertheless, to all intents and purposes, in these advertisements, the gaze represents the mask that the woman holds up to her face, where an even higher degree of perfection is obtained, combined with the necessary neutrality of expression communicated as essential in every social situation. The image is the expression of contrasting social forces where a sense of originality and innovation is relayed in the attempt at marketing the product by transmitting a vision of women possessing an appropriate degree of physical attraction and femininity, without ever flouting or appearing to transcend the limits of convention. Most cosmetic advertisements encapsulate this message to varying degrees. Finally, from the addressee's perspective, and particularly from that of the younger addressee, a further interpretation may be given to such advertisements, where the mask advocated and adopted by women in society, allows the gradual exploration of personal life cycles and options behind the protection afforded by the neutrality and apparent lack of expression, so essential in the as yet static, conservative and uncertain environment dominating the lives of women (Piccone Stella, 1993; Crainz, 1998). The mask, thus, has the potential for becoming a constraint and an opportunity, with an apparently uniform appearance, behaviour and attitude transmitted by women, in order to negotiate the paradox of static social codes in a rapidly industrialising economy.

Helena Rubinstein

In 10 minuti
un viso fresco
e disteso

Una assoluta innovazione di
Helena Rubinstein: Skin Life Mask,
una maschera invisibile
che si applica facilmente, come una crema,
e si toglie con rapidità:
in soli 10 minuti corregge ed annulla
le imperfezioni estetiche della pelle.

In questa nuova biomaschera
sono gli ingredienti nutritivi di Skin Life,
che agiscono intensamente
negli strati profondi delle cellule.
L'uso anche frequente di Skin Life Mask
è quindi adatto per ogni tipo di pelle,
a qualunque età: la pelle secca
acquista una nuova elasticità, la pelle grassa
muta immediatamente il suo aspetto lucido
ed appannato in una sfumata trasparenza

In tutto il mondo Skin Life Mask
ha già conquistato il favore delle donne
i cui impegni sociali o professionali
esigono un volto irreprensibile,
senza eccesso di civetteria.

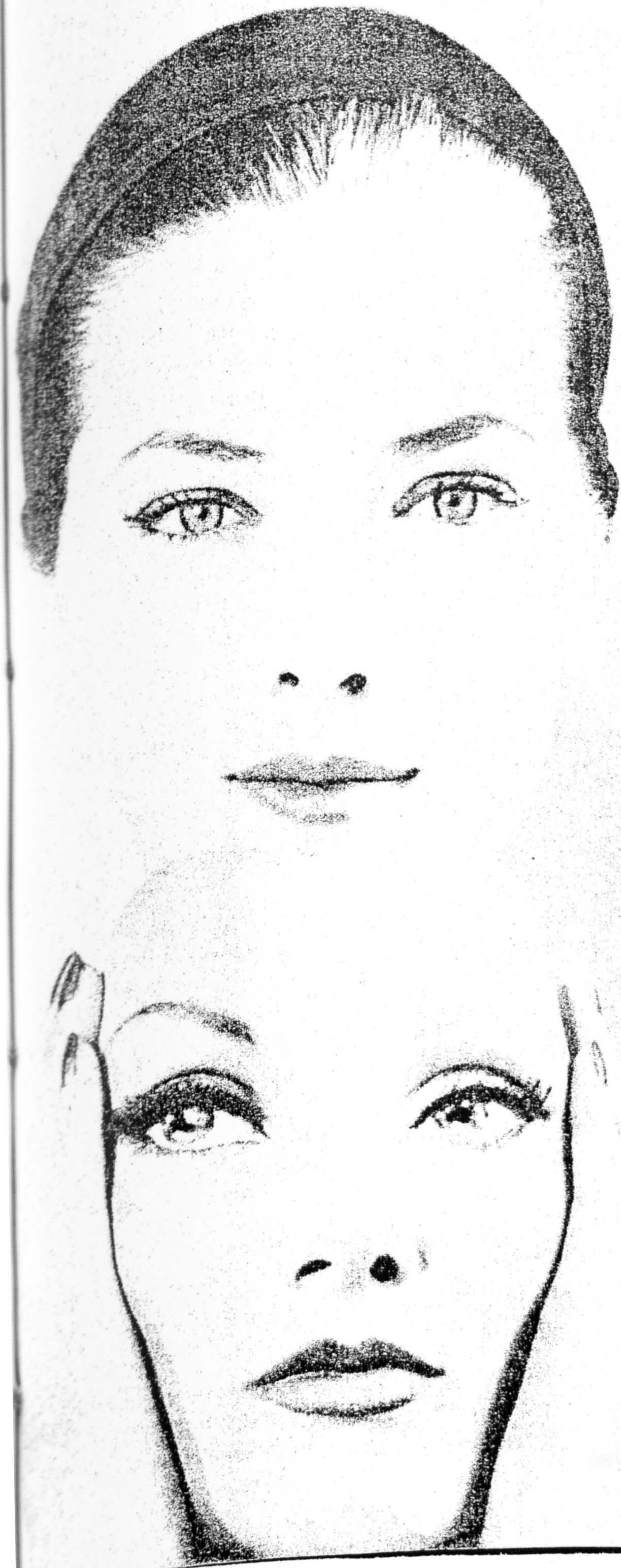
Skin Life Mask



Questa nuova maschera biologica
distende e illumina il vostro viso
per molte ore

Skin Life Mask è uno dei preziosi preparati
della serie **"TREE OF LIFE"**

Servizio Consultazioni Helena Rubinstein
Via Montecuccoli, 32 - Milano



6.16 HELENA RUBINSTEIN. Skin Life Mask

- *Grazia*, 1960

(on previous page)

The 1960s sees transformations completed by certain companies, such as Elizabeth Arden, with increasingly high-profile product ranges. This is evident in the re-emergence of brand names signalling exclusivity, spending power and social standing, in line with women's modified status, aspirations and budget. The powder compact 'Invisible Veil' appears spasmodically in half page or less advertisements throughout the 1950s, only making a compelling advertising appearance in 1960, in advertisements encompassing a page and a half, with a striking model whose perfect complexion is featured next to the powder compact container (*Grazia*, 6th March 1960), as cause and effect are highlighted even further by pink headline contrasting with the black and white image. In a later version, which appears in *Grazia* on the 23rd February, 1964 (see Figure 6.17), this product makes all facial blemishes disappear, and provides a uniform and perfect make-up. The advertisement is located on the attention-seeking right-hand page, in the initial advertising-dense pages of the issue. The image utilises the model's direct gaze, common to facial cosmetic advertisements, in attempting to establish empathy and direct contact with the addressee. The image dominates more than three-quarters of the page, focusing on the model's face, as the white ermine shawl covering of the head and upper body merges into the colour of the surrounding page. The significance of the diamond tiara, located in top-centre of the page, and providing an oval optical effect in symmetry with the model's face and chin, lies in the establishment of an indexical relationship between this object and the advertised product. The tiara and the soft, fur stole denote elements of wealth, exclusivity and elegance to be associated with the product, and further emphasised by a brand symbol reminiscent of a family crest. The explicit use of aristocratic reference markers is further reinforced by the use of diamonds, with cultural connotations in Western societies of eternal fidelity and enduring relationships. These signs provide the product with a unique exclusiveness, and infer an almost inevitable brand loyalty from its use. They can also be seen to act as purchasing catalysts, initially for consumers already belonging to a higher social category who merely restate their consumption identity, and to those upwardly mobile consumers, influenced by the inevitable 'Cinderella' syndrome, eager to join the former, and emulate an ideal by investing in the 'must have' products of the category.



la cipria Invisible Veil di
Elizabeth Arden
soffice leggera invisibile



Invisible Veil è la cipria più leggera che si possa immaginare, creata in 14 delicate gradazioni di colore. "Sport Light" è la tonalità che dona all'epidermide una luminosa sfumatura dorata e sottolinea la perfezione del maquillage. Nuova confezione da viaggio, elegante, praticissima, a chiusura ermetica.

6.17 ELIZABETH ARDEN. Invisible Veil

- *Grazia*, 1964

(on previous page)

The advertisement's language aims at convincing the addressee that natural features can be highlighted on the one hand and yet modified with the product to 'veil' imperfections. Use of the noun 'veil', reinforced by the adjective 'invisible' in the brand name, signals the cosmetic's ability to provide women with a constructed or modified beauty that appears a natural asset and not a readily obtainable good from a jar. The significance of this quality is reiterated by the adjectives 'soffice leggera invisible', reinforcing the notion of an imperceptible, yet ever-present constructed mask, allowing women to both cover their facial imperfections and adopt a 'veiled' countenance in different aspects of their lives. The use of these adjectives serves to clarify the meaning of the brand name, whilst the headline makes use of the distinctive product signature, associated with the logo, and recall of the product range's traditionally renowned qualities, for those already familiar with them. The language used in the body copy never directly exhorts purchase, but retains a poetic, soft quality, with the text functioning as relay in relation to the image, using carefully chosen lexis to reinforce the headline, in particular 'luminosa sfumatura dorata', and to recall the advertisement's colour and texture, from the page's brightness, to the model's golden complexion and the fur stole's lightness.

6.5 THE 1970s: REVIEWING THE 'BEAUTY MYTH': ELIZABETH ARDEN AND ITALIAN COSMETIC ADVERTISING.

The 1970s herald an identifiable change in consumption patterns, with a higher propensity to consume products previously regarded as luxuries, and only considered once the family budget expenses for car payments, petrol allowances, food and the home had been met. Advertising focuses on fashion, cosmetics, gadgets, fashionable household goods and alcoholic drinks linked to a particular lifestyle, all areas of prime interest to those producers targeting essentially middle-class female consumers with greater time and money to spend on shopping for these products. As a result, the middle-class readership built up by the majority of women's magazines becomes the perfect target for these products, as does the channel itself. Consumption increasingly departs from products for the home to emerge as 'hedonism' and pleasure, with the proliferation of

specialised 'boutiques' and designer labels, already making their appearance in Italian high streets and set to grow in the next decade. The period sees consumption roles and images re-evaluated with men, women and young people being profiled in increasingly wider and varied spectra, to the extent that even the more traditional woman's magazine *Grazia* features the occasional cover model in carefree, natural or active situations.

The importance of advertising to consumption levels is increasingly evaluated in the period, as studies analyse the relationship linking cause to effect, acknowledging that advertising levels increase where the potential for differentiating the product according to characteristics or price diminishes. There are significant implications for magazines as most of the products advertised adhere to this inverse relationship. Indeed the highest levels of advertising spending in periodicals from 1964 to 1972 features in the categories of food, personal hygiene, cosmetics, detergents and clothes, all high-profile advertising areas of difficult product differentiation in women's magazines (Campa, 1976, p.265). The only other significant growth area in terms of spending in the 1970s is for alcoholic drinks, thus corresponding to the search for a distinctive lifestyle increasingly associated with such products. The importance of advertising spending in women's magazines may be highlighted again by a greater emphasis attributed to magazines in general compared to the general press, with a rise in the former from 43.8% in 1964 to 53.55% in 1973 and a corresponding fall in the latter from 28.91% to 15.08% (Campa, 1976, p.237). The greater targeting of advertisements in terms of magazines, apart from the general press and radio channels, is a feature of this period of expanding advertising potential.

The greater leisure time available to the many women who had gained their idealised middle-class housewife status by the late 1960s, and to the others forced out of the labour market by successive economic downturns of the early 1970s, becomes a profit source for advertising in women's magazines. Authors like Lieta Harrison writing in the early 1970s (1972) equate this leisure time as the opportunity for the younger generation of married women to invest in more sexual pleasure, following women's greater awareness of their own needs and the general atmosphere created by the feminist

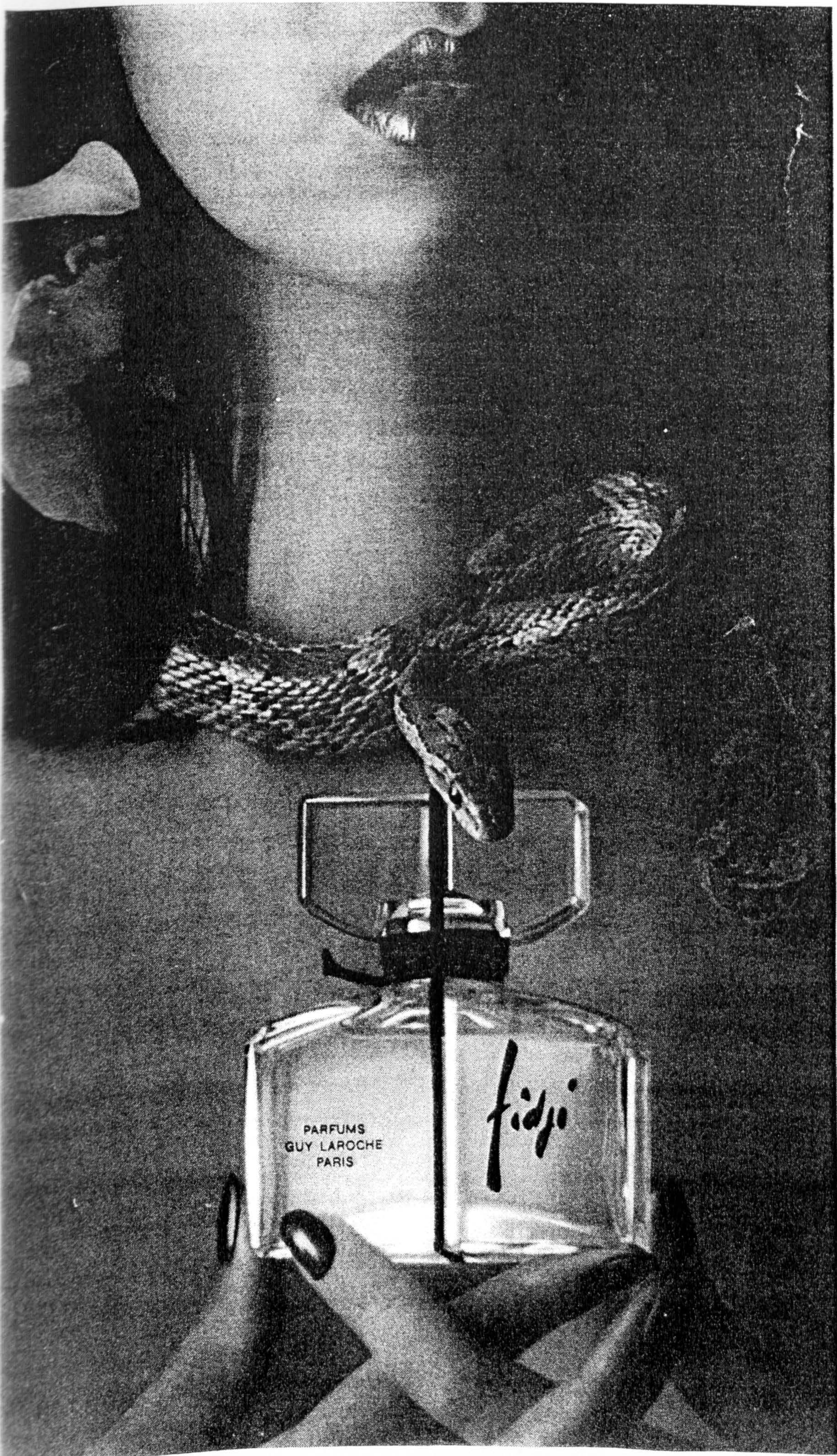
movement. The author's reductive view of the channels of communication as essentially preaching the consumption of greater quantities of sex in order to attain increased levels of happiness is reflected in some articles of women's magazines, whilst the role of advertising in propagating a sort of 'sexual leisure myth' is never fully investigated, and consequently appears significantly less defined despite their dominance of women's magazines. Advertisements for the more exclusive self-enhancing products, such as facial and body cosmetics and perfumes, use the sexual message implicitly, with nudity not utilised in those products whose message is traditionally based on notions of youthfulness, presence and sophistication, such as in Elizabeth Arden advertising. Where utilised, nudity features in particular settings or situations, without necessarily referring to sexual encounters or romance. Investment of time, effort and money is, therefore, more oriented towards self in the first instance, and others in the second, in a change from the types of advertising messages utilised previously.

Dedication to self is evident in advertisements such as those for Pikenz body cosmetics (*Grazia* 1974) that accentuate the body, while eliminating sexual reference in all but the model's profiled nudity, by concentrating on product use as the means of obtaining a youthful appearance. These are symptomatic of much of the multinational perfume and cosmetics advertising both of that period and into future decades, with the increasing use of global advertising strategies. The emphasis on 'la naturale sicurezza Pikenz' in the headline is symptomatic of advertisements that link the product's beneficial qualities to those obtained directly from nature, with use of the growing consumer consciousness of environmental problems, and the desire for a greater contact with nature. Reference to vegetable extracts and seaweed reassure the addressee of the natural contents and subsequent results to be obtained. The female body and its parts are the essential ingredients of such memorable multi-domestic advertisements as those for Fidji perfume (*Grazia* 1974), where sand, sea, female silhouette and bottle merge as one on a sandy beach. The promised sexual desirability for the addressee associates the product with the atmosphere of the exotic, where the French language headline 'La femme est une île. Fidji est son parfum' reinforces the sense of sensuality associated with French perfumes,

and allows a world brand strategy to be used. As noted by Wendy Chapkis, the fantasy of travelling to exotic lands becomes an ingredient of advertisements, especially in certain products: 'Perfumes, cosmetics and certain fashion lines promise the look of the exotic for those unable or unwilling to actually travel to distant countries' (1986, p.57).

Likewise, 1970 heralds the arrival of the Japanese cosmetic brand Shiseido in middle-class Italian women's magazines, as women are encouraged to associate the cosmetics to the many mental images, and cultural concepts, associated with 'the land of the rising sun'. *Grazia* (21st June, 1970) offers a complimentary writing kit, as a double-page advertisement is followed by a timely and detailed editorial on the cosmetic range. Reinforced by foreign travel, increasingly accessible to the middle classes, where the experience matched or exceeded the fantasy, use of the exotic was to remain a constant theme well into the next decade. Indeed, by 1980 (*Annabella*, 9th October), Guy Laroche is globally advertising its Fidji perfume with direct use of an oriental model, as the consumer is encouraged to discover paradise - 'le parfum des paradis retrouvés - through consumption and adherence to the 'oriental dream' (see Figure 6.18).

Although overall body silhouettes are the stuff of advertising, the nude woman embracing herself in the most narcissistic of poses is used time and again as a sign of total self-contemplation and leisure, such as in Revlon's 1971-1972 advertisements for breast 'Contour Drops' (see Figure 6.19) and Pond's depilatory 'Depil' cream (*Grazia*, 1976). Similarly the use of body parts in a fragmented way enacts the opposite strategy of focusing attention on a particular feature, such as in the Maybelline 1971-1972 cosmetic advertisements, with women usually more liable to be used as commodities and physically 'cropped' compared to men. The increasing use of the unclothed, segmented female body is seen to reflect the reinvention of the concept of beauty for women, by utilising a range of images and messages targeted to the middle/upper-middle-class range of consumers, whose higher level of education, penetration of the employment sector, and sense of dissatisfaction, sparked off by the second feminist wave, sees a fall in the purchase of women's magazines in Italy from the late 1960s and throughout the 1970s.



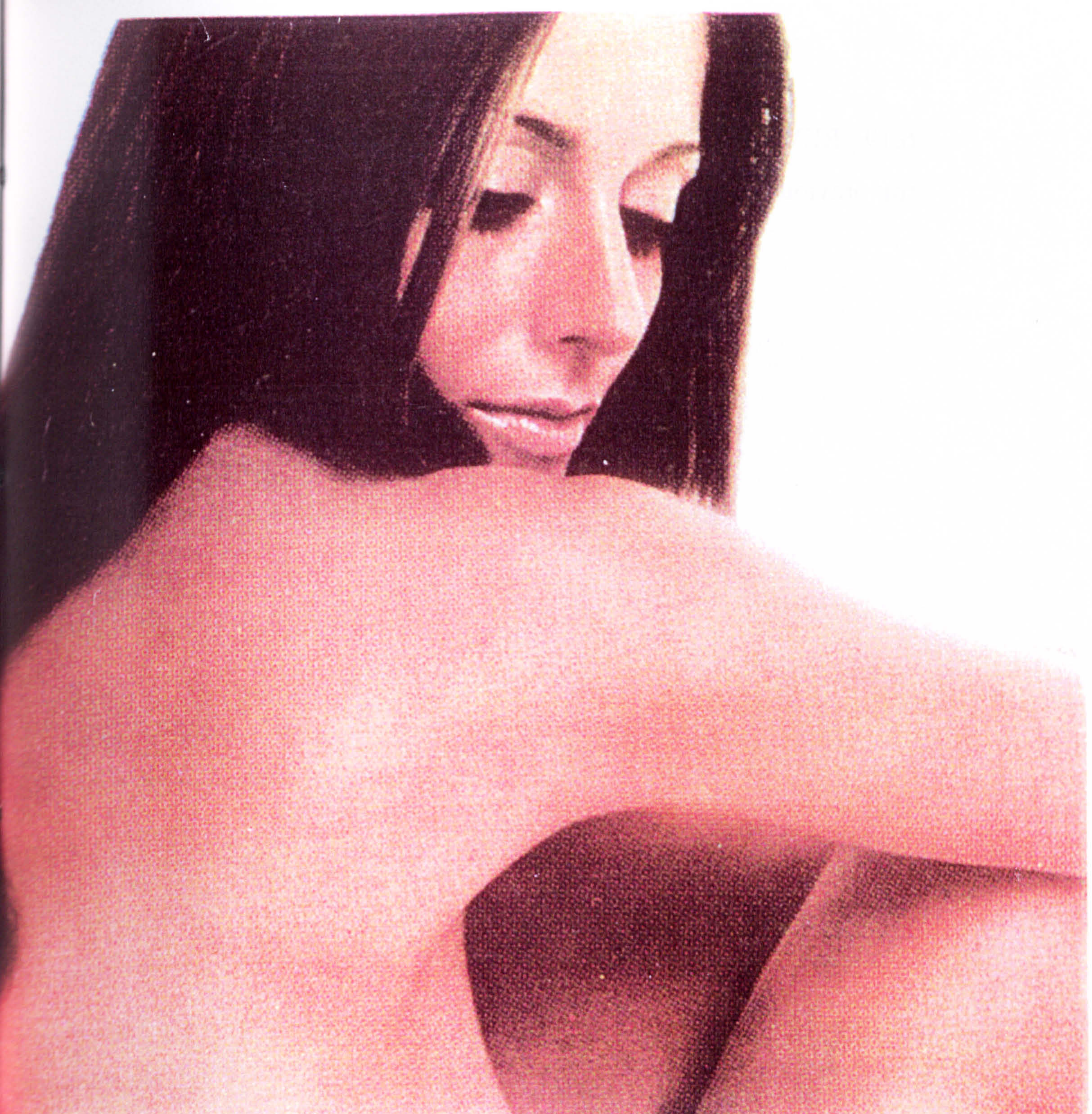
Guy Laroche

*le parfum
des paradis
retrouvés*

fidji

Paris

6.18 GUY LAROCHE. Fidji - *Annabella*, 1980
(on previous page)



Un viso bello non è tutto... tu vuoi di più!

Revlon presenta 'Eterna 27' Contour Drops per il seno

Qualcosa di assolutamente nuovo per la donna che vuole primeggiare.
Un vero trattamento di bellezza per il seno. E' la moda di oggi che lo impone.
Mancava. Ora esiste. Nuovo «Eterna 27» Contour Drops per il seno
con Progenitin, lo stesso prezioso ingrediente della famosa «Eterna 27» Cream.

Queste gocce dorate massaggiate delicatamente ridonano e conservano al seno
il suo tono giovane e fresco.

Il tuo seno è adesso splendidamente curato come il tuo viso.
Nelle gocce di bellezza «Eterna 27» tutto è diverso: dal modo di usarle
(una goccia per volta) all'elegante flacone che le contiene

Queste gocce dorate entrano così nel rituale della tua bellezza.

*Se vuoi conservare a tutto il corpo una levigata morbidezza usa la nuova «Eterna 27»
Super Enriched Lotion per il corpo (contiene Progenitin).*



6.19 REVLON. Contour Drops - *Annabella*, 1971
(on previous page)

In Italy as elsewhere, the attempt at overcoming what is seen as a threat to consumption by an international fashion and cosmetics industry suffering from the 'backlash' effects of these changes, results in a reinforcement of both the direct and indirect advertising conducted in women's magazines. It also leads to the formulation of 'the beauty myth', that according to Naomi Wolf is based on rapidly growing youth and thinness industries:

In the breakdown of the feminine mystique and the rebirth of the women's movement, the magazines and advertisers of that defunct religion were confronted with their own obsolescence.

The beauty myth, in its modern form, arose to take the place of the feminine mystique, to save magazines and advertisers from the economic fallout of women's revolution.

The beauty myth simply took over the function of Friedan's 'religion' of domesticity. The terms have changed but the effect is the same. Of the women's culture of the 1950s Friedan lamented that 'there is no other way for a woman to be a heroine' than to 'keep on having babies'; today, a heroine must 'keep on being beautiful' (Wolf, 1990, p.49).

The take-over of one ideology from the other, as emphasised by Wolf, denies the traditional role of beauty and toiletry products in women's magazines. Indeed, in many ways it is difficult to agree with Wolf, given that the role of these products would appear to be insignificant, if not completely absent, prior to the late 1960s. Indeed, the historically limited view of beauty to the post-war period adopted by the author leaves much unsaid, with the beauty myth apparently only invented by international fashion and beauty industries in the wake of the feminist backlash to consumption and the ideological construction of female image. A reading of advertising in women's magazines, and in particular of Italian magazines, indicates the contrary. The modern cosmetic concept of beauty has been formed throughout the century in a continuous process of development, and change, in line with changing visions of the female body and face (Thesander, 1997). Furthermore, already by the inter-war years, the 'beauty

myth' emerges in a 'modern form' with prolific use of advertising, and selling techniques, epitomised by the expanding department stores, cosmetic and hairdressing parlours, (Winship, 2000). In Italy a similar development is under way, with the establishment of up-market 'La Rinascente' chain stores by the Bocconi brothers in the 1920s, and the subsequent opening of 35 of the more economical 'Upim' stores by 1934 (Montaldo, 1966, p.104). Modern make-up, hair care and fashion provide a sense of empowerment, especially for younger women, as they became the sign of 'social and industrial transformation' (Winship, 2000, p.30). This empowerment is ignored by authors like Wolf, whose limited vision in many ways minimises the developments of the immediate post-war years, with penetration of foreign markets by large cosmetic and toiletry manufacturers, and a sense of renewal and change provided to European women whose memories of suffering and privation were beginning to abate. Especially relevant to the middle-class woman whose access to personal enhancing products had always been assured, the 'beauty myth' may be seen as an on-going process, and not merely an late post-war industry inspired innovation, so much so that when industrial cosmetics are not available, women resort to a number of other strategies to enhance their appearance.

In perusing the advertisements of various years by such large concerns as Elizabeth Arden and Helena Rubinstein, the similarity to modern advertisements is striking in terms of the depth, nature and content of the language used. Modern advertisements focus on the body to a greater extent given the growth in middle-class purchasing power that companies attempt to channel towards an ever-widening range of products, and as such are a development on earlier advertisements, whose emphasis was on the only socially and culturally really visible, and acceptable, part of the body: the face. The 'Nude Look' offered up by Vogue in 1969 (Wolf, 1990) allows international cosmetic producers to develop advertising strategies that place the body at the centre of advertisements, frequently with some form of clothing or in silhouette. Compared to advertisements for other products such as beer, furniture or petrol, that by image or language may be considered far more detrimental to women's sense of self, the 'new' focus on youth and thinness, is instrumental, according to Wolf, in limiting women's

access to power in the workplace, and in enacting a profitable and timely 'transfer of guilt', so that women's 'sense of liberation from the older constraints of fashion are countered by a new and sinister relationship to their bodies' (Wolf, 1990, p.50). Once more it is difficult to agree with Wolf's basic assumption that an emphasis on youth and thinness dates from this period, to the extent that only women in this period suffer from extreme guilt in not conforming to the ideal. The fact that a focus on youth may be seen to date as far back as the turn of the century in Italian women's magazines, and thinness to become a focus of attention, with the 'garçonne' look of the post World War One years, are indicative of wider social and cultural developments that producers simply capitalise on. The examples are numerous: the 1912 issue of *La Donna* (5th September) contains advertisements for 'Thé Svelto' that assures women they can 'dimagrire senza pericolo è ringiovanire' (see Figure 4.2 in Chapter 4), and a large advertisement calling on women: 'Signore! Se desiderate conservare sempre fresca e vellutata la vostra pelle, far sparire le macchie di rossore dal viso e diminuire le rughe premature, fate uso, per la toeletta, nel bagno e per massaggio della rinomata Acqua Antiqua Delizioso Profumo'. Corroborated by slim figures in the fashion and society pages, such advertisements increase in size, frequency and importance, to the extent that by the 1930s, youth, beauty and thinness, and even a degree of nudity, become associated with a number of other products, from elastic body roll-on corsets and toiletries, to a variety of foods. Unlike the conclusions drawn by Wolf, who attributes a primary role to the male-dominated cosmetic and fashion industries in moulding the modern 'beauty myth', the fact that these players are merely one of many in a wider socio-cultural and economic game absorbing women and the development of their image, does beg the question of whether the feminist movement, and women's new-found sense of liberation, is yet simply another social development of this century to be strategically exploited by expanding multinational concerns in accordance with the market-driven profit motive.


Use of feminist discourse in advertisements targeted at the 1970s woman becomes a source of revenue as one cosmetic company after the other 'jumps on the bandwagon', promising the sort of self-realisation that the consumer appears to want. As a result,

advertising content expands further in women's magazines, matched by an enlargement of page size and number, and the use of cosmetic advertisements on single and double pages. By 1972 (*Annabella*, 7th March), Max Factor 'Fresh Fruit Lip Glosses', in a double page advertisement, features a close-up of the model on the right-hand page, with a traditional white crochet cascading shawl on one side of her face, and a baby doll on the left-hand page. The headline 'Le bambole non sognano tu vivi Max Factor' is followed by the text and the slogan 'Max Factor Ti Esprime':

Tu non sei una bambola: tu vivi, hai preso coscienza di te stessa, della tua personalità, dei tuoi sentimenti. E il tuo stile di vita è nella tua immagine libera. Così scegli la "tua" libertà fra decine di collezioni e centinaia di prodotti Max Factor.

As evident from the slogan, women are encouraged to express individuality and self-realisation through product use, and to link their identity to beauty product consumption, with a promise of personal fulfilment even when it is only tenuously connected to reality.

The image of woman as audacious, strong and adventurous, similarly finds its way into advertising discourse as seen in a 1972 Elizabeth Arden advertisement (*Annabella*, 25th April), where text and image combine in a successful formula for the spring 'Razzle Dazzle' make-up range (see Figure 6.20). The actual products are notably absent due to the greater visual impact to be had from the image utilised in this way, and the difficulty inherent in adequately portraying within advertisements the many products pertaining to different cosmetic ranges under the same brand name. The text has a headline quite indicative of the times, with the use of the English term 'make-up' rather than the Italian 'trucco' to denote the foreign nature of the product, the consequential attraction of difference, and the particular appeal deriving from country of origin, factors present in the consumer's mental 'make-up'. The term also immediately qualifies the nature of the product offering, so that the addressee is aware of the fact that reference is made to make-up, and not to other facial or body products produced by this same manufacturer.



**il make-up
che infuria**

Facciamola questa pazzia di primavera, un'avventura colorata che sta infuriando in tutto il mondo e ci travolgerà tutte, noi... e i nostri uomini. Razzle-Dazzle è trucco e pittura, brillante audace bellissimo. E' un make-up che va giocato a fondo, con le unghie e le labbra, le guance e gli occhi.

**RAZZLE
DAZZLE**

Il make-up di primavera in quattro sfumature di colore coordinate.

Elizabeth Arden

6.20 ELIZABETH ARDEN. Razzle Dazzle

- *Annabella*, 1972

(on previous page)

This allows the addressee to correctly link the text and image to the particular product, and arrive at the advertisement's overall meaning in accordance with a personal, yet guided, interpretation. The headline uses the verb 'infuriare', that beckons an interpretation based on equating the cosmetics with the latest fashions that are 'all the rage', thus establishing an important link between wearing the right clothes and using the right make-up in the consumer's mind. The headline also insinuates an active effect on the wearer who becomes more attractive and fashionable as a result of the product's transformation. The 'dazzling' effect, as denoted by the brand name itself, and by the verb, is also actively invoked in those who gaze upon the woman, as their emotions are left for the reader to interpret, albeit within the constraints of surprise, astonishment and admiration of the wearer's audacity, as implied by an overall reading of the text.

The link between image and body copy is self-contained, as the addressee automatically and continually refers from one to the other to complete the message. The body copy is phrased initially as an open invitation, with use of the verb 'fare' in the first person plural command form, to indicate common behaviour, a deliberate attempt to establish empathy between addresser and addressee with the all encompassing 'Let's ...' form. This tool allows the addressee to be absorbed into the addresser's frame of reference, and into the message content, as use of the imperative implies a reality that she cannot help but see, and, therefore, participate in. Use of the nouns 'pazzia' and 'avventura' describe a state of affairs that is contemporary and being experienced by women who are increasingly becoming protagonists in a changing society, reinforced by the verbs 'infuriare' and 'travolgere', where a sense of being overwhelmed by developments and an inevitable involvement are communicated. Mental association with the effects deriving from product use, at a personal and social level, is established by use of the indefinite adjectives 'tutto' with reference to a world-wide phenomena, and 'tutte' with reference to all women. The link is thus extended from private to social, from individual to community, as Italian women are encouraged to envision other women experiencing a similar 'adventure' elsewhere, and consequently, utilising the advertised brand. Implicit reference to the feminist movement is also contained in this part of the body copy, albeit

concluding with the tell-tale 'noi ... e i nostri uomini', as the overwhelming effects of the changes affecting women are aptly adapted in the message to include men, who are subject, not simply to mutated conditions, but to women's new audacity. The male element is essential to the message, allowing the product range to be seen not merely for personal freedom of expression, given that the next logical step would have been to throw out the make-up bag, as advocated by many feminists, but for satisfying male visual, sensory and social pleasure. As participants in women's newly discovered freedom, the male's centrality in women's attention and approval-seeking behaviour is retained. Although mitigated by the possessive adjective 'nostri' to show empathy between addresser and addressee, the male gazer remains the cornerstone of the discourse and thus, of women's lives, over and beyond other interests. Strategic use of this concept in the advertisement allows the focus to be moved from the wider social context to the personal, whilst making use of language and image based on the former, particularly from the women's movement.

The body copy proceeds to transmit the product's essential qualities, that extend beyond the limited concept of applying make-up to become 'pittura', an artistic activity requiring skill and ability, that allows the addressee to discover a sense of worth and self-realisation, in the process of beautifying herself, and in obtaining the desired result. Reflected in the use of the adjectives 'brillante audace bellissimo', women are encouraged to dare to be beautiful in a different and unusual way, by presenting a fashionable and personalised mask on the most exposed parts of their bodies: face and hands. Use of the expression 'giocare a fondo' is strategic in reinforcing the fact that all physical features must be masked to the utmost, whilst drawing upon the linguistic notion of 'getting to the bottom' of an issue, an essential aspect of the women's movement, and one that characterised many of the developments of the early 1970s. Indeed, use of such expressions, calling on women to discover themselves, plumb their personal depths, and express their pent-up emotions, reflects an attempt by advertisers in Italy, as elsewhere, to exploit yet another social development for profit. The inevitability of such advertising strategies throughout time is linked as much to the profit motive, as

to business survival, despite evident ideological implications. Notably, even Elizabeth Arden, founder of the cosmetic firm in turn of the century New York, participated actively in social events in order to promote her products. Her vision, like that of her rival Helena Rubinstein, was based on the use of cosmetics as a means of obtaining the freedom that women were battling for, as well as improving health through a regular beauty routine. As Elizabeth Wilson notes: 'Elizabeth Arden, no suffragist herself, once joined a suffrage march in the hope of attracting customers - for at this period in New York fashionable society and feminism mingled' (1985, p.110).

The less confident, self-aware and socially-conscious reader may be drawn into a commercial web composed of complacent editorials, and high doses of advertising, that do little to increase self-esteem, or to project the consumer beyond her individualised existence, by presenting a varied social picture, or by communicating with a lexis not oriented towards taking advantage of social developments at all costs. The link created between a particular image, form of identity, and social presence, is thus established in the minds of middle-class consumers, who see a version of themselves in all their femininity as the means of fully expressing their identity, and yet of not being fully associated to such developments as the feminist one, where the socially prevalent image of the feminist was not seen as meeting traditional canons of beauty and elegance. Ironically, make-up advertised with the use of linguistic forms based on those used in the press, and by popular movements themselves, does not provide the vaunted individual expression of self and personal identity, but merely the latest fashionable, mass market version of femininity. In the cosmetics sector, this lack of personal differentiation through product use becomes increasingly the case as one progresses down the price-quality-brand image spectrum towards the supermarket stand, where the mask, and the consequential mass identity provided, is within everyone's reach, frequently without the middle-class advertising illusion of self-expression and freedom from constraint.

The image utilised draws on these concepts and others, by exhibiting a model, whose facial expression and physical pose allow the addressee to associate the product with the

concept of self-expression and freedom. The prolific, bright make-up redirects the reader to the lexical notions of painting and mask in the text, demonstrating the range's self-enhancing properties, whilst the semi-nude chest, playfully covered by the open hand, effectively sexualises the image, as do the red lips and nails, and fish-net stocking and the knee bent up. The image is as far as anything the addressee might expect from a women's movement participator, or even from a regular middle-class Italian woman, and in so doing, effectively defuses any notions of active involvement in social developments contained in the body copy. Women's primary objective is to 'dazzle', as emphasised by the detail of falling orange curl over one eye, extravagant cloth cap and the overall impression. The advertisement opposes feminist notions of fashion and beauty as subordination and oppression, by framing diametrically opposite concepts as highly desirable, within a text and image that communicate in a different way with the addressee. The significance of concepts of self-expression and identity found in clothes and cosmetics advertisements, is that they parallel the way women experience fashion and make-up as enriching their frequently limited and restricted lives. They represent elements that women have some control over, which provide a sense of self-worth. As Elizabeth Wilson notes:

Fashionable dressing is commonly assumed to have been restricted for women and to have confined them to the status of ornamental or the sexual chattel. Yet it has also been one of the ways in which women have been able to achieve self-expression, and feminism has been as simplistic - and as moralistic - as most theories in its denigration of fashion (1985, p.13).

Opinions of this nature are laudable in attempting to reach beyond the negative opinions of cosmetic advertising as anti-feminist, by demonstrating the importance of issues such as identity and self-expression, often eliminated from writers' views of advertising throughout the 1970s and 1980s. Typical is Mary Talbot's view that:

Cosmetics advertising and the glamour that surrounds it present potential consumers with dominant standards of feminine appearance. Liberation through

self-indulgence ... required conformity to these standards... women's self-esteem being dependent on male approval. Cosmetics advertising offering self-indulgence as liberation was, and is, vigorously anti-feminist (2000, p.181).

The importance of the woman as consumer in her own right, able to read into an advertisement, provide a personal interpretation, and reach beyond the stereotypes, or the deliberate exploitation of feminist language and concepts in advertisements is given very little emphasis, whilst the many interpretations open to the various middle-class addressees are similarly negated.

The two further points worthy of note in the advertisement relate to the model's face and jacket. The visual emphasis attributed to the face sees it located in the reader's optical centre, and devoid of distracting hair, as the reader is encouraged to mentally visualise the effects of the product range on her own face. The use of the sober, dark green jacket, with plain buttons on the cuff, complements the audacity and sexual playfulness on which the image is based. The jacket is rapidly incorporated into fashionable women's wear from the end of the nineteenth century, inspired by the male original to the extent that by the pre-war period, the birth of 'separates', made up of a long jacket and skirt, becomes the ideal dress uniform for the increasing numbers of women working in offices, stores and schools. Mass production of clothing becomes a reality by World War Two, allowing the 'haute couture' designs to spread down through the social classes. The suit marks a significant development in modern wear for women from the 1930s, and throughout the war years, denoting style, elegance and adaptation to all occasions, with use of accessories to lend allure to severe styles. Use of the suited jacket in the advertisement, therefore, may be seen to denote a masculinity tempered by substantial doses of femininity, to the extent that the jacket is completely feminised, symbolically representing an acquisition of power by women who are still able to retain their femininity in society. As the masculine jacket finds its way onto the modern woman's clothes rack, the 1950s Chanel suit is displaced in favour of a jacket that becomes associated with the new army of women entering the workplace in white-collar

professions. The use of the jacket may be seen as a way of targeting this professional woman, as well as the middle-class housewife, given that the magazine's target reader is to be prevalently found in these two categories, and that the division between femininity of a more traditional ilk, and the professional image befitting a working woman, has not entered the conflict phase that emerges in later years.

According to Naomi Wolf (1990), the working woman's 'no win' situation is increasingly characterised, from this period, by the need to be professional, whilst being in daily conflict with her wardrobe, given the pre-conceived notions of gender roles, and rapidly developing concepts of appearance, that exist in the workplace. Indeed, the pressure felt by women to conform to greater beauty and youthfulness requirements are seen as escalating, in view of added pressure to conform to diverse workplace visions of acceptable female dress, make-up and physical presentation that decree a woman's ability to keep her job, despite the absence of similar pressures for men. 'Dress for success' thus becomes the working woman's mantra of the 1980s. Once more it is difficult to agree with those authors, such as Wolf, who overly generalise phenomena of this nature. Whether such purse-draining pressure may be considered uniformly across all Western countries, given varied employment, trade union, cultural and social factors, is debatable and would require detailed analysis of women's real access to white collar employment over time and the factors influencing their workplace experience. Indeed, use of the jacket in the Elizabeth Arden advertisement is significant at a time when the middle-class Italian career woman is still largely restricted to a number of socially, and culturally, defined roles in the service and education sectors, or confined to an enforced domesticity following the economic recession of the early 1970s.¹

Domesticity emerges as a double-edged sword, based increasingly on transnational notions of beauty and fashion that surface in the middle-class woman's magazine, and in advertising, emphasising beauty, elegance and sexual attraction. Evident in the Elizabeth Arden advertisement by use of a garment that successfully communicates this combination, and the notion of audacious modernity, the importance of targeting the

working woman, albeit in a sexual format, seeps into advertising by mildly hinting at employment, but also at a femininity that transcends the limits of convention. Use of this garment is relatively rare in advertisements, as it denotes a measure of androgyny, or tempered femininity, that advertisers generally scrambled to avoid for such feminine products as cosmetics, at a time when women's magazines were making every possible effort to recall notions of supreme femininity in women influenced by a national, and international, movement based on a number of contrasting concepts. The significance of the stances adopted by the movement at large, and by individual feminists such as Gloria Steinem (1983; 1995) whose famous saying - 'A woman needs a man like a fish needs a bicycle' - expresses a widespread feeling, and is certainly not lost on advertisers, women's magazines and international corporations alike (Steinem 1997).

In conclusion, the importance of self-indulgence, and taking time to care for one's appearance, is the core message of all these advertisements in middle to upper-middle-class magazines, especially where the models contemplate the results obtained through use of the product. Advertising by international companies thus becomes more accentuated on the woman's body in the 1970s, as cultural and social taboos disintegrate, matched by ever more advertisements for age-reducing creams, laden with technical terminology and even blatant untruths. The possibility of adapting advertisements to an international magazine reader is increasingly appealing for those products whose advertising could be based on common social movements, such as the environmental, feminist and social ones of the late 1960s, as well as on the notion of the Americanised consumer. This latter element grows important in Italy in a period when basic economic needs have been met, and women are more readily enticed towards spending on goods not classified as essentials, but that could be increasingly portrayed as such. The percentage of advertising carried out in periodicals compared to total media spending is indicative of this trend, with a continuous rise in spending in toiletries, cosmetics, hygiene/aesthetic products throughout the late 1960s, and early 1970s, with the latter two categories representing between 81-89% and 69-78% of total spending in periodicals (Campa, 1976, p.273). Building regular product use as a vehicle to brand loyalty

becomes the means of capturing important, yet elusive target markets. The role of the multinationals in this period continues to increase, creating a form of cultural convergence based on uniform advertising strategies across nations, frequently with minimal variation to meet language, and social differences, in European countries that are already subject to a growing socio-cultural uniformity caused by the multiple influences of the cinema, the mass media, North American imports and multinationals.

As a result, the 1980s herald an even more narcissistic vision, as dedication to self dominates in advertisements for body cosmetics that accentuate the body, whilst eliminating sexual reference in all except the model's nudity, by concentrating on product use as the means of obtaining a perennially youthful appearance. Such advertisements are symptomatic of much multinational advertising of perfume, and cosmetics, of the period, and into future decades, as global advertising strategies begin to be increasingly used by producers from the late 1960s. In cosmetic advertisements, and in those for facial products in particular, little change appears to take place, although techniques expand to include not simply notions of traditional femininity based on male attention as in the above case study, but also liberated femininity based on the workplace. However, as may be expected, the latter remain the exception, with the woman as a narcissistic unrequited, envious dreamer remaining the focus of a socially-constructed gaze.

ENDNOTE TO CHAPTER 6

1 A brief analysis of the employment and education possibilities available to Italian women from the 1960s, sees women limited to a continually shrinking number of jobs, more often than not in the service sectors and in low-wage work. Working-class women are employed in factories, and those with an upper secondary level of education as secretaries, typists and clerks in the tertiary sector, with few ever reaching positions of power in their chosen profession without some form of personal sacrifice. An analysis of education statistics (ISTAT, 1987) provides an idea of the education levels reached by women in the 1960s, and their resulting employment possibilities in the following years and in the 1970s. 1961-70 sees the number of female secondary school students more than double to 510,000 from 222,000 of the previous decade, although part of a general trend applicable to both sexes. University-level education as an index of social progress shows a different trend, with a marked increase in the number of women attending from 42,000 in the 1950s to 122,000 in the 1960s. This three-fold increase may be seen as an indication of women's changing role in society, from predominantly low-wage workers or carers, to white-collar earners, as well as an increasing self-awareness of personal potential in a changing society that appears to offer greater opportunities to all. Nevertheless, it is also an indicator of the fact that women are often forced to continue in education in order to aspire to some form of future employment, that their male counterparts could obtain with lower qualifications. Indeed, the period is also characterised by laws that appear to allow women equal employment opportunities: the 1956 equal pay law (no.741), the 1963 law (no.7) guaranteeing women the right not to be dismissed upon marriage, and notably the 1966 law (no.66) that sanctions women's rights to all forms of employment in the public sector, including the judiciary, but not the police and armed forces (Sarogni, 1995, pp.203-4). In occupational terms, the Left does much to further women's equality, whilst still leaving cultural concepts of gender and women's roles very much intact, so much so, that the advent of women's demands are seen as undermining the stability of the family, the Church and the State. The 1970 divorce law, the 1971 working mother's law, the 1975 family reform and 1977 employment equality laws are paradoxically amongst the most significant developments of a period characterised by recession and the middle-class woman's newly-enforced domesticity.

CHAPTER 7: LOW BUDGET COSMETIC REMEDIES - PALMOLIVE COLGATE LUX

7.1 INTRODUCTION: EARLY TOILETRY ADVERTISEMENTS FOR SELF-ENHANCEMENT AND HYGIENE IN ITALIAN WOMEN'S MAGAZINES

In the pages of women's magazines the presence of another category of products is notable, signifying historical change and socio-economic differentiation characterising the magazines through time. The range of soap, toothpaste, shampoo and low budget cosmetics produced by expanding multinationals under various brand names, emerges as a decisive aspect of the advertising conducted in the magazines, and undoubtedly contributes towards expanding the notion of personal care and hygiene in a way that transcends that of more exclusive brand ranges. Furthermore, although many of the products may be regarded as essentially hygiene products, they are marketed in a number of ways, with specific use of image and language that reaches beyond this limited vision of their use, and that forms part of a long-running international campaign in some cases.

At the turn of the century, the fortnightly *Margherita. Giornale delle signore italiane* is representative of the reading material of women of the upper, and upper-middle classes, the most significant in terms of purchasers of branded goods. The magazine contains a variety of advertisements ranging from the typical to the unique: pharmaceutical products, beauty-enhancing concoctions (breast, depilatory and body creams) are advertised alongside silks, fabrics, busts, olive oil, articles for the home, furniture and Parisian shops with the latest from the undisputed capital of European fashion. The attempt at penetrating consumer consciousness with particular brand names, at a time of limited differentiation, sees the repetitiveness of many advertisements, and use of a limited number of large, illustrated advertisements by companies such as Bertelli, one of the most significant precursors of the advertising to be used for hygiene and beauty products in future years. A particular case is that of an almost full-page advertisement for 'Sapol e profumerie igieniche' featuring the 'modern', true-to-life image of a young

woman, a rarity in magazine advertising of the period, and in particular for low-cost, daily use, hygiene-oriented products: parasol in one hand and open fan in the other, the figure surveys the bay whilst sitting at the balcony. The advertisement doubly reinforces the brand name and logo ('SAPOL. IL VERO SAPONE. Finissimo, Igienico, Economico') on the lady's fan, and on the sailing boat in the bay below, displaying the company's distinctive logo, and name SAPOL, by means of a horizontally open shooting star on the boat's sails (*Margherita*, 15th July, 1900). The advertisement is particularly significant in terms of the message and image, where use of soap denotes the woman's beauty and youth, and likewise the sense of freshness deriving from cleanliness and open air. The emphasis placed on low price and hygiene is aimed at ensuring regular product use, whilst the female image, and the implicit sense of women's wish to maintain a continual physical freshness and attractiveness contained in the advertisement, recalls the importance placed on hygiene and cleanliness by the expanding medical profession, and the primacy of the role as keepers of a clean hearth attributed to women at the time.

The slow development of notions of self-enhancement in hygiene products reflects wider changes, as by the turn of the first decade of the twentieth century, advertising is reflecting these slow but inexorable progressions with changes in fashion, style and living standards. A general overview of advertisements reveals a heavy reliance on script, and limited use of image, although some products start forsaking the former for the latter, as the realisation of the importance of image in the public imagination, and conception of the product begins to take hold. The prevalent use of image in the artistic roadside and tram posters of the period thus insinuates itself into the world of newspaper and magazine advertising, assuring greater recall and impact for those products increasingly manufactured at an industrial level, or that face a significant degree of competition. As seen in Figure 7.1, the *La Donna* advertisement for 'Odol' liquid toothpaste presents a young woman pouring out the product into a glass, as the headline 'Vi odolizzate?' attempts to transform the product name, reminiscent of the noun 'odore', into a verb, in order to aid recall by consumers of the product and its beneficial effects (*La Donna*, 20th November, 1912).

Vi Odolizzate?

L'Odol, l'acqua dentifricia per eccellenza, è la preparazione della quale dovete servirvi.

Qualche goccia d'Odol in un bicchiere d'acqua, preferibilmente tiepida, dà una emulsione che pulisce e purifica la bocca, e distrugge tutti i bacilli nocivi che vi si trovano.

L'azione di pulirsi i denti e di sciacquarsi la bocca con questa preparazione deliziosa ed antisettica, si chiama:

Odolizzarsi.

L'Odol esercita la sua azione antisettica e rinfrescante, non soltanto durante i brevi momenti del suo uso, ma **durante parecchie ore.**



7.1 ODOL - *La Donna*, 1912

(on previous page)

Despite such use of the female image and its connotation with health and hygiene, future advertisements use other images from that of the container set against the moon (*La Donna*, 20th March, 1913), to that of it set alongside a hand holding a mirror reflecting a female mouth and teeth (*La Donna*, 20th September, 1913). The importance of attractive appearance rather than simply of hygiene is evident there. These examples are indicative of a limited number of advertisements relying on image, targeting the female consumer, and communicating product qualities with strategically chosen symbols and signs. They also indicate an educational strategy transcending mere information, as the consumer is told when to use the product (evening), and only later its beneficial effects. So important is the woman's hand as a sign of cleanliness, health and beauty that, as shown in Figure 7.2, other products such as 'Pixavon' shampoo rely also on this symbol, at a time when use of more detailed images is still relatively rare (*La Donna*, 5th September, 1912).

7.2 MULTINATIONAL ADVERTISING IN THE FASCIST PERIOD: IMAGE OF ITALIAN WOMEN IN TOILETRY ADVERTISEMENTS

By the inter-war years, women become much more a target in their own right, no longer simply representing the budget-constrained housekeeper meeting family needs. The soap advertisements, by the large Colgate-Palmolive multinational, communicate an emerging desire for self-enhancement based on use of hygiene products (see Figures 7.3 and 7.4). The advent of the new, more widely distributed 'rotocalchi' by the late 1930s allows a significant leap in the quality and quantity of advertisements. This is seen especially with companies such as Colgate-Palmolive, whose presence in women's magazines, and in less gender specific magazines like *Scena Illustrata*, reflects a significant use of modern advertising strategies. Advertising in the more exclusive *Lidel* of the late 1920s and early 1930s, gives way to a continual use of advertising space in other more widely available magazines, most notably the weekly *Grazia*. Considered as the first company to conduct market research in Italy before launching its product in 1927 (Cunsolo, 1955), it bases its advertising on the common habit of using a generic bar of washing soap for personal cleanliness, given the presence of a very limited number of luxury brands on the market.

Chi si è

abituato

a lavarsi regolarmente la testa una volta la settimana col **PIXAVON**, saprà che non vi è un mezzo migliore per mantenere sana e robusta la sua capigliatura.

Il **PIXAVON** non pulisce solamente i capelli e la cute capillare, ma agisce anche *come eccitante* sul cuoio capelluto. Già dopo pochi lavaggi al **PIXAVON** se ne risente il benefico effetto. I lavaggi al **PIXAVON** devono essere quindi considerati come il miglior metodo per la cura della cute capillare e per rinforzare i capelli.

Il **PIXAVON** viene preparato chiaro (*incolore*) e scuro. Oggidì si preferisce il **PIXAVON** chiaro (*incolore*), preparato con un catrame, che, mediante un procedimento speciale, è stato privato anche della sua sostanza colorante scura. L'azione specifica del catrame è la medesima in ambedue i preparati, scuro e chiaro.

Il prezzo è di L. 3 per bottiglia, sufficiente per dei mesi. Tutti i migliori parrucchieri eseguono dei lavaggi al **Pixavon**.



7.2 PIXAVON - *La Donna*, 1912

(on previous page)



La vostra bellezza

in questo provino!



Il segreto di bellezza degli antichi era l'uso dell'olio d'oliva per conservare morbida e colorita la carnagione. Quanto olio d'oliva è contenuto in una saponetta Palmolive? Eccovi, nel tubetto qui di fianco, la esatta quantità adoperata. Il Palmolive è, fra i saponi più diffusi, l'unico, composto di olii vegetali, che abbia per base l'olio di oliva. Il suo colore verde è dovuto agli olii vegetali; nessun colore artificiale è aggiunto. Oltre 20.000 specialisti di bellezza, conoscendo il valore della quantità d'olio d'oliva

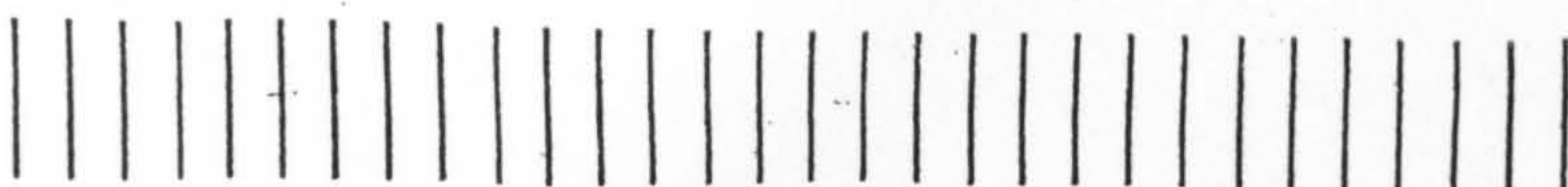
contenuta nel sapone Palmolive, ne consigliano l'uso a salvaguardia di un colorito sano e giovanile.

Grandezza naturale
del provino contenente
l'esatta quantità di olio
d'oliva adoperata per
la fabbricazione di ogni
sapone Palmolive.

2 lire



PRODOTTO
IN ITALIA



7.3 PALMOLIVE.

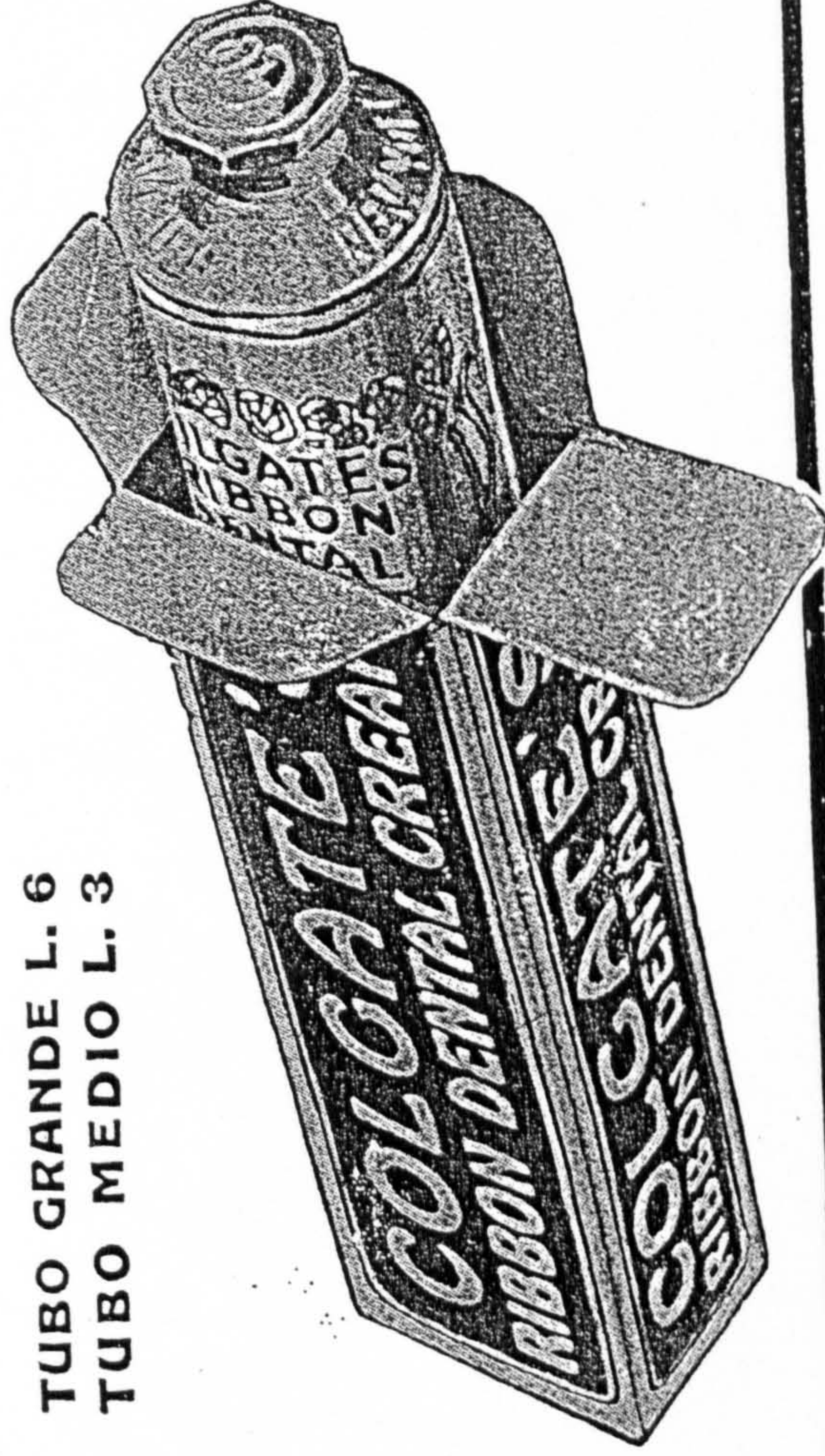
La vostra bellezza in questo provino!

- *Lidel*, 1932 (on previous page)

Un sorriso... Colgate!

L'alito profumato contribuirà sempre ad aumentare il fascino del vostro sorriso; ma quante disillusioni... se avete l'alito cattivo! L'alito cattivo è spesso causato da residui di cibo che si fermano fra i denti. Il dentifricio Colgate vi dà la sicurezza di un bel sorriso, perchè non soltanto pulisce completamente i denti, penetrando nelle più piccole cavità dentarie, là dove lo spazzolino non arriva, ma anche vi lascia l'alito puro e profumato. Lavando i vostri denti al mattino ed alla sera con il dentifricio Colgate, il vostro sorriso diverrà... un sorriso Colgate!

TUBO GRANDE L. 6
TUBO MEDIO L. 3



...Pensate che la perfetta e sicura conservazione dei vostri denti ed il loro candido splendore costituiscono sempre il fascino più grande e più attraente del vostro sorriso.

PASTA DENTIFRICIA
COLGATE

7.4 COLGATE. Un sorriso ... Colgate!

- *Lidel*, 1932

(on previous page)

This results in the launching of a good quality, reasonably priced product for the consuming middle-classes, backed by widespread advertising utilising photography, up-to-date images of the young female consumer, and even a degree of nudity in a 1938 campaign. Despite competition from the increasing number of brands, totalling about fifty, the multinational obtains 30% of the Italian market within a few years of its entrance into the personal hygiene market (Cunsolo, 1955).

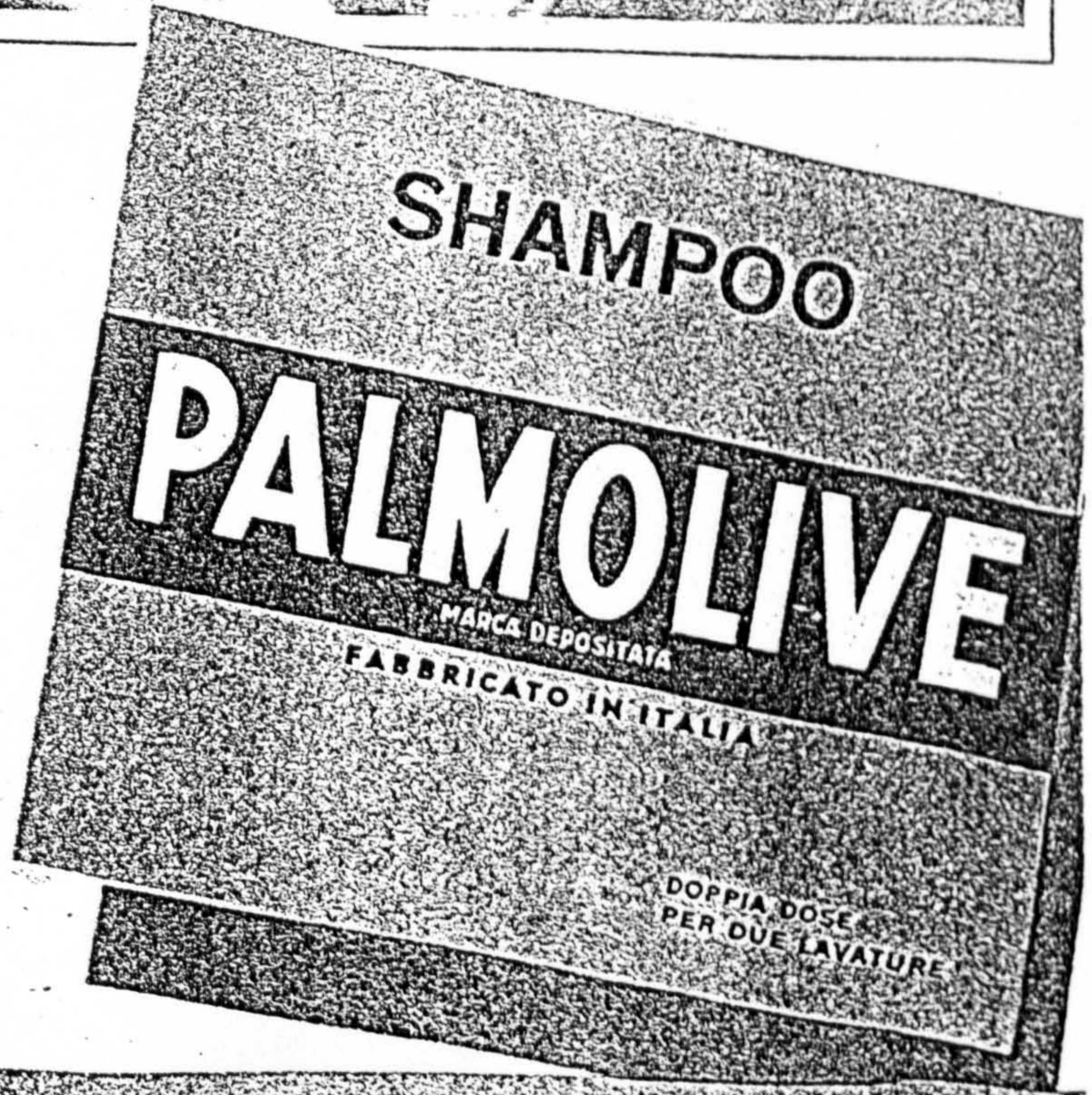
By the eve of the Second World War, women are encouraged to visualise and frame their beauty with the obvious aid of Palmolive shampoo (*Grazia*, 31st August, 1939). The advertisement (see Figure 7.5) utilises an image of a young woman whose well-kept hair and attractiveness are emphasised by the lateral profile. The headline performs the function of anchorage, facilitating the reader's interpretation of the image given that the model is placed within a frame that limits the image's contours, reinforces the headline's meaning and focuses the addressee's attention on the model's features and in particular on her hair. The frame also appears to symbolically represent the gaze of others, as women are continually encouraged, here and elsewhere, to become more aware of their image and its effect on others, in order to project it to these significant others in a certain way. Encouraging women to use their self-image as a calculated part of their existence thus emerges, to a greater extent, in advertisements by large companies such as Colgate-Palmolive by the late 1930s, with sophisticated use of photographic image and advertising techniques. Reference to the frame may be seen as having a dual function: women see themselves as a work of art to be moulded for the gaze of significant others, much as these others would gaze at, and appreciate, the picture of a beautiful woman in a gallery. The woman attributes value to herself in accordance with her appearance and its acceptability to these others. The recurrent example of middle-class women performing all household tasks before dressing and applying make-up for their midday stroll around town, is recalled by this advertisement, as the impeccable 'de rigueur' public image of this social category is required at all times, despite widespread financial difficulties and a general 'making do' with the advent of autarchy (Vené, 1988).

*incorniciate
la vostra
bellezza!*



Non è possibile, signora, immaginare un volto veramente bello senza una natura morbida e lucente che lo incornici una splendente aureola! Ecco perchè lo Shampoo Palmolive è considerato un vero datore di bellezza! Questo famoso prodotto non contiene sapone, grazie alla sua speciale composizione allo sciroppo di palma, non secca la capigliatura, ma la lava delicatamente liberandola dalle impurità. Inoltre la schiuma detergente rafforza il bulbo capillare, rende i capelli morbidissimi, vaporosi e lucenti, senza mai alterare il loro colore naturale. Esiste in due tipi: per bruna ed alla camomilla. Il Shampoo Palmolive costa pochissimo e dona ai capelli una irresistibile attrattiva.

PRODOTTO
A GENOVA



STA CON DOPPIA DOSE **L1** SERVE PER DUE LAVATURE

7.5 PALMOLIVE. Incominciate la vostra bellezza!

- *Grazia*, 1939

(on previous page)

Recall of a concept of beauty founded upon the acceptability of others is naturally concentrated on the hair as the point of relevance, thus providing this physical attribute with a central role in the notion of beauty and consequently in the language utilised. The introductory exclamatory sentence of the body copy addresses the reader as 'signora' with a deference characteristic of the period, and stating the obvious fact that a beautiful face requires soft, shining hair. The significance of this phrase is to reinforce the attention-seeking headline by utilising the verb 'incorniciare' in referring back to the image and concept of the frame, as well as, to the hair performing the function of a 'shining halo' ('una splendente aureola'). Use of religious imagery in the language may have the function of mitigating the physically exposed image utilised, and simultaneously of recalling religious art, a predominant part of Italian artistic and popular culture. The dominant role of religion in Italian life never diminished with the advent of fascism, and may be cited as present in this advertisement, given the model's serene gaze towards the heavens, reminiscent of religious Marian art, and of women's frequent aspirations based on the family-oriented dedication characteristic of the figure of the Madonna. Significantly, the advertisement attempts a double feat: initially, in presenting a busy social butterfly, as evident in the elaborate make-up, clothing, bare shoulders and cleavage, so unacceptable in Mussolini's ideal of 'madre e moglie esemplare'; secondly, in recalling a complex baggage of cultural and religious imagery pervading Italian culture, in the guise of the model's stance and the language used. The many images rolled into one, thus, serve the purpose of establishing the product's appropriateness to a wide socio-economic and age range, allowing different addressees to interpret the advertisement in different ways. Nevertheless, one may argue that the former image appears dominant given the expanding purchasing power of legions of younger women, and the inevitable, frequently advertising-driven desire of older consumers to project the sort of youthful image featured in such advertisements.

The poetic nature of the introduction, therefore, serves to establish an intricate link between the headline, image and product, explained in detail in the subsequent lines. The religious imagery evoked by the advertisement is reinforced by the subsequent line,

where the shampoo becomes a veritable 'bestower of beauty' ('un vero datore di bellezza'), reminiscent of the concept of beauty as God's gift to women. The prevalent use of adjectives associated with product use ('speciale, detergente, morbidissimi, vaporosi, lucenti, naturale'), perform the function of reinforcing the concept of performance, as the product cleans and reinforces the roots without causing negative side effects such as excessive dryness. Evidently regarded as problems associated with the other products, the addresser is punctilious in reassuring the customer, especially given the product's olive oil content, so familiar to Mediterranean cultures. The last phrase also acts to attenuate any residual negative quality connotations deriving from the product's declared low price, and double dose content, despite the availability of two versions, in the use of the final invitation to purchase: 'dona ai capelli una irresistibile attrattiva'. By recalling women's wish to meet the prevailing social canons of personal attractiveness, this concept effectively closes the image-language-culture circle, given the existence of a defined set of sophisticated, elegant images based on determined physical attributes prevalent in Italy at this time as elsewhere. In particular, the adjective 'irresistibile' anchors product use to individual sentimental relationships, an evident 'must' for any advertising strategy targeted to women, who by their nature were generally considered to be fully absorbed by this issue in their lives.

Finally, of significance is the fact that the product is declared to be manufactured in Italy, apparently in accordance with autarchy requirements, despite the company's decidedly foreign nature. The quasi-Italian nature of the brand name may be instrumental in not creating undue barriers to market penetration by this company, given Mussolini's aversion for non-Italian names, whilst the issue of a more calculated strategy by such multinationals to circumvent autarchic limits remains to be more fully explored. The advertisement is also one of the few to occupy an entire page at a time of relatively restricted advertising space, other than the traditionally strategic back cover, a relevant factor indicating the importance attached to this magazine's middle-class readership spectrum, and the willingness of multinationals to expand into newly formed media.

Indeed, by the beginning of the Second World War, the affirmed regularity of multinational advertising becomes more evident in *Grazia* (1940), with advertisements for Palmolive brands an increasing presence, visible in the frequent case of soap advertisements featuring baby on the back-cover, as the multinational continues marketing its product within an autarchic compromise. These advertisements are revealing in terms of the incoherence of fascist policy regarding women, and practical control of foreign influences and products, given that even at this time, language, images, fashion and cinematic productions are controlled by the state. Mussolini's daily ritual of perusing the papers and obtaining continual updates on daily developments in all areas of life, are renowned and lead to the elimination and control of various undesirables.¹ Nevertheless, the diminished attention afforded women's magazines, probably regarded as less problematic, may account for such incoherence, compounded by the inherently ambiguous nature of Mussolini's policies, especially those regarding the female population, and a wish not to damage potentially advantageous relations. Furthermore, the significant lack of control exerted over the advertising industry, and the images in the Italian print media and on billboards, may reflect the Duce's long-standing, yet unwilling acceptance of the industrial sector.²

A 1941 issue of *Grazia* (13th March) also portrays what may be considered a 'non-fascist' advertisement, clearly indicative of the changes taking place in Italian society. The Colgate toothpaste advertisement pictures a drawn sequence of events, where a young woman is left at home every evening by her sister in the staid company of her father. The girl's unsavoury breath acts as a deterrent to her social life, where evening outings only resume following product use, and the resulting beneficial effect on her self-esteem. The freedom attributed to young women in the advertisement is probably only a reality for a minority, yet functioning as an aspiration for the majority, in a period of rapid change, and transformation of daily routine, linked to war requirements. Progressive absence of family control and inhibitions for some young women, linked to war-time employment possibilities and their increased disposable income, makes forms of urban entertainment and spending affordable transforming them into a positive and

negative target for the press and for advertisers. Yet, the very Americanised freedom pictured in the advertisement, is in direct contrast to the reality of a period increasingly characterised by maternal instead of paternal control, and fascist ideology of young womanhood, founded on the home and on the ideals of associations like the 'Giovani Italiane'. The portrayal of such images is merely a taste of things to come, as the attempt to appeal to certain aspirations and desires becomes a dominant feature of multinational advertising in the post-war years.³

7.3 THE POST-WAR COLGATE-PALMOLIVE WOMAN IN ITALIAN WOMEN'S MAGAZINES

Advertising resumes in the post-war period, albeit in magazines characterised by fewer pages and low paper quality, a fact reflected in the rare full, or even half-page advertisements, with heavy advertising of international brands such as Colgate toothpaste and Palmolive soap. Significantly, these manufacturers also heavily market a range of products, namely talcum powder and facial compact powder, that transcend the specific soap-based brands, in an effort at delving into consumers' shallow pockets. The period is characterised by women's lack of spending power in a new post-war scenario of inflation and diminishing disposable income, whilst the desire to appear attractive and eliminate socially inappropriate difficulties, often caused by malnutrition and an unbalanced diet, is also significant. In a 1948 edition of *Grazia* (22nd May), the Colgate back-cover colour advertisement pictures a 'wall-flower' at a party pondering the secret of other women's social successes, a mere throw-back to previous advertisements, with women's sole preoccupation remaining social acceptability. In the subsequent scene, the cinematic embrace is synonymous of the product's beneficial effects, as the woman acquires allure simply from a new-found radiant smile and pleasant breath. The use of relatively more modern approaches and techniques by these multinationals in the immediate pre-war and initial war years is consolidated in the dawn of the new republic. Techniques used such as the photoromance situation of the above advertisement, the elaborate and large coloured advertisements in a sea of black and white print and of

smaller advertisements for national products, furnish the advertisements with a particular appeal based on these companies' rapidly consolidated experience. They also represent a notable investment by these multinationals in a strategic attempt to exploit a largely undeveloped consumer base with mass market potential for low priced goods.

Colgate-Palmolive's unusual, yet successful, foray into the Italian market during the inter-war years leads to substantial investment in the post-war years as access to an open, expanding, recovering economy, hankering for a version of the American dream, is symbolised by these products, and by the indelible aura that emanated from these English-language branded goods. Italy's increasing socio-economic and political ties to the U.S. in this period of Marshall Plan loans, and pro-Americanism, would also favour the proliferation of American products, moulding all that the U.S. stood for in the public mind. Although these multinationals certainly act as carriers of a particular image of the U.S., reinforced by Hollywood productions and the media, the greatest significance of many advertisements by U.S.-based brands, riding on the wave of opportunity, and no longer required to play the autarchic game, lies in the reinforcement, alongside national products, of the image of a home-based, elegant, beauty-oriented woman. The continuation of this version of womanhood seems paradoxical in a Europe scarred by war, and men and women's life experiences. Nevertheless, the desire for a pre-war existence, ordinariness, ritual and a higher standard of living prevails to the extent that the war is treated by the press and society almost as a parenthesis in the otherwise home-based existence of most women. Advertisements are suffused to a greater extent with themes relating to social acceptability, stardom and sophistication, calling on women's dreams and desires for a personalised revival and change. Exceptions become a rarity.⁴

In the 14th August 1949 edition of *Annabella*, an extravagant half-page advertisement for Palmolive soap promises 'una nuova cura di bellezza in 15 giorni!', with documented statistics and expert approval, given the rigorous testing of the product and certain beautifying results. In terms of the advertisements featured in the pages of the magazine, a uniformity of advertising conducted in this immediate post-war period is evident, as

most women's magazines contain a similar range of advertisements for the same products. Advertising is as yet a marginally used means by which to differentiate the magazine as a media product, given the post-war limitations on industrial production, availability of goods, spending and media quality.

The above advertisement, much like others of its nature, and by the same Palmolive, is significant for a number of reasons. It is located on the penultimate page of a 16 page issue, whose front and back covers are traditionally reserved for fashion photographs, unlike the more consumption and advertising-oriented *Grazia*. The advertisement is of an eye-catching dimension, encompassing almost half the breadth of a 37 x 28 centimetre page, it may be placed in a different category compared to the generally reduced (quarter page and less) format of the other advertisements. Significantly, it is also strategically located alongside a serialised novel by one of the most popular romance writers of the period, Liala, renowned for her implicitly educational role, with abundant advice on soap use dispensed in her novels, justified by the sexuality and sensuality attached to cleanliness and the act of washing (Lepschy, 2000). The advertisement, thus, also establishes an indexical relationship with a form of femininity familiar to Liala readers, and to other magazine readers, considering the use of the author's name in the launching of *Confidenze di Liala*, where the female protagonists in aiming for marriage and a family, can still be independent and unconventional.

With the caption '36 MEDICI AMERICANI affermano ...' (see Figure 7.6), the authority of the medical profession is utilized in the advertisement to lend the product clinical legitimacy, a strategy frequently applied to products as diverse as soap or cosmetics, in the ultimate attempt at convincing potential consumers of the product's incomparable qualities and visible effects. The advertisement makes use of the fact that the medical professionals are American, a particularly significant aspect relating to the post-war era, when appealing to the consumer's sense of modernity required recall of the U.S. as the haven of modernity, professional expertise and consumerism. Thus, the advertisement reinforces the subliminal message that good things tend to come in American packages.

36 MEDICI AMERICANI

affermano:

dopo prove fatte su 1285 donne dai 15 ai 50 anni con ogni tipo di pelle, normale, grassa o secca, due donne su tre hanno ottenuto sensibili ed effettivi miglioramenti della pelle in soli 15 giorni, con la Cura di Bellezza PALMOLIVE.

Ecco la Cura di Bellezza PALMOLIVE

è semplice come l'ABC:

- A* Lavatevi il viso con il SAPONE PALMOLIVE.
- B* Massaggiatevi per 60 secondi con la sua soffice, piacevole schiuma. Poi sciacquatevi bene!
- C* Ripetete questo trattamento 3 volte al giorno per 15 giorni.

Questo massaggio di pulizia dà alla vostra pelle tutto il benefico effetto del SAPONE PALMOLIVE.

**RISULTATI
effettivi:**

pelle meno grassa, più chiara, liscia e vellutata; colorito fresco, più luminoso, meno punti neri



Formato medio gr. 60
Formato normale gr. 100
Formato bagno gr. 150

7.6 PALMOLIVE. 36 Medici Americani

- *Annabella*, 1949

(on previous page)

Secondly, the advertisement relies on a numerical format, where clinical trials conducted on 1285 fifteen to fifty year-old women provide consumers with proof of the product's beneficial effects in two-thirds of cases. Reference to an apparently large number of women used for the product testing, combined with the ample age range, lends a distinct sense of reliability and certainty to the product's potential, as do the other numerical references in the message. Utilised thirteen times throughout, of which seven in the headline and principal body copy, reliance on this format signals use of a potent advertising strategy, and decisive penetration of a relatively wide target market, categorised by the advertisement itself as the fifteen to fifty age group. Furthermore, this ample group represents a number of consumer categories: very young women, not considered as yet a culturally separate consumer group, whose initial knowledge of the product originates from these post-war advertisements; the older middle-aged housewife searching for a quality product at limited cost; and the many young women whose limited pre-war knowledge of the product is boosted by such campaigns.

The language utilised is accessible in the attempt at targeting all groups, whilst the image may reflect a particular targeting of the younger consumer categories, given the potential for long-term product loyalty, and younger generations' greater readiness to adopt relatively new, different or unknown products. Unlike the pre-war advertisements, the absence of photography and apparent lack of sophistication characteristic of this advertisement is mitigated by the overall image. The product's beneficial qualities are transmitted by an image designed to attract the addressee's attention, conspicuous in the use of an off-the-shoulder, low-cut evening gown, fashionable in these Christian Dior days of romantic revival, jewellery and direct gaze. The indexical relationship established between the product and the imaginary desirable situation of an elegant evening, beyond the reach of the majority of the female population, is contained in the image. Indeed, the image appears to go further by inferring that, despite the occasional social opportunities available to most women, a woman's eternal wish of being elegant, desirable and appealing to others is now within her grasp, and may become a regular feature of her existence by means of regular product use.

The concept of regularity is also complemented by the lexis, where the advertisement overturns the typical poetic, informational, directive sequence of language used in advertisements. A decisive informational content in the main body copy immediately encourages purchase, by providing 'hard facts' as to the product's skin improving potential. The 'ABC' of a daily skin cleansing routine outlined in the secondary section has a directive function, providing the consumer with clear instructions on purchase and use, and is significant in terms of the vocabulary and forms of address. The more distant 'lei', utilised to denote distance, to indicate respect and a particular class-based consumption category, is replaced by the more familiar 'voi', that serves to construct a direct relationship and the complicity of a shared beauty secret between addresser and addressee. The use of the verbs 'lavare', 'massaggiare', 'sciacquare' and 'ripetere' have the function of inciting a series of mental images, familiar to most addressees, and of allowing the advertisement, and consequently the product, to base itself on another type of advertisement and product. In this case, intertextuality is an essential ingredient of the advertisement's meaning, as the reader is implicitly referred to advertisements for cosmetic products. The 'ABC' beauty treatment paragraph has the function of reinforcing this notion of the product as a beauty aid, and of recalling the typical step-by-step instructions provided in cosmetic advertisements and in specialised publications.

Once the reader has been convinced by the statistical data provided, and instructed on product use, the advertisement contains a final section where the adjectives 'grasso', 'chiaro', 'liscia', 'vellutata', 'fresco' and 'luminoso' are used to conquer any remaining vestiges of reticence, by ensuring that the product appeals to every consumer's innermost desire for clear, translucent skin. The decidedly poetic nature of this section, nevertheless, gives way in the last line to a reality conditioned by unsightly blackheads, with removal assured through product use, in the ultimate effort at wooing young (teenage) consumers. The recognition of distinct consumer groups is thus complete in the advertisement, as much as the fact that the advertisement lacks a direct exhortation to buy, thus reinforcing, in final analysis, an inherent psychological 'secret' that the consumer is invited to share: that the imported product does not need to exhort purchase,

as the beneficial effects to be had from regular use, combined with the facts provided, make the advertisement's message irrefutable, and product purchase virtually automatic.

In conclusion, it may be noted that problems relating to colour and paper quality of the magazine, are overcome to a significant degree by means of varied script size and type, as well as through optical distribution of the text. The pictorial location of the product in the advertisement is complemented symmetrically by the highlighted box in the left-hand corner, while the secondary 'ABC' text seems to originate from the pen of an advice dispensing beauty expert. With the 'Cura di Bellezza PALMOLIVE', the advertisement transmits an image and message about the product as something that it is not. Undoubtedly aware of this psychological ploy, acceptance by women is based on years of privation and limited finance. Drawn towards a mutual complicity, propagated by the advertising and consumption industries, women find a partial solution to their wish for a cosmetic in these products. At the same time, manufacturers clearly attempt to provide a market-wide product to fill a gap in the lower income end of the market that could not readily afford cosmetics. This is despite the increase in advertising and availability of middle-market cosmetics, most notably those of the large multinationals. An analysis of this issue of *Annabella* reveals myriad advertisements for such lower cost accessible products as talcum powder (two advertisements), lavender water and perfumes (seven advertisements) and soap (four advertisements), whilst as yet marginalising other products, first and foremost cosmetics. The only exception in terms of these beauty aids emerges from the more middle-class, woman and home, *Grazia*. In this magazine, it can be seen that Max Factor does indeed embody the cosmetic enhanced stardom of the famous Hollywood stars for the starry-eyed legions of young women, and the sought-after elegance and sophistication for the older generations of Italian women.⁵

7.4 THE ROLE OF TOILETRY ADVERTISEMENTS IN 1950s MAGAZINES

The 1950s see the mass rural-urban migrations characteristic of this decade becoming a source of advertising potential, as companies tout the qualities of their products in terms

of social acceptance and the elimination of undesirable habits or features, in the new condition of shared space within the urban working and living jungle. Soap, toothpaste, deodorant and health remedies became products relating to the social requirements of urban proximity, a frequently utilised message by manufacturers, and one that goes from the more to the less subtle in accordance with the magazine's target reader and brand strategy. Women are prime targets for this form of information-persuasion and, as Milly Buonanno notes, the objective appears to be to 'humanise' the female consumer, who in terms of personal care seems to have little notion whatsoever of basic cleanliness and hygiene, not to speak of self-enhancement. Although published in 1975, Buonanno's study may be regarded as particularly relevant in terms of the two previous decades, where the 'opera di dirozzamento' (Buonanno, 1975, p.92) initiates in the 1950s advertising boom, and develops in the following years, long before being a source of academic interest.⁶

In an example from the period, coarse, roughly hewn versions of womanhood are turned into acceptable beings through product use, as a shapely girl in a swimsuit announces: 'ORA SÌ. Oso alzare le braccia quando uso questa nuova crema che fa sparire i peli in 3 minuti' (*Confidenze*, 29th June, 1958). The 'no frills' message reflects a decidedly negative image of the lower-middle-class and working-class Italian woman, in need of explicit information in order to grasp the negative social consequences deriving from the frequently abundant underarm hair, so visible in dark-skinned populations. The normal acceptance of female body hair rapidly mutates into social deviance under the influence exerted by advertising in the wake of various external forces and mutating social systems. Other products characteristic of this 'donna tutta casa e famiglia' ideology (Buonanno, 1975, p.92), are family, or general use, products in the inevitable small-scale advertisements. Although the woman appears to be responsible for 'polishing up' her own as well as the family's habits, and moulding a media-designed lifestyle, the implication is one of a very limited purchasing power, and the implication prevails that she is confined to a defined range of products.

Significantly, however, advertising is much more multiform than would appear from subsequent feminist analysis (Ravaioli, 1969 and 1978; Saraceno, 1971; Rava, 1972; Nozzoli, 1973; Pezzuoli, 1975; Dal Pozzo and Rava, 1977), with the brand image transmitted to consumers in a number of different ways, and, inevitably, varying from the more middle to upper-middle-class magazines *Grazia* and *Annabella*, to the lower-middle-class magazines *Gioia* and *Confidenze*. Dictated by product-market differentiation strategies, and the need to justify purchase of goods that could otherwise not be considered essentials by the lower income categories of consumers, the strategies used are reminiscent of turn of the century advertisements, whose emphasis on defects, rather than enhancement, allow purchase to be justified in the family's meagre budget. Indeed, the emphasis attributed to personal problems in the magazines targeted at lower income categories, ironically give way to advertisements for the same products as beauty enhancers for the higher income groups. Criticised by feminists in a later era, and most notably by Buonanno (1975), this strategy finds its origins in the 1950s with the development of a consumer-oriented differentiation that continues in the following decades, becoming a cornerstone of much of the advertising conducted. In this initial period, however, and particularly in the economic boom years, advertising differences, even amongst the middle-class magazines, begin to emerge, with a progressive, albeit subtle, differentiation that is totally ignored by 1970s feminist analysis, as much as the influence of other media on women. For example, *Annabella* becomes distinctive for its particular pastiche of advertisements where the 'run-of-the-mill' anti-perspirant, toothpaste and washing powders common to the period, feature alongside rather more controversial products and images, frequently for more costly brands. Soaps virtually became cosmetics, and perfumes feature precociously in *Annabella* with a definite aura of sophistication, Dupont's three soaps (see Figure 7.7) cater to dry, oily and delicate skin (*Annabella*, 23rd March, 1954), whilst even products used as anti-perspirants, such as Palmolive body talc (*Annabella*, 2nd April, 1950), does not eliminate body odour for this magazine's reader, but provides a pleasant sense of freshness (see Figure 7.8).



pelle secca?

SAPONE
NUTRIENTE
Dupont



pelle grassa?

SAPONE
ASTRINGENTE
Dupont



pelle irritabile?

SAPONE
CALMANTE
Dupont

L. 200 al pezzo

7.7 DUPONT - *Annabella*, 1954

(on previous page)



Un gradevole senso di freschezza...

lascia alla pelle il TALCO BORATO PALMOLIVE.
Esso evita gli arrossamenti anche alle pelli più delicate
e preserva dagli inconvenienti dell'eccessiva traspirazione.
Il TALCO BORATO PALMOLIVE è specialmente indi-
cato per i bambini e usato dopo il bagno elimina ogni
traccia di umidità.
È la vera polvere igienica di qualità.

Confezionato in barattoli
impermeabili e in buste.



7.8 PALMOLIVE. Talco Borato
- *Annabella*, 1950
(on previous page)

Nowhere is this differentiation more prevalent, however, than in soap and toothpaste advertisements, highlighted by the case of the highly successful, low-cost, photoromance magazine of the post-war years, *Grand Hotel*. Unlike the notable investment occurring in most other magazines of this period, use of unsophisticated low-cost techniques, black and white hand-drawings and rare photography in this magazine's advertisements, are indicative of the low spending power of its readers. The more 'no nonsense', 'straight to the point' tone of many advertisements is matched by prizes, competitions and promised physical transformations that characterise this magazine as much as others of the lower middle and working classes. By the economic boom years, the full range of 'Cinderella' products, ready to provide women with a much-needed physical transformation and social acceptability are on offer: 'Veet' body hair remover, Halo hairspray for lacklustre hair, Colgate talcum powder, 'bac' deodorant and Palmolive shampoo. Undoubtedly, such advertisements reflect the influence exerted by foreign, cinematic and mutating social systems resulting in a transformation of what is considered socially acceptable. Recognised by the sociologist Alberoni (1967) as essential products in a society characterised by a lack of adequate sanitary facilities in many cities, insufficient running water, time, money, and habits of washing frequently, the explicit language used by advertisements of this nature appears to transcend the limits of persuasion to enter the realms of education. Nevertheless, the fact that advertisements seem to presume the non-existence of hygiene habits by women, and their almost total ignorance of products, may also be regarded as an indication of a gap in market knowledge of consumer categories, a lack of market research, and reduced empathy with the conditions of the lower-income categories of the largely female population to whom these products are targeted.

The lower-middle to middle class women's destiny thus appears to be framed within the confines of eliminating body odours, presenting a reasonable physical appearance, cooking and washing. A destiny that remains relatively static for the following two decades as evinced from other magazines such as *Confidenze*. This magazine's marginally more middle-class readership is reflected in the magazine in terms of advertising, as the reader is allowed an occasional glimpse of a different reality based on

the beauty and elegance permeating other magazines, despite the predominance of advertisements for home, food and hygiene products. The communicative tools used vary from the more to less subtle, as expert advice, product features and benefits appear in an escalating round of advertisements. As a result, products become psychological aids: skin problems disappear with Palmolive soap (5th February, 1950) as a woman kisses a man with her new-found confidence deriving from the 'beauty treatment'; Colgate's large talcum powder advertisement promises the freshness and perfume of flowers for underarm use (19th October, 1952); Colgate toothpaste (see Figure 7.9) neutralises the enzymes causing bad breath, as recommended by dentists (9th May, 1954); a more beautiful complexion is on offer with Palmolive soap, as an embracing bride and groom emphasise both the product's self-enhancing and allure potential (4th November, 1956). A further category of advertisements in *Confidenze* rely on the inevitable expert, male advice to ensure product acceptance, with toothpaste and soap most characteristic of this formula: Durban's toothpaste features a dental certificate - '4216 dentisti non possono sbagliare' - as product quality is assured by means of ample consensus (4th June, 1950); Palmolive also regularly features expert medical advice, with imposing advertisements advocating the use of soap containing natural chlorophyll, an undeniable complexion improver in only 15 days (27th July, 1952); two years later the same advertisement features tests conducted by 36 doctors attesting to its even greater complexion improving potential (9th May, 1954). The advertising is incessant, with these brands insinuated into women's consciousness and consumption patterns.

7.5 THE 'STAR SYSTEM' IN WOMEN'S MAGAZINE ADVERTISEMENTS: THE 'LUX' BEAUTY SOAP CASE

The alternate use of 'Cinderella' and 'star' ideologies, as indicated by Buonanno (1975), more notable in magazines with advertising content aimed at lower income categories, allows for minimal personalisation of products, brands or messages, as the female reader is constantly pulled from one ideology to another, encouraged to aspire to star status while continually being pulled back to earth by the reality of limited social opportunities.

Finalmente un dentifricio che rimane attivo per 12 ore e più!

Solo il nuovo **DENTIFRICIO COLGATE**

con **GARDOL***

combatte la carie per tutto il giorno

e vi assicura

deni bianchi, deni sani, e bocca più fresca!

1 - g/c



Come agisce **GARDOL**

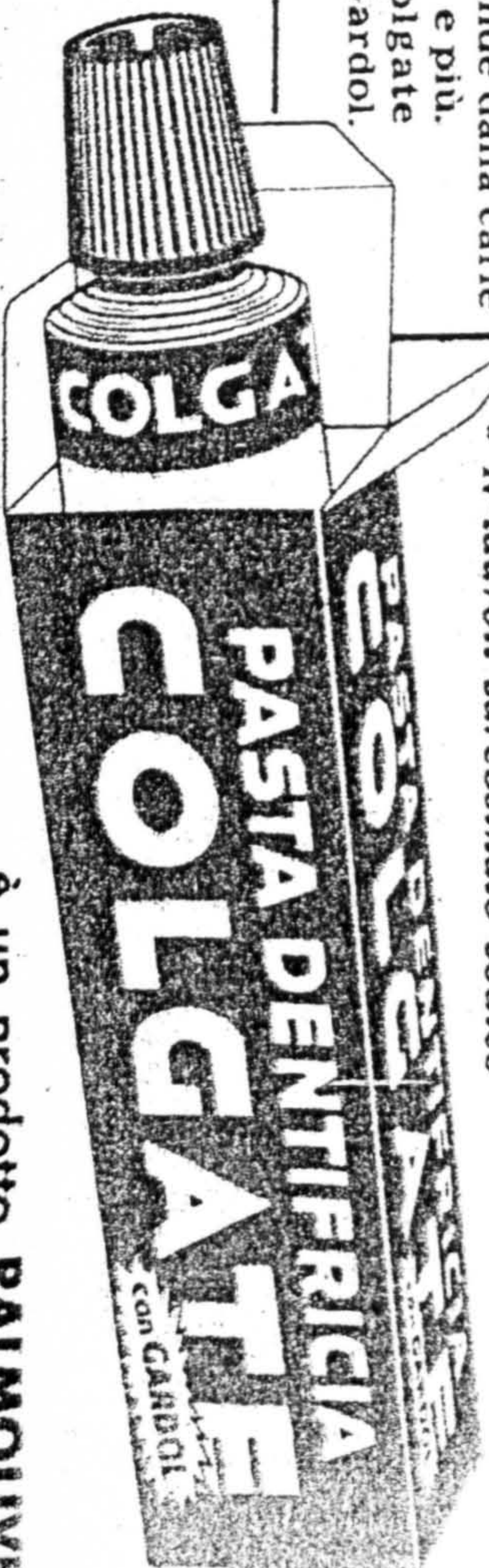


Qualsiasi dentifricio può ridurre gli acidi che causano la carie. Ma dopo alcuni minuti questi acidi riprendono la loro azione. Soltanto Gardol forma sui vostri deni una invisibile barriera protettiva, che li difende dalla carie per 12 ore e più. E solo Colgate contiene Gardol.

Provate il nuovo Colgate — vi piacerà il suo fresco sapore, la bianca schiuma che penetra fra i deni e li pulisce a fondo. Colgate elimina le impurità dell'alito e lascia la bocca meravigliosamente fresca. Prove scientifiche dimostrano che il nuovo Dentifricio Colgate con Gardol rimane attivo per 12 ore e più — quindi difende i deni dalla carie per tutto il giorno.

* N-lauroil sarcosinato sodico

tubo medio L. 100
tubo regolare L. 190



è un prodotto **PALMOLIVE**
garanzia di qualità

Provate lo e scoprirete perché

Colgate con Gardol è il dentifricio più venduto nel mondo

7.9 COLGATE. Gardol - *Confidenze*, 1954

(on previous page)

The dominant socio-cultural environment influences the use of this 'push-pull' strategy. Young women attain stardom and notoriety, emerging in the wake of beauty contests or cinematic productions, with the majority still remaining unknown in the shadows. Italian stars like Gina Lollobrigida for 'Lux' soap (*Grand Hotel*, 19th June, 1954) and the aristocratic Countess Carla Annoni di Gussola for 'Pond's' face cream (*Confidenze*, 4th November, 1956) replace the unattainable 1930s and 1940s Hollywood film stars. The most emblematic example of the 'rags to riches' scenario is represented most of all by the actresses in the 'Lux' soap advertisements with the brand featuring the well-known UniLever international strategy, '9 out of 10 stars prefer it'. The company's strategy is to use images of famous female film stars that the public can identify, to sell their products.

In the heyday of Hollywood, the female star's image as glamorous goddess was carefully cultivated. A controlled release of information about her private life surrounded her with an aura intended to enhance her screen characterisation and the standing of the studio. ... Star charisma depended partly on the individual's acting ability, and on the concealment (as far as the publicity machine was able) of awkward details about her life. Glamour, in the era of the Hollywood studios was the prerogative of the female film star (MacDonald, 1995, p.111).

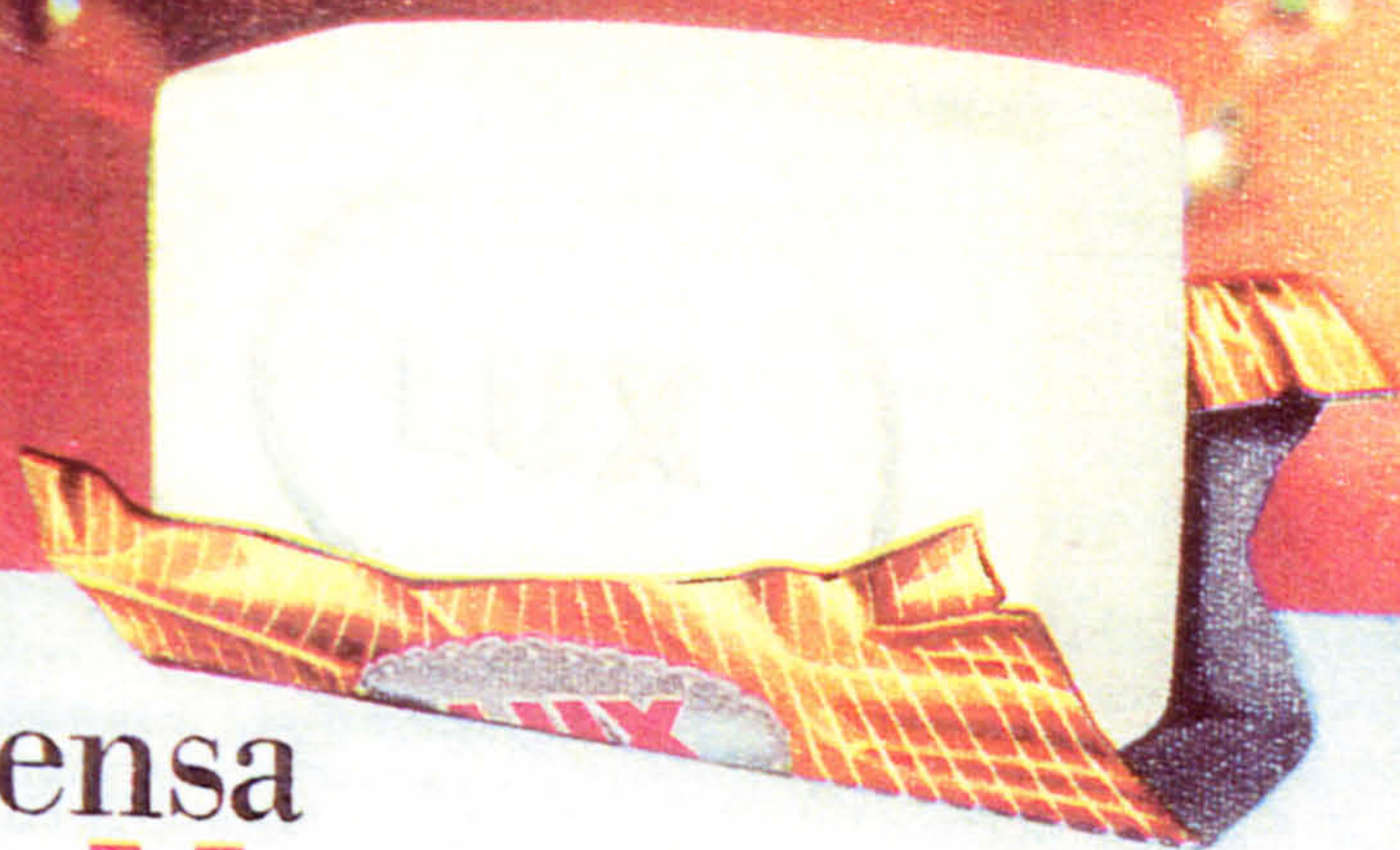
The use of foreign, international film stars is increasingly matched by home-made 'beauties' from countries like Italy that have developed a star system of their own, with subsequent emergence of these stars in the international movie industry. Use of both formulae allow women to desire certain star qualities of the former and yet identify with the reality of the latter, whose lives are more familiar to them through the myriad magazines that discuss the life and loves of the stars. This national variation is based on adaptation to cultural requirements that transcend any lack of identification associated with the unreachable Hollywood stars that frequently dominate 'Lux' advertising. Based on the characteristics of the star in question, the product embodies the qualities of the testimonial of the moment, where beauty, youthfulness and sophistication are continually combined with the star's particular image. The curvaceous Sofia Loren of 1950s

advertisements (see Figure 7.10) gives way to a different image of stardom represented by sultry-eyed Ornella Muti thirty years later. The aura of credibility attached to the star's product use, important in the advertisements, becomes an essential ingredient for success. The widespread and continual use of both national and international stars lends credibility to the slogan's claim that ninety per cent of screen stars prefer the product. As Rein Rijkens notes, the emerging national and international trends provide the company with the means 'to match the film-star presentation with the current views and opinions of women on the role and value of these artists in the world of today' (1992, p.100).

Compared to the advertisements of Palmolive, which emerge in the late 1920s Italian media, and of Colgate in the 1930s, advertising of the 'Lux' brand is notably absent. However, it becomes a visible element of the post-war media, in particular of women's magazines. Early post-war strategies of the brand feature blatant use of the star's appeal as a source of emulation to those women desiring a taste of the beauty, glamour and even notoriety available to a lucky few. New tertiary sector employment opportunities such as those of secretary, air stewardess and interpreter, became rapidly glamorised and subsequently transformed into typically female occupations. The emergence of national screen idols on the international stage also undoubtedly act as a catalyst to women's aspirations, whilst the booming photoromances become a means of attaining a degree of notoriety, and the rapidly developing medium of television provides new opportunities within national confines for aspiring 'soubrettes' and actresses. From the early 1960s, gradual disintegration of taboos, more active participation of women in public life and greater visibility in the media, are but some of the effects of the economic boom and socio-cultural developments, with mass culture and the media both capitalising on and stimulating changing perceptions of gender roles and social status. The centrality of the media and mass culture in Italian society is such that in the wake of elevating living standards, changing perceptions infiltrate political bastions of Left and Right wing power, fragmenting staid notions of appropriate morality, as increasing significance is attributed to the mass media in all aspects of society (Cacioppo, 1982; De Tassis, 1982; Barbanti, 1992; Lepre, 1995; Forgacs and Lumley, 1996; Gundle, 2000).⁷

SOFIA LOREN
Stella della Paramount
in "Un marito per Cinzia"

LUX



piú intensa
la vostra **bellezza**
con la ricca schiuma di Lux

...e che profumo delicato!

* **Sofia Loren** dice: "Io uso Lux" e anche voi, usando ogni giorno Lux, potrete avere una carnagione cosí luminosa, cosí pura.



IL SAPONE DI 9 STELLE SU 10

7.10 LUX. Sofia Loren - *Grazia*, 1959

(on previous page)

In advertising terms, women do not simply become ever more the priority of advertising discourse, as new possibilities for spending are identified, but also become the target for changing discourses, even for the 'Lux' beauty bar of soap. The sharing of experiences becomes a focus for advertising as empathy is sought, given women's greater self-awareness and sophistication, their greater knowledge of beauty products and increased spending power, leading to the necessity of integrating developments and customer profiles of women who no longer associate beauty to the use of a limited number of products, or even the single one bar of soap. The sharing of experiences, and in many ways 'humanising' of various stars, that characterises advertisements may be seen in the advertisement featuring the actress Carroll Baker (*Confidenze*, 7th May, 1967: see Figure 7.11). The advertisement utilises an international star that the audience could presumably identify with, given women's greater access to a range of media, and their knowledge of media personalities' personal and professional lives from the many weekly 'rotocalchi' overflowing from the press stands. Nevertheless, the breadth and depth of the potential addressee's knowledge base may be questioned by the initial image and caption, where the star's direct gaze in a full-face shoot is complemented by the 'Carroll Baker says' introduction, presumably superfluous for the informed reader. Typically used in 'Lux' advertisements, the facial expression does not cover most of the page in this case, but is limited to the upper left corner by way of an introduction to the advertisement. This stratagem serves to recall the star's facial features, a readily identifiable and memorable part of a person, as well as her specific personality and image. The direct gaze and partially open mouth simulate the speech act, establishing a link with the addressee, as the star does appear to be in the process of talking in first person to the reader.

This element belonging to the overall optical dimension is a strong component of the advertisement, given that the diagonal upper-left, lower-right optical line sees the centre devoid of image and the location of the star's face and brand image on the diagonal's two extremes. The location of the former is significant as the optical centre is usually marginally above the geometric centre, whilst the latter automatically attracts the eye by its opposite position. How does one interpret the advertisement as a carrier of meaning?



dice Carroll Baker

“Voi ed io desideriamo le stesse cose...”

“...un mattino sereno da vivere al sole...
molte ore felici... un'ora tutta nostra
con musica e sogni... una pelle
giovane che profumi di buono...”



“e usiamo le stesse cose voi
ed io: quel sapone puro,
delicato, personalissimo nel profumo...
quel sapone che pulisce la pelle a fondo con il
tocco lieve di una crema di bellezza. Il sapone LUX!”

Il sapone di 9 stelle su 10



Lux offre regali di gran marca con la raccolta punti



7.11 LUX. Carroll Baker - *Confidenze*, 1967
(on previous page)

Indeed, the intertextuality between the star's persona, use of the product, lifestyle and the actual product is established visually before the addressee even proceeds to a linguistic reading of the advertisement. This attention-seeking fundamental is reinforced by use of a 'zig-zag' optical effect proceeding from the upper-left to lower-left corner, inciting further interest in the reader, as the relatively unusual poses adopted by the star require a linguistic interpretation. The images, therefore, create a partial puzzle or inquiry in the addressee's mind that the language, and in particular, the headline, definitely contributes towards solving. By playing on expectation, the advertisement feeds on the reader's desire for knowledge and explicit information, as the carefree poses are far removed from the more frequently seen static poses for the same brand or others.⁸ Indeed, due to the ambiguous images, open to a variety of interpretations, the verbal message becomes essential for its monosemic nature, although in itself selective of a precise interpretation.

The focus on the star's face, and subsequently on the multiple images, functions to elicit an empathy that significantly continues into the headline, where the addressee is encouraged to feel both a sense of similarity with the star who embodies an 'everyday' person like herself, and contemporarily to picture herself with an analogous lifestyle made of pleasure and comforts, if not to actually aspire to star status. As a result, the headline uttered by the protagonist functions as relay, permitting the essential process of anchorage to take place between the star, the images, the brand and the reader's resulting guided interpretation. The headline opens with the 'voi' form, a popular form of address in advertisements, and one that is used to directly establish a particular sense of belonging with the younger female generation. This empathy is reinforced by the use of the other personal subject pronoun 'io' in the equation, notably distinct from the more encompassing 'noi' that implies a real sense of similarity and not merely a sameness within certain limits, as suggested by the 'voi ed io' utilised.

The headline makes use of this person deictic category in order to allow the obstacle represented by the ambiguity of the images to be overcome, as the images are devoid of this form of deictic anchorage, essential for a correct interpretation of the advertisement

in terms of cultural, social and product-related content. The headline also provides the time deixis in the form of the present tense ('desideriamo'), thus linking the language to the images by indicating habitual wishes and a continuous state of desired, if not actually lived experiences, common to both addresser and addressee. The 'desire the same things' provides the means by which to reduce, if not eliminate, any perceivable distance between unreachable stardom and the reader's daily existence. In establishing empathy, the headline effectively introduces the common areas of life experience in the body copy. The body copy is a linguistic continuum from the headline to the final line containing the brand name, reinforcing the open one-way star-addressee dialogue. The specific use of punctuation, quotation marks and absence of full stops and capital letters, lends further credibility to the discourse, as common points no longer function as separate entities, but flow into each other, expressing aspects of the star's personality and thus of the reader's.

The first section of the body copy performs a linking function by continuing the notion of intertwined desires expressed in the headline. The common desires are generic enough to be expressed as 'un mattino sereno da vivere al sole', 'molte ore felici' and 'un'ora tutta nostra con musica e sogni'. This final desire contains the possessive pronoun 'nostra', highly indicative of the sense of buyer-testimonial empathy, and similarity, sought by the advertisement. Significantly, these wishes reflect the broad, young consumer base targeted by the brand, reflecting a state of youthfulness no longer constrained by a set of socially uniform precepts, but the freedom to dream and to fulfil these dreams. The advertisement also reflects the presence of a generation, increasingly seen from the early 1960s as a socially distinct group, with a different approach to life, enjoyment and consumption, less formal in behaviour and self-expression. The later development of notions relating to teenagers and young adults as a distinct social group in countries such as Italy, sees this advertisement aptly expressing the rapidly diminishing restrictions on young people, and on young women, albeit marginally, with use of the active sporty image, compensated by the passivity of listening to records sprawled on a rug in the most relaxed of poses. The ultimate sense of togetherness is reached by means of a desire for young, nice-smelling skin. Use of the specific adjective

'giovane' also serves to establish the target, even though it may be argued that references to youthful skin generally abound in soap advertisements. In this case, the presence of this particular testimonial, combined with the advertisement's location in the middle to lower-middle-class magazine *Confidenze*, specifically targeted at a younger reader, confirm the target. In fact, as suggested by the name itself, the magazine in this period may be seen to reflect readers' consolidating social and personal confidence, as a provider of advice, suggestions and advertisements, aimed at a young woman with new personal and occupational visions. The same issue of the magazine sees the presence of other advertisements with a decidedly modern vision of young women's free-time activities, and their decision-making potential: an advertisement for women's vests, 'Maglieria Alpina', a habitual Italian undergarment features an all-girl band playing guitars and sporting the vests. The same year also sees advertisements for 'Vestebene' dresses, with three aggressive but feminine models wanting to be 'the centre of attention' - 'al centro degli sguardi' (2nd July, 1967), whilst Aperol (6th August, 1967) eliminates the singular 'che le signore preferiscono' slogan in favour of a more generic 'l'aperitivo poco alcoolico', so implying a wider consumption category in terms of taste and gender.

In the second section of the body copy the introductory phrase furthers this desire by reiterating the headline, albeit with variations. The verb 'usare' replaces 'desiderare' as the focus of the phrase, given that by this point in the discourse at least one desire has been turned into a reality: nice-smelling, young skin. The personal subject pronouns 'voi' and 'io' are located at the end of the phrase, thus allowing a lead-in to the product's qualities by means of the subsequent colon. The adjectives 'puro' and 'delicato' have the purpose of defining the product's specific qualities, despite recurrence of the same adjectives for various cosmetic and hygiene products. Their use also lies in relation to the product's perfume content and cleansing ability, likened in this case to that of a beauty cream. The superlative 'personalissimo' indicates the product's adaptability to skin type and substitution of body odour with a personalised perfume. Also invariably suggested is a type of individualised self-enhancement to be obtained from product use, and evidently obtained by the star in question.

Notably, comparison of apparently unrelated products, such as soap to perfume and cosmetic creams, is a frequent feature of toiletry advertising that attempts to provide the product with qualities transcending those normally associated with a simple bar of soap. An analogous product with a different advertising strategy is 'Camay' soap (*Grazia*, 13th March, 1960) that transmits a message of seduction through product use (see Figure 7.12). Woman as seductress is a ploy of advertising discourse by imaging women in this role and thus encouraging them to view themselves as such. The average Italian woman is encouraged to view herself as seductress by an advertisement that does not, in itself, picture a stereotypical seductress but an 'ordinary' woman who may adopt the role if she so wishes. The product empowers her with this ability and yet frames her within a traditionally modest role, as the advertisement uses the third person 'seduce' and not the first person 'seduci', thus placing the onus on the product as the tool of seduction and not on the woman as the subject of seduction. The woman can, thus, avoid this immodest role associated with overt sexuality and yet obtain a certain satisfaction from her powers of seduction. The soap essentially performs the basic function of a cleanser, but also becomes a tool of seduction, as the buyer is told that it contains French perfume and cold cream, two luxury beauty products. These individual products would only be available to the well-heeled consumer at a time when many families are still concentrating on obtaining basic necessities and household goods. Use of this particular 'Unique Selling Proposition' adds to the product's appeal, given women's desire for the more sophisticated, yet frequently unaffordable cosmetic products also advertised in the magazines. This strategy, symptomatic of those years straddling the late 1950s and early 1960s, when general prosperity was on the horizon, but was still not a reality for many families, also reflects the fact that women are still not sufficiently financially independent to afford a range of beauty or personal products. Indeed, a feature of much advertising for beauty products of the period is the pricing of the product in the advertisement, a fact that reiterated these aspects, as well as the evident cost-consciousness, and concept of 'value for money' attached to much consumption. This advertising feature begins to fade by the late 1960s as the economic 'miracle' becomes a fact of life for an even greater number of families.

...con CAMAY seduce



perchè solo CAMAY

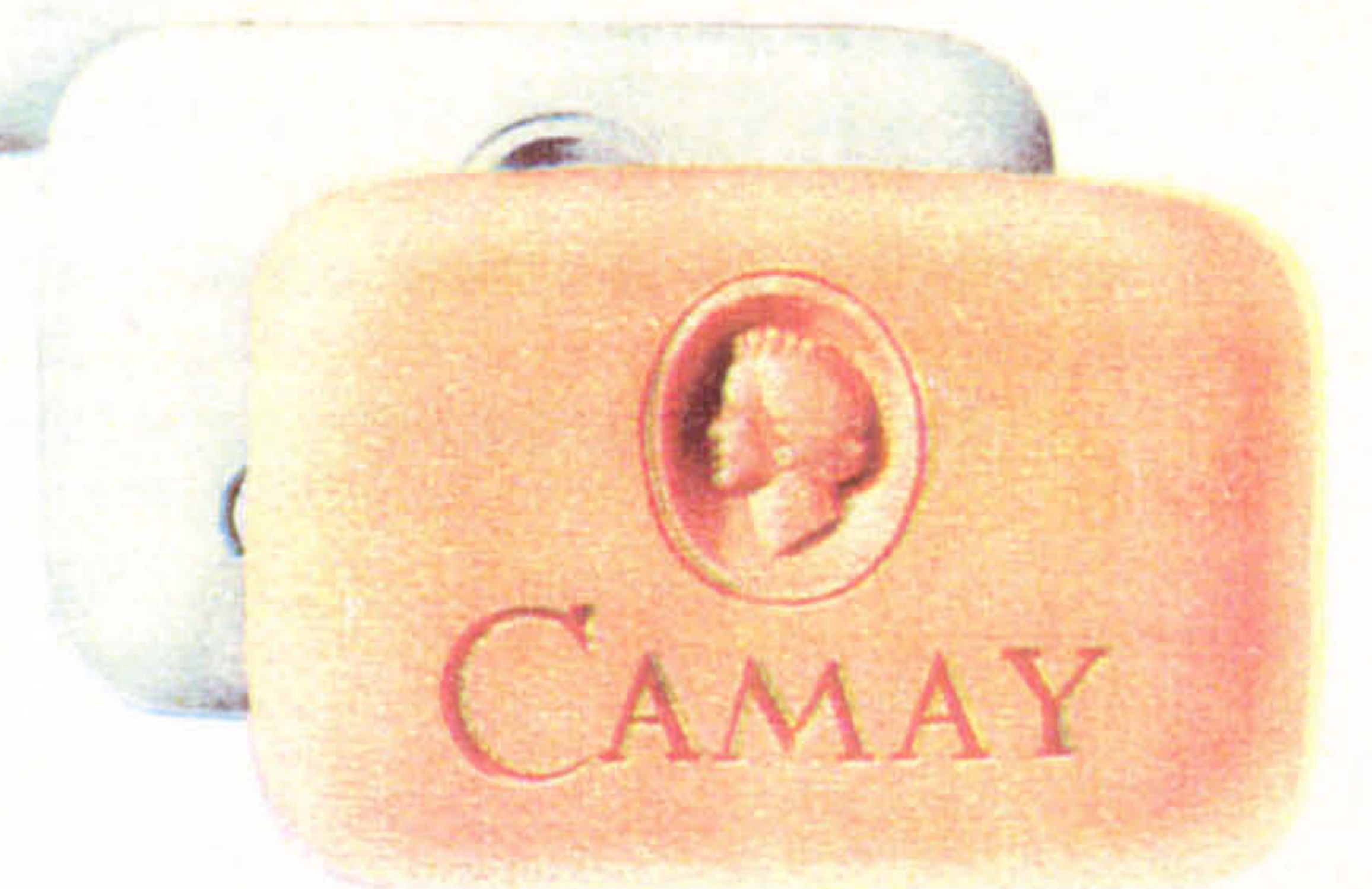
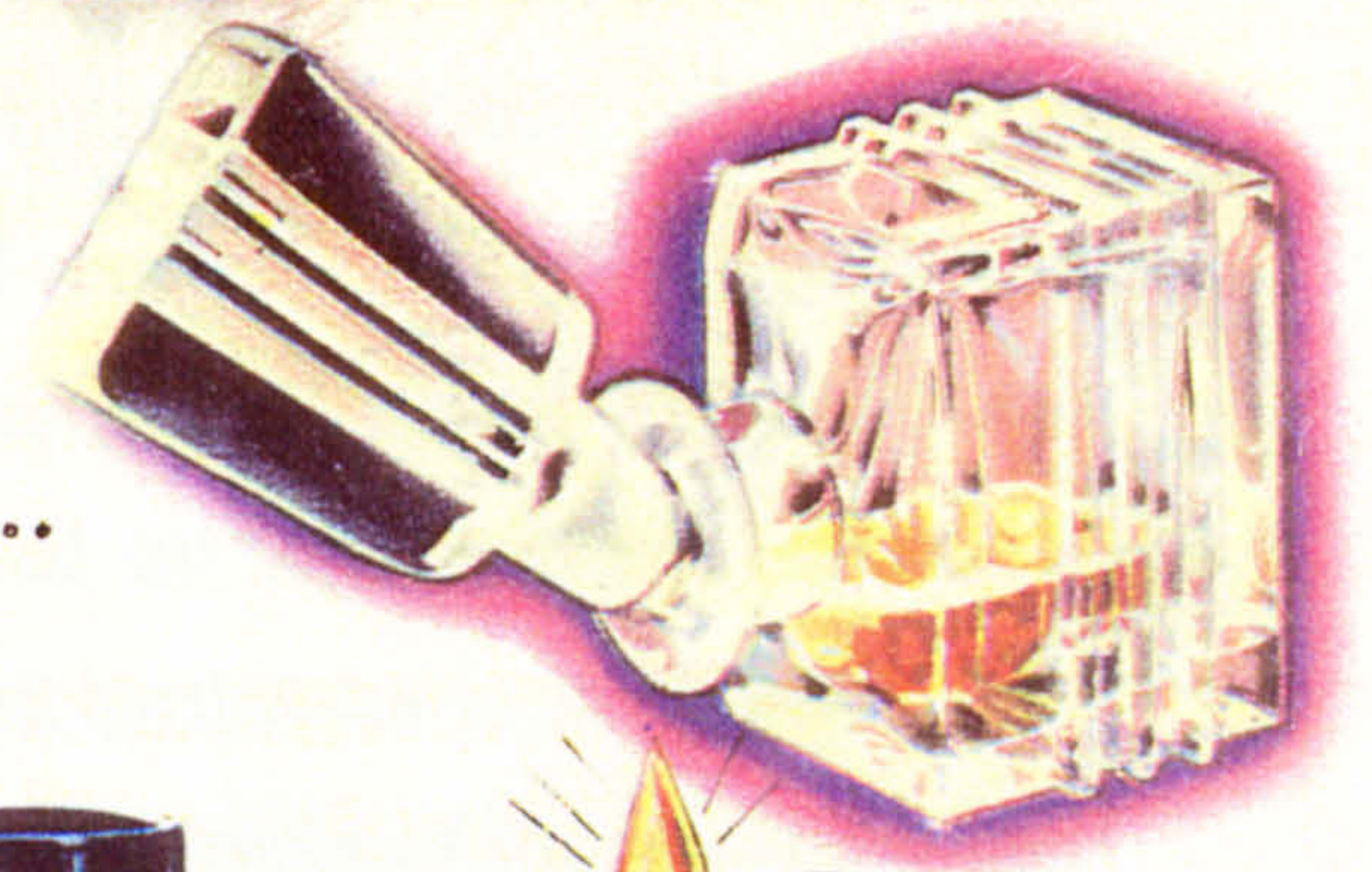
contiene Profumo Francese...

che vi costerebbe 10.000 lire il bocchettino

...e Cold Cream

che rende la pelle più vellutata

Solo CAMAY, Rosa o Bianco,
esalta la vostra carnagione,
dona un fascino nuovo, segreto,
irresistibile, vi conquista
l'ammirazione di tutti.



Bianco



CAMAY

seduce... seduce... seduce

7.12 CAMAY. Seduce ... - *Grazia*, 1960
(on previous page)

In the Lux case, the limited financial accessibility and social constraints attached to the use of expensive perfumes and creams for younger women also contribute towards explaining the integration of these qualities into the product. Furthermore, in the advertisement, the absence of concepts relating to physical attractiveness, powers of seduction, and relations with the opposite sex, is significant, relating not simply to the 'Lux' tradition, but reflecting an increasing tendency for younger women to consider personal needs and desires independent of social constraints. Although the older woman may well see the product as part of her daily cleansing and beautifying routine, geared to facilitating a certain image, the younger woman is encouraged to view the product as a means by which individual desires may come a step closer to realisation. These desires transcend the wish for a relationship, a common ingredient in augmenting the allure of a wide range of products, and reflect the characteristics of young Italian women, increasingly exposed to the opportunities available in education and employment.

The second section is, therefore, prevalently informational in nature, compared to the decidedly poetic language of the first. The concluding words of the body copy ('Il sapone Lux!') perform the function of providing the reply to the absent, yet palpable interrogative, of which product can provide all these benefits, and although not specifically directional in nature, they appear to almost direct purchase by use of the exclamation mark typical found in forms such as 'Buy!' or 'Ask for!'. Action is therefore not exhorted by use of an imperative, but by a more subtle form, and the omnipresent slogan. The latter serves to delineate and separate the underlying images, explicitly linked to the brand and its use from those above, associated with the poetic first section. The images of the opened bar portrayed by the packaged version, to facilitate identification and purchase, are complemented by the star in her bathtub. This unsophisticated image allows the addressee to gain a final glimpse of the star in the most familiar of poses, one that effectively allows the testimonial-reader distance to be reduced, providing the final dose of similarity with the addressee's reality. The full-face stills of sophisticated, bejewelled, elegant stars of preceding years seem to be forgotten temporarily, as this new type of star shares the pleasures and experiences of her public.

Significantly, this advertisement from an issue of *Confidenze*, is reinforced the following month (*Confidenze*, 25th June) by a similar advertisement with Italian actress Rossana Podestà, whose appeal to young Italian women is assured. Notably, however, whilst the most important language features of the advertisement remain the same, with the images and introductory paragraph somewhat personalised, the advertisement has lost its first person speech form, as the relay function becomes almost superfluous, given the greater instinctive empathy and knowledge possessed by consumers for a 'home-made' star. Use of regular reinforcement is also evident for other toiletry products like Colgate toothpaste, where the same year sees various images based on the interrogative 'Vi sentite sicuri del vostro alito - anche in un momento così?'. Women are increasingly portrayed in a range of social situations and in close proximity to the opposite sex, albeit in positions of social and professional difference, as symbolised by the body postures (Goffman, 1985). The forms of 'gender display' in these advertisements are indicative of male executive roles in a society where women perform under direction, and have little decision-making capacity, even in the training pool (*Confidenze*, 18th June 1967). In the university setting (*Confidenze*, 7th June, 1967), the female student likewise 'looks up' to her 'professore' in a posture indicative of respect and recognition of male authority, a fact reiterated by advertisements for diverse products featuring men and women, as the women are regularly in a subservient social or occupational position to the male. It is significant to note that the relative absence of males from women's magazines, and from advertising in general, for a range of products, changes over the following years as male consumerism is more recognised. Indeed, the male image is useful to denote a number of product characteristics, such as quality assurance product effectiveness and trust in these advertisements, especially for non gender-specific products like toothpaste.

7.6 MULTIPLE DISCOURSES IN TOILETRY ADVERTISEMENTS AND THE NEW 1970s 'LUX' WOMAN

The novelty of the 1970s, and the following years, undoubtedly lies in the use of men to an increasing, participatory degree in advertising discourse for soap and toothpaste

products, no longer simply as recipients of the beneficial effects deriving from the product's use by the woman, but in relation to the change in consumption roles, are increasingly portrayed as consumers in their own right. Although featured without the omnipresent mother or wife catering to all his needs, women are still being encouraged to fill this very role as language and images, albeit of a different nature, orient women towards the role of eternal carer and purchaser in women's magazines. The use of the male model also undoubtedly allows a certain degree of advertising differentiation whilst associating features regarded as typically 'male' to the desired product image. Men feature implicitly or explicitly as comfort seekers with the woman providing the much longed-for docility and tenderness (Parca, 1977) or in the 'tough guy' image. The clean-shaven, rugged reliability of the 'Chlorodont' toothpaste model, packet thrust forward in a firm male grasp (*Confidenze*, 1970), or 'Scottex' toilet tissue featuring alongside an unshaven, imposing male wrapped in a feathery boa (*Grazia*, 1974) show the use of male characteristics as a strong selling technique. The symbolism of the male model is revealed in a mental association between the tough, strong man and the product's attributes of cleaning power in the first and strength with gentleness in the second.

The 1970s also consolidate the increasing availability of cosmetics, creams and perfumes for an expanded market of various income levels, in a market segmentation process that increases throughout the decade and characterises the cosmetics and toiletry industries in the following years. The main development may be identified in the fact that toiletries, and particularly toilet soap, are considered ever less as 'cosmetics', with comparable beneficial effects on the skin. The product is no longer seen by the consumer as the means of obtaining perfect facial skin, given the progressive advertising emphasis attributed to a proper skin care routine, and to anti-ageing products that battle against the passage of time, environmental factors and the damage caused by the rudimentary soap cleansers. Numerous beauty editorials in middle-class magazines teach women how, when and where to use different types of cosmetics, and the fact that soap is no longer a universal solution. Such is the extent of advertising persuasion that even Natalia Ginzburg (1971), in a journalistic contribution, marvels at the newly discovered negative

effects linked to the facial use of soap. As a result, emphasis shifts largely to other functions based on the body, as facial use rapidly loses its credibility in a cosmetics and toiletries market characterised by products ranging from those to be found on supermarket shelves, to those available at the exclusive specialised outlets. The static, expressionless, facial images utilised in cosmetic advertisements, and especially in advertisements for facial creams, are substituted by the more familiar photo sequence or 'real life situation', where the product's benefits are communicated through an evolving story, and appropriate gestures and expressions utilised. A 'Rexona' toilet soap advertisement (*Grazia*, 21st June, 1970), utilises the 'shared secret' formula, as one friend whispers to another: 'Sai per il tuo problema c'è Rexona. È il sapone più deodorante che conosca'. The ensuing centre-page headline 'Solo Rexona è deodorante "mattino sera"', sees use of two distinct images: the model lathering her body, followed by the word 'mattino' and in elegant evening dress, being courted by two handsome men, followed by the word 'sera'. The association between the long-lasting effects of the product and that of a 24-hour deodorant are established, as the advertisement utilises the notion of multiple advantages to be gained from a product that transcends the function of mere cleanser.

The apparent reduction over time in the frequency of advertisements for soap and toothpaste in women's magazines may also be due to other factors. Brand loyalty may be cited, resulting in a reduction in the need for the frequent advertising characteristic of the initial phases of a brand's life cycle, when consumer awareness is low. The entrance of new competing brands, whether of a direct or indirect competitive nature may also be indicated, due to the fact that from the late 1960s an increasing number of specific products for female hygiene become available, from various types of deodorants to douches, thus displacing the bar of soap from its traditional all-encompassing hegemony. Furthermore, the use of other media, in particular television, with its potential for memory recall by means of memorable jingles and images, balances out the progressively greater utilisation of middle-class women's magazines for female beauty and hygiene, food, domestic and childcare products.

Nevertheless, by the late 1970s, 'Lux' continues to advertise its toilet soap in women's magazines, albeit without the '9 stars out of 10' slogan, which is clearly outdated at a time when consumers are less inclined to base purchase on the wise word of the current testimonial. The 1979 advertisement from *Grazia* (see Figure 7.13) features international star Raquel Welch, whose testimony for the new brand version is expressed in the headline, functioning as relay to the advertisement, as she merely asserts a well-ascertained fact, and one that the consumer should be aware of: that the product protects the skin. Use of the emphatic 'sì' in the headline adds greater credibility to the assertion, corroborated by a direct quote below the image. The star's opinion retains its importance as the advertisement establishes an indexical relationship between the testimonial's beauty that appears relatively natural, and not heavily made-up, and the beneficial effects to be obtained from regular product use. The adjectives 'morbida' and 'curata' denote these effects, where being 'womanly' is one's first duty. The image reinforces the empathy established in the text by means of the open and direct gaze, where the slightly parted lips indicate the recently uttered headline. The direct eye contact established with the addressee leads to a sense of complicity, as the addressee is invited to share the star's beauty formula. The partially turned head, casual clothing and open neckline reinforce notions of casualness, frank communication and empathy established with the addressee.

The main body copy communicates the properties of the 'new', improved brand, as the two adjectives 'naturali' and 'pregiate' denote, whilst the comparative of inequality places the brand above all others, thus practically displacing it from the realms of the regular soap brands as the addressee is led to understand that a significant difference exists in terms of quality and customer care. Use of typographical underlining of this introductory phrase in the body copy fixes the reader's attention on this vital concept, subsequently reinforced by the lower text. Indeed, the uniqueness lies in the product's affinity to the skin's own biological composition, central to the fact that the brand leaves softness and elasticity, and, therefore, by expectation, the addressee deduces that other brands cause dryness and lack elasticity, detrimental factors associated with the much touted problems of environmental sensitivity and ageing in a variety of advertisements.

Lux, sí che protegge la pelle



"Una pelle morbida e curata fa parte della bellezza di essere donna... per questo uso Lux"

dice Raquel Welch.

Per Lux vengono impiegate più sostanze naturali pregiate di qualsiasi altro sapone. Le sostanze naturali di Lux sono simili a quelle presenti sulla pelle. Ecco perché la sua schiuma è più densa, più cremosa e quando va via lascia la pelle morbida ed elastica. **Lux, finita la schiuma è come una crema.**

7.13 LUX. Raquel Welch - *Grazia*, 1979

(on previous page)

The use of the invariable comparative 'più' with the adjectives 'densa' and 'cremosa', does not simply refer to superiority compared to other brands, but also to the brand's previous formula, as although the superlative form is missing from the text, the message does, however, encourage the consumer to see the brand as the best available, the ultimate aim of any advertisement. The use of these particular adjectives is based on a lexical and photographic comparison with facial cream, an enduring formula in toilet soap advertisements, where an indexical relationship is also established between the epidermal benefits to be gained from a jar of cream, and the product's ability to perform similar anti-dryness, rejuvenating and beauty-enhancing functions. The well-worn message is lent greater credibility by the use of the testimonial and the slogan, where the enduring after effects of product use, also inherent in the use of the verb 'finire', is reflected in the star's ageless beauty and the brand's long-standing market success.

As the 1970s draw to a close, few developments appear initially to have infiltrated the advertising of toiletries, as soap, toothpaste and the increasing range of personal hygiene products on supermarket shelves use health, beauty and social acceptability to ensure purchase. Nevertheless, the targeting of women with particular language and image for toiletries that are seen as cosmetics in the early post-war period, and later as beauty aids as women gain financial access to the cosmetic ranges previously reserved for the truly well-off, signals the developments of forms of advertising discourse, and the changing nature of an advertising discourse that must contemporaneously consider women's traditional, yet changing, social roles in targeting vast sectors of the female buying public. As a result, the discourse of large multinationals in their increasing use of multi-domestic advertising campaigns is generally more oriented towards those areas associated with femininity, whilst exploring new approaches, above all in the incorporation of a range of discourses featuring the male to progressive versions of a 'new' woman, who in terms of developments in Italy does exhibit some innovative characteristics, whilst remaining firmly anchored to established notions of Western femininity.

ENDNOTES TO CHAPTER 7

1 A particularly renowned case is that of the magazine *Le Grandi Firme*. The hysteria surrounding the female figure, such as the anti-feminine 'maschietta', criticised as notoriously far from the accepted ideal, and resulting in the censorship of advertisements, would later fuel antipathy for the voluptuous cover females of *Le Grandi Firme*, more akin to seductress than wife-mother, thus decreeing the death of the magazine in 1938.

2 Advertising is so significant as to penetrate all areas of life by the 1930s, with cinema no exception. A 1932 production featuring Vittorio de Sica ('Gli uomini che mascalzoni'. Director: M. Camerini) sees the rampant and indiscriminate use of advertising in the film, set against the backdrop of the Milan industrial trade fair. The evolving story with the 'brava ragazza' Mariuccia (L. Franca) sees use of socially acceptable criteria, as the made-up, fashionable girls are forsaken for this virtuous version of young womanhood, where marriage is the ultimate aim and employment but a temporary condition.

3 Notably, much of the freedom experienced by women during the war is rapidly re-evaluated, in Italy as elsewhere, in the post-war period with the return to the 'culla, casa, chiesa' for many. The level of freedom pictured in advertising terms may be seen by an example from the magazine *Grazia*, where by the summer of 1941, the advertisements relating to women's escalating war work and liberated social status becomes more marked. The 5th June issue is emblematic of the mixture of messages directed at women in this period: the advertisement by the cycling industry - 'BICICLETTA: Sport dei poeti. Sport della salute!' features a young woman cycling in shorts, socks and high-heeled war-time cork sandals, followed by a detailed list of the physical benefits to be obtained from the activity. The obvious need to save on fuel for war purposes, however, goes unmentioned as women are actively encouraged to utilise a means of transport previously regarded as somewhat unfeminine and male-dominated. The importance of this low-cost means of transport has frequently featured in Italian cinematic production both before and after the war, but never are women so encouraged to use this means of transport as when employment and the liberated customs, often criticised by the Church during the war, transform their lives. As indicated by Miriam Mafai (1987), the summer of 1941 heralds the cycling fad, as young women shorten their clothes and cycle out of paternal control. The Church's purity campaign becomes a mere set of local authority rules and fines against trousers and shorts, in the face of escalating hunger and independence.

The marketing of previously 'male' products to the relatively new target market of young employable women is also emphasised by a Boccasile employment autarchic advertisement: a girl in dungarees, spade in hand is portrayed digging, whilst the caption 'l'impronta femminile nel lavoro dei campi' de-emphasises the image by reducing the nature of women's agricultural labour to that of the 'female touch', much akin to

light gardening. As with other advertisements invoking war-related participation, any mention of the real nature of the employment is avoided, so much more for those sections of the population, such as the middle-classes, whose lack of familiarity with a spade would lead to even greater difficulties in adapting to war-time requirements and restrictions. Unlike the direct propaganda utilised by the regime, this form of advertising does not refer to the use of substitute goods or forms of labour, despite the analogous aim of freeing goods and manpower for the war effort. True to target market, the advertisement focuses on the middle-class vegetable patch grower, whose contribution would rarely extend beyond partial coverage of personal food needs, with a degree of choice giving way to obligation, as increasing food shortages result in the use of all available planting space.

4 The influence exerted by American concepts of advertising are not simply limited to the products advertised by the multinationals, but extend to Italian companies eager to explore alternatives, thereby allowing certain taboos to be fragmented, if not totally broken. Advertisements for products such as sanitary towels begin to appear with greater frequency, alongside menstrual pain killers, with the magazine *Confidenze* advertising 'Intrex' sanitary tampons (27th October, 1946). The reader is exhorted to be modern - 'Sii moderna in tutto!' - with availability of a sample and information leaflet on request. The two women portrayed discussing the product's benefits are meant to reassure any new user, and communicate the advantages of eliminating the paraphernalia of cloth pads used by the majority of women, given the expense of disposables. The relative absence of advertisements in this magazine in the initial years of publication would undoubtedly afford a higher profile and visibility to these few advertisements, resulting in greater impact, compared to the more densely advertised magazines. Although relatively unusual in a rather traditional environment, the advertising of this type of product probably reflects an attempt at tapping into modern tendencies and a wish for new goods. The phenomenon appears short-lived, however, as this type of advertisement rarely appears in the following years, and this magazine is soon submerged by a similar spate of advertisements much akin to the other magazines on the market.

5 The analysis in chapter 5 on cosmetics demonstrates the use of these advertising strategies by companies like Elizabeth Arden, albeit for an earlier period.

6 Buonanno's analysis, and sample of working and lower-middle-class magazines, identifies a particular form of advertising based on limited spending power and saving on the family budget. According to Buonanno, the use of quite frank language and images rarely allow products such as soap, toothpaste and deodorant to be communicated as beauty.

7 The evolving nature of the Italian economy, society and politics are discussed to varying degrees: Maria Cacioppo (1982) analyses family conditions and living standards; Piera De Tassis (1982) investigates

women's condition in terms of the use of the body and portrayal of the female figure in the media, with particular reference to cinema; Marco Barbanti (1992) investigates the issue of morality in post-war Catholic culture and in terms of the ethical and moral campaigns of the 1940s and 1950s that influence, and are influenced by, both the Communist Party and the 'Democrazia Cristiana' parties; David Forgacs and Robert Lumley trace the growth of the cinema and television in Italy in the post-war period. These factors may be seen as particularly significant popular culture components of the economic boom years, with the ensuing increasing centrality of television in Italian culture; Aurelio Lepre (1995) provides an analysis of the development of television as an instrument of social unification and of the spread of American and consumerist models. Lepre's consideration of the DC's hegemony in daily life and the family, focuses on the integration of the 'American dream' into Catholic family life, to the extent that, in order to overcome the church's aversion for the American way of life, yet abhorrence for the Left, economic progress and rising standards of living are explained away by the DC in acceptable terms. Typically, domestic appliances and packaged food did not mean less time for women to dedicate to the family, but a welcome lightening of their load; finally, Stephen Gundle (2000) analyses the various mass culture issues facing Italian Communism over a longer post-war period to the eve of the new millennium.

8 The 'Lux' soap advertisements are regularly present in a number of magazines apart from the restricted category of women's magazines, given the continuous expansion in number and variety of weekly magazines also prevalently read by the female population. For example, a 1960 advertisement for the brand features in both women's magazines like *Confidenze*, and in popular weekly magazines of the period, with an Italian actress who is a familiar face for the national public (*Tempo*, 2nd July 1960). Use of a close-up of the star's face and the headline 'può la vostra carnagione sfidare il primo piano?' ('can your complexion bear a close-up?') underlines the multinational's well-worn strategy of identifying beauty as both natural and yet obtainable, as the ultimate function of the brand is to facilitate the emergence of that beauty.

CHAPTER 8: THE RELEVANCE OF THE FINDINGS ON ADVERTISING DISCOURSES IN ITALIAN WOMEN'S MAGAZINES

Chapters 3 to 7 considered the nature of advertising in Italian women's magazines by an examination of five distinct, yet interconnected, product categories aimed at Italian middle-class women, in terms of periods and advertising discourses. It was shown that the advertising of domestic appliances and food, along with other related products, utilises a message in the post-war period based largely on an underlying and dominant 'domesticity' ideology. This was unlike the advertising in the inter-war period that is frequently characterised by appeals involving notions of appearance and lifestyle. Cosmetic and toiletry advertising base the message content on an ideology of female beauty and Italian social acceptability, although cosmetic advertising is more oriented towards the creation of a perfect mask, able to hide imperfections and facilitate the creation of the desired persona. Toiletry advertising communicates the product's ability to overcome exclusion by providing access to a range of social situations. The historic emphasis placed on women's emanation of a fresh, sweet bodily odour, in contrast to the lack of such requirements for men (Sivulka, 1998), increasingly becomes a sign of social acceptability and femininity in the middle-classes. Finally, cars remain as probably the most ambiguous of the product categories discussed, where the addressee enters and exits from various message forms, as the advertising discourse, at first glance, reflects dominant ideologies, yet incites a variety of perspectives following a more in-depth reading of the advertisements. Their analysis draws forth an initial interpretation based on denotative elements and manifest connotative content, to progress into the realms of ideology and context, and meaning at a deeper level. Thus, their meanings at different levels have been considered and, where applicable, their polysemic nature has been demonstrated. As a result, with reference to the product categories and brands analysed, a number of conclusions may be drawn in relation to their language and images.

Domestic appliance advertising in Italian women's magazines is characterised by a number of discourses. The tentative advertising of the pre-World War One years in

women's magazines contrasts with the more assiduous advertising in other press media, as the woman's magazine generally features a limited advertising content for household goods. With the advent of war and changes in women's roles and status, appliance advertising becomes marginally more noticeable with the use of a discourse and images targeted increasingly at the modern woman in terms of her leisure time and spending power. Thus the middle-class woman can be seen increasingly to embody a purchasing function, not simply for the home, but also for herself, and in so doing this allows notions of independence, modernity, and the 'as yet' secondary notion of pleasure for the growing Italian middle-class, to filter into advertising. Despite the rarity of appliance advertising in middle-class women's magazines of the war and early post-war years, by the mid 1920s the undeniable presence of brands like Electrolux leads to the utilisation of a language and image of women that simultaneously merge and diverge from the post-war 'ritorno al focolare' ideal. Contrasting notions of hygiene and art are combined in advertisements calling on the wise 'padrona di casa' to invest in the technologically advanced machine that provides comfort in an enviable home environment, whilst images hint at modernity, fashion, independence and the possibility of fleeing the domestic sphere and the traditional housecoat for the outside world.

Despite the notable lack of domestic appliance advertising in Italian women's magazines of the 1930s, and the fact that the occasional advertisement emphasises the increasingly domestic function attributed to women by the regime, language and image, nevertheless, mediate this dominant vision with other socio-cultural discourses. For the middle-class woman, the domestic appliance is communicated to her as a means, not simply of meeting family needs, but of saving time and physical labour. Significantly, the free time thus acquired is not attributed to the need to do more chores, as envisioned by the 'moglie e madre esemplare' role model, but generally its use is implied in terms of personal or non-domestic activities in or out of the home. The range of advertisements and general content in Italian women's magazines corroborate such an interpretation, whilst the fact that domestic appliance advertising suffered a general decrease in this period does not allow for the force of the language and image used in advertisements to

be denied. Advertising in the post-war period sees a much less sophisticated use of discourse, with the woman framed in the domesticity ideal of the 1950s, thus leaving little scope for contrasting elements, or a more polysemic reading of the advertisements by the addressee. Whilst some advertisements do eliminate the female image to focus on technical features, and in so doing, allow for a glimmer of flexibility beyond the intended closed meaning to emerge, most advertisers rely on the female image to transmit what is viewed as a dominant and inescapable dominant vision of womanhood.

The 1960s herald the utilisation of various signs in appliance advertising that point to a more varied, if still often criticised as unrealistic, message content and interpretation of the advertisements. In fact, although the woman appears principally linked to the home, she is central to an advertising message that emphasises other considerations such as lifestyle aspirations, non-domestic activities, and even external employment. It widens the scope of the addressee's interpretation, as time and labour saving features take on new meaning in a changing socio-economic environment. Indeed, women's increased status as purchasers and decision-makers may be seen in the advertising for this category of goods, albeit linked to domestic functions. This fact continues throughout the 1970s, despite the integration of more 'user-friendly' notions relating to independence and new family roles. This variation in appliance advertisements excludes explicit reference to the employed woman, despite feminist critical analysis of the period, but does signal a progressive development in discourses targeting a more demanding and informed middle-class consumer, whose identity is increasingly less reflected in that of the modern 'massaia'. Finally, the continued use of a domesticity discourse in the advertising of domestic appliances undoubtedly relies on a stereotype that is difficult for advertisers to ignore, although the fact that image and language in advertisements converge and diverge from this stereotype in various periods is indicative of the degree of complexity in the advertising of one of the most representative categories of goods for the home.

The Mediterranean undoubtedly offers a particular combination of foods that are frequently associated with Italy, and in advertising in Italian women's magazines,

increasingly linked to the woman as the prime carrier of meaning for nurturing and caring functions. Food advertising by large domestic producers evolves from humble origins to become a significant presence by the 1920s with the utilisation of image and language that come into a certain conflict with these notions. The centrality of the body, clothes and appearance in advertising, in the wake of the war and the 'garçonne' look, heralds an unprecedented emphasis on physical factors for the Italian middle-class woman. Buitoni and Cirio adroitly target this 'ideal-typical' woman with increasingly differentiated product ranges, as choice becomes synonymous with independence and control over one's body. The manifest divergence of advertising discourse in women's magazines from prevailing regime ideals, deals a blow to the myth of the physically imposing Italian 'mamma', as younger generations of middle-class Italian women are influenced by a multiplicity of contrasting cultural and ideological forces in the heyday of the aproned, house-bound cook and carer. Characterised also by a variety of advertising images and language, beckoning women into a haven of lifestyle possibilities and aspirations, food advertising utilises such images as the maid, the nurse, the bouncy baby, the social event, and contrasting 'before' and 'after' profiles, as the addressee is enticed into a world far from regime dictates. This, nevertheless, vanishes in the 'happy housewife' Cirio advertisements in the years following the war. Such is the dominance of this image that, despite use of other image and language based on the impeccable hostess or occasional secretary, food advertising is concentrated on this modernised and increasingly 'housecoat-less' image. Typically, emphasis by Barilla advertisers on culture, tradition and the 'Gran Cuoca' in each Italian woman, does not allow for alternative discourses for years. Even the 'Star' brands and the multinational Kraft steer clear of advertising that utilises a message based on anything other than such factors. As the female model alternatively enters and exits from food advertising, the image and language remain focused on quality, price and culinary tradition with the woman as the sole addressee of a food preparation process that retains a mystique associated uniquely with Italian femininity. Finally, in excluding other content and the role of the male in all but that of culinary expert, food, and particularly pasta, advertising becomes ever more linked to a specific female function, less nurturing than b

efore and more sophisticated than ever, compared to the inter-war years advertising, where evolving visions of Italian womanhood provide advertisers with much 'food for thought'.

The advertising of vehicles has generally featured as a minority category in Italian women's magazines, despite the persistent use of the woman as a sign in advertisements from the early 1900s, denoting such characteristics as care, comfort and safety. The favourable connotations of the female image in active and passive roles, continues in the inter-war years, with the 1920s particularly characterised by the young, fun-loving, independent driver. Such is the strength of this image, corroborated by a lack of language text, that this form of advertising denoting women's freedom and self-expression is substituted by more passive images where, although used for her positive connotations, particularly in advertising targeted at women, the 1930s woman is portrayed less in terms of her role as active user of the product. Increasingly associated with concepts of manliness and masculinity, the act of driving is not, however, a male prerogative, as advertisements targeting the woman driver continue sporadically up to the war. The advertisements highlight concepts of independence and middle-class aspirations and for women, stimulating participation in a public sphere where the car leads to new freedoms. Indeed, in comparison to this inter-war period, the post-war years appear drab and staid with a revival in direct car advertising to women only in the late 1960s. Emerging slowly from advertisers' blinkered visions, the image and language no longer relegates the woman purchaser to a passive role of competition prize-winner. In reducing the use of the woman's image in car advertisements, there is a focus on the language that alternates from the persuasive to the informational and technical, as the addressee's purchasing role is acknowledged. Despite their lack of frequency in women's magazines due to the nature of the investment, car advertisements may be seen as emblematic of changes in perceptions of Italian women, and of the discourse utilised in a significant, yet often theoretically undervalued category of advertised products in Italian women's magazines.

Cosmetic advertising has long been standard fare in Italian women's magazines, as colognes and creams give way to more complex product ranges in the wake of the expanding cosmetic sector in Italy and abroad, as the passage from essentials to ranges similar to today's occurs in the inter-war period with both national and especially international producers. The Elizabeth Arden brand is a particular case, yet emblematic of the development of an advertising campaign that encourages the addressee to construct a set form of femininity through adopting a beauty mask. This, although denying individuality, is 'sold' to women as a means of optimising those physical features that reflect positive, and overcome negative, personality traits. The significance of these campaigns lies in their recurrence over extended periods of time, as women from one generation to the next, are bombarded repeatedly with continual references to the need to care for their physical beauty, but not as an end in itself, but as a means to an end. The utilisation of a variety of discourses by this producer and others, from English rose freshness, clinical perfection and stardom, to post-war facial 'pan-cakes' and subsequent naturalness, does not in any case detract from a central theme of youth, sophistication and make-up as the ultimate expression of femininity that the appearance of more middle-market brands does little to expel. Nevertheless, despite the undeniable dominance of cosmetic advertisements in some Italian women's magazines of particular periods, the lack of attention attributed to these advertisements beyond feminist critiques of the propagation of a deliberately inflicted and damaging 'beauty myth' reflects a limited vision. Recognition of the role of cosmetic advertisements in stimulating self-expression, self-protection and visibility for women, in a culture where women have typically received limited social recognition, is emblematic of a very different vision.

The centrality retained by cosmetics in the advertising pages of Italian women's magazines is reflected in that of toiletries, where the use of a message based on self-enhancement and hygiene sees women framed within a certain advertising discourse. The prominence gained by multinational corporations is largely due to the language and image of imposing, eye-catching and frequent advertisements, as brands built on loyalty acquired in inter-war campaigns. Above all, in the immediate post-war period, these

dominant brands propose images of femininity based on media, cinematic and Western cultural notions of womanhood that reinforce the centrality of physical appeal for women, while transcending country-specific limitations. Hollywood is used as a referent, both directly and indirectly, for much toiletry advertising in Italian women's magazines, as women are invited to partake in a complicity whereby the 'magical' properties of the beauty 'formula' transforms not just their skin but even their social life. The utilisation of the 'shared secret' message in toiletry advertising engages women in a well-known and willingly undertaken complicity, with most addressees aware of the real benefits and limitations of toiletry products. Indeed, in addressing Italian women with these and other advertising messages and images, advertisers rely on the post-war woman's desire for previously unobtainable goods stimulated by the flood of Hollywood films, information on stars and on the American way of life. The primary role played by toiletry advertising in these magazines involves the linking of brand identity to the magazine, as cosmetics generally, although principally toiletries, increasingly reflect the differentiation of the magazines in social class target market terms. Nevertheless, the toiletry brands considered in detail are spread across the middle-class range of Italian women's magazines, thereby encouraging widespread empathy with a message or the image of a film star, increasingly seen as accessible to younger women in terms of aspirations or lifestyle, and to older women in terms of acceptance and improvement of self.

Finally, changes in the advertising techniques, message content, and use of image and language, in the various product categories and brands considered, make the analysis more interesting. Italian women are consistently framed by advertising discourses in a 'no man's land' between tradition and modernity. Not fully reflecting tradition, given technological and economic progress, nor fully incorporating modernity, advertising language and image appears to fluctuate, moving from advertisers' visions of the traditional Italian woman to contained versions of the modern woman that are not fully realised. The role of changing advertising techniques and content are to reflect developments in an implicit rather than explicit way in advertising. However, the discourses often appear to target the Italian woman in a somewhat static way. Despite

this, the means by which she is mediated by advertising images and language throughout the 20th century can still allow a broader interpretation based on the underlying context.

CHAPTER 9: PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE: SOME CONCLUSIONS ON THE STUDY OF ADVERTISING IN ITALIAN WOMEN'S MAGAZINES:

9.1 THE IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY IN RELATION TO PREVIOUS WORKS

The analysis of the advertising in women's magazines took place in various Western countries in the wake of the second wave of the feminist movement. The fundamental role played by advertising in moulding consumption, perceptions, and attitudes, especially in industrialised countries, became increasingly recognised and incorporated into academic, journalistic and popular press contributions. Other elements in the equation proved equally important, such as women's central consumer role for the family unit, and the formal integration of advertising, media studies and women's studies into academia, initially in countries like the United States and Britain, and later in others like Italy. However, the different forms of analyses frequently emerged as fractional, ideologically bound and historically limited, with both feminist and non-feminist authors often generalising or stereotyping issues, frequently without a more concerted effort at considering the actual use of language and image in advertisements.

The research for this thesis was therefore conducted in order to fill a gap in the literature that had been identified. This related to the fact that studies conducted on the advertisements in Italian women's magazines, and which related them to broader social, historical and cultural contexts, appeared to come from very particular ideological orientations, which were usually feminist but sometimes Marxist or Socialist. They tended to lack any detailed analysis of the advertisements themselves. At the same time, studies of a more semiotic nature, were usually limited in terms of a lack of consideration of contextual factors and an extremely restricted time frame. The latter did not allow for the relevance and interaction of the various historical periods to emerge.

The situation was compounded by the fact that even in those studies that did exist, especially at the height of feminist activity in Italy in the 1970s, very few actually stated the specific context of the advertisements analysed and whether they were to be found in women's magazines. In other cases, the reader is left guessing as to the sources (e.g. in Pignotti and Mucci, 1978) or is given an extremely general critical analysis of the advertising content of Italian women's magazines without any real reference to actual language and image details. In contrast, this thesis has attempted to answer the question that other studies have failed to consider. It asks if there is any divergence in the advertising discourse of middle-class Italian women's magazines from dominant visions of Italian womanhood, or whether the advertising discourses simply converge in line with the dominant ideologies of the relevant historical periods, as indicated by many of the previous studies.

Notably, the only period to be considered to a certain degree in terms of processes of divergence and convergence of women's magazine advertising content from the dominant visions of womanhood of that time, has been the fascist period. However, this was restricted to the works of a few authors in the 1980s and 1990s, and discussed in very general terms. Elisabetta Mondello (1987) is practically the only author who does dedicate a few pages to a deeper consideration of the issue, although her analysis is not comprehensive enough. In general, a visioning or revisioning of the time periods in question is absent from the relevant works of literature, especially those largely dominated by feminist or left-wing rhetoric, leaving the reader to suppose initially that absolute convergence between dominant ideologies of Italian womanhood and advertising discourse in women's magazines throughout the period was indeed the case.

The thesis attempts an analysis of the advertisements from a relatively objective stance, without adopting any particular ideological orientation or agenda. It considers the advertising discourse as more complex and less uniform over an extended historical period in order to see the extent of divergence or convergence with dominant ideologies of the various periods. In so doing, a number of advertisements have been examined in

detail in terms of their language and image as well as the contextual factors that influence the reading of the advertisements. This has not been considered in the literature, apart from mainly those feminist studies of the 1960s and 1970s that were concerned with the condition of Italian women. It therefore appeared appropriate to examine these advertisements once more in order to provide insights into an area of study that has been virtually ignored, or at the very least marginalized, since the late 1970s.

In merging a number of factors into a consideration of the role played by the advertising content in Italian middle-class women's magazines, this thesis attempts to rethink various socio-cultural and ideological issues through an analysis of the language and image of specific sample advertisements. In so doing, the paucity of historically continuous research in an area that has suffered some degree of marginalisation, allows scope for investigation.

9.2 ADVERTISING IN ITALIAN WOMEN'S MAGAZINES: EMERGENT PERSPECTIVES

Advertising in Italian women's magazines reflects wider cultural and social developments prevailing in Europe in different periods. As far as women are concerned, the dominant ideology generally sees middle-class women framed in the role of wife and mother, varying from the parsimonious figure who is seen as preceding the First World War, to the capable household manager of the inter-war years, and culminating in the post-war woman, whose budget-constrained functions give way to a culturally constructed femininity. The latter incorporates notions of appearance to an increasing degree for the expanding middle-class. Nevertheless, within such a wider frame of European and American influenced ideologies of middle-class womanhood, the variations prove more interesting and fruitful, especially when viewed through the lens of the advertisements targeting these very women, and attempting to imbue a sense of modern consumerism into them.

The 1920s 'garçonne' surfaces in Italy, as much as elsewhere, even as early as the war years, with modern versions of womanhood featuring on magazine covers and within advertisements. The appearance of this version of womanhood is indeed surprising in Italy, in view of the conservative climate dominating a middle-class whose sense of propriety, and aspiration to higher rungs of the social ladder, becomes incorporated into advertising language from the more mundane coffee maker to the luxury car. The use of innovative discourse by advertisers also recalls women's newly discovered sense of freedom, and financial independence, a fact that continues to feature in Italian women's magazine advertisements up to World War Two, albeit conditioned, to a certain extent, by fascist rhetoric regarding women. The fact that fascist visions fail to act as an ideological blanket is evident from the advertising in women's magazines, as forms of personal enhancement, and self-expression remain visible.¹ Particularly important in fragmenting any degree of hegemony is the role of large national and multinational companies in reaching out to the female magazine reader as consumer. Home care, use of modern appliances, personal hygiene and beauty products are consolidated in the advertising of the inter-war years, transforming the middle-class Italian woman into a modern, and what is increasingly seen as an Americanised consumer. Indeed, the significance of cosmetics, toiletries, clothing and accessories in the formation of a 'beauty myth', and in encouraging ever greater numbers of Italian women to care for their appearance, probably emerges in this period as never before, and lays the foundation of consumer brand and product use awareness for the advertising conducted in post-war women's magazines.

In this inter-war period, various influences pervade the advertising in Italian women's magazines. Women's resulting interpretation of the advertisements is in an environment characterised by a lack of totalitarian control, positive views of American marketing methods by advertisers and companies², and a vision of the 'American way of life' that, despite fascist rhetoric, seeps through to women and men of the middle-class. These and other factors condition the output of Italian advertisers, whether operating for national or

multinational companies. They also affect women's interpretation of the advertisements in Italian women's magazines, as advertisement specific factors combine with domestic and transnational notions of womanhood and femininity. The very lack of absolute ideological control in Italy is evident in the ambiguous relationship between Church and State, industry and regime, and Mussolini's demographic, agricultural and autarchic policies.³ This is in contrast on the one hand with Nazi Germany, yet on the other with the less strident, but by no means less effective, propaganda of a domesticity ideal permeating non totalitarian European countries, as well as in the United States in this period. The fate of Italian middle-class women seems sealed by the ideologically imposed role of 'moglie e madre esemplare' within a fascist family unit managed by the state, so much so that where mentioned in publications of the period, beauty, health and the body care are continually and exclusively linked to the woman's ability to procreate and find fulfilment in marriage, even during the war, when women's contribution outside the family is highly visible (Calderone-Mazzù, 1930; Riggio Cinelli, 1932; Benetti-Brunelli, 1933; Poggi-Longostrevi, 1933; Cardini, 1935; Mussolini, 1937; Loffredo, 1938; Graupner, 1944).

These cultural and ideological issues are lacking from advertisements that project an image of perpetually fresh but also sophisticated womanhood, far from the motherhood ideal of the inter-war years. However, it was probably closer to the aspirations and desires of many readers, particularly those of the lower middle-classes hankering after lifestyle improvements. Such is the flexibility of both fascist rhetoric, and domestic and non-domestic influences, that producers of cosmetic and hygiene brands can afford to eliminate strictly fascist notions of femininity from their discourse. Whilst national companies pay lip service to some aspects of fascist rhetoric in their advertising, in order to actively court the favours of the regime, selective use leads to the retention of a variety of middle-class concepts. They imbue the advertisements with an emphasis on factors such as appearance and the possession of the appropriate goods and services.

The way the advertisements stimulate the adoption or elaboration of personal identities that do not necessarily converge with dominant ideologies is less evident in the post-war period. Indeed, rather than chipping away at the sort of dominant ideology characteristic of the years following World War One and the subsequent period, that sees middle-class women constrained within domesticity, advertising content in the post-war years of reconstruction and the Marshall Plan loans converges towards a more unequivocal discourse and use of image. With women's identity once more portrayed as inextricably linked to the home and the family, the influence of wider socio-economic and cultural forces in an Italian situation characterised by a central role played by women in the war and its aftermath cannot be underestimated. The image and language targeted at women in advertising is thus encapsulated within a dominant framework that appears to override more flexible or multiple interpretations by the addressee, in favour of image and language that are instrumental in defining and restricting the message in advertisements in Italian women's magazines. Such is the dominant nature of the set roles advocated, and the underlying assumptions relied on by advertisers, that, despite the occasional use of marginally alternative advertising discourse that appear to guarantee greater freedom and independence for women through product use, the middle-class addressee's interpretation cannot but be influenced by the advertisement and underlying socio-cultural expectations.

The advertising within Italian women's magazines does, nevertheless, begin to find ways of incorporating notions of femininity linked to a personal independence outside the home and family, albeit expressed principally in terms of the goods consumed, and the greater free time to dedicate to self, provided by modern conveniences, rather than to be used in occupational or other terms. Confined within a market-driven vision of womanhood, factors such as the religious climate, the conservative socio-cultural influences exerted by the major political parties, and inherited notions of morality and appropriate behaviour, particularly for women, are identifiable in the discourse utilised by advertisers. By the 1950s, advertisers' use of language and image expands minimally beyond the as yet unidimensional modern, young, pretty 'massaia', reflecting similar

advertising influences elsewhere, as women are seen first and foremost in this light. The palpable atmosphere of possibility and potential suffusing these years of economic growth and socio-cultural change embraces women, and particularly younger women, whose interpretation of advertisements is less oriented towards the set roles portrayed. Conditioned by improvements in living standards, as represented by the expanding array of available products, and by increasing education and employment opportunities, that although limited, according to subsequent feminist interpretations, are, nevertheless, instrumental in providing advertisers with a different lens through which to formulate the language and image of advertisements targeted at this middle-class addressee.

Awareness by advertisers of alternative needs and interpretations attached to advertisements surfaces by the 1960s, given the development of Italian women's roles in an evolving society and the consolidation of their position in the post-economic boom workforce. The fact is that for younger women, who are completing their 'maturità' and progressing into the labour market or higher education, the focus by the advertisements on domesticity may merely be interpreted as one relevant to an existence divided between home and work. This increasingly becomes an element identifiable in future generations, particularly in the wake of the post-1968 changes characterising Italian society. The centrality of the addressee's socio-culturally changing interpretation pertains principally to a middle-class whose boundaries systematically widen, as the much sought after 'benessere' touches the lives of ever greater numbers, and as women are recruited into the function of managing change. Advertising does undergo a parallel transformation, albeit incrementally and with the utilisation of alternative, different or innovative advertising discourse by advertisers as yet marginal, with a continued, if varying, emphasis attributed to the housewife, domesticity, beauty and hygiene in the majority of advertisements in women's magazines. Indeed, the advertising for products as diverse as cosmetics, domestic appliances, and cars leaves some, if very little, scope for alternative message content, or addressee interpretation, especially for women caught between domestic labour and the need to meet appropriate standards in the middle-class, white-collar, male dominated workplace. Nevertheless, a degree of flexibility in the use

of language and image may be perceived in women's magazine advertisements from the post-war years onwards. Although the addressee is not actively encouraged to interpret advertisements in ways that are more compatible with her lifestyle, she is not limited in the further interpretation given to the brand's ability to meet her needs, particularly where convenience foods, domestic appliances and her own car effectively allow for time savings and for her domestic burden to be alleviated. This is particularly important when she is employed and provides greater time for herself. Finally, the continued use of limiting stereotypes to this day cannot in any case be denied, as advertising in Italian women's magazines becomes increasingly characterised by national and international campaigns that, in transcending external and/or internal country-specific factors, continue to present a homogeneous figure that minimally acknowledges difference or change.

As a result, the advertising of large national companies and multinational corporations is targeted, to an even greater extent by the 1970s, at an Italian women's magazine addressee pulled by multiple influences that rarely, if ever, directly form part of advertising discourse. This therefore propels her towards defined middle-class consumption patterns of an increasingly trans-national nature. The formulation of advertisements for women whose identities, lifestyle and consumption patterns are moulded as much by the advertising in women's magazines as by other media, and socio-economic and cultural influences, is an important feature of a later post-war period. This is a time that continues to frame women squarely within a 'femininity myth' based on the consumption of an expanding range of products that are considered more indispensable than ever for a woman who, ironically, has expanding possibilities and life courses outside the home. A number of different perspectives, thus, emerge from this study regarding the advertising targeted at Italian women, the portrayal of women in advertisements, and the products that pull at purse-strings defined by certain socio-cultural roles and functions. These perspectives are instrumental in acknowledging the fundamental importance of advertising throughout the century in the Italian nation state, and in the medium of women's magazines, that as vehicles characterised by a central

selling and consumption function, rely on a specific construction of femininity to address the reader. Indeed, the language and image utilised in advertisements also indicates that the formation of the Italian middle-class woman's identity passes through the advertiser's conceptualisation of Italian women as users and consumers of products, through the influence of wider socio-economic and cultural forces acting on the advertiser's perspective of womanhood, and, finally, through the varying gaze utilised by Italian women to interpret advertisements in a society undergoing change.

9.3 THE HIDDEN DEPTHS OF ADVERTISING IN ITALIAN WOMEN'S MAGAZINES: RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Advertising in Italian women's magazines is a valuable source of material awaiting exploration in conjunction with the magazines themselves. In particular, the under-researched inter-war years are a veritable treasure trove of advertisements that do little to propagate the myth of the 'moglie e madre esemplare'. The developments in the advertising of 'brown goods' in Italian women's magazines, from the inter-war years onwards, is a source of research interest, given a certain lack of historical continuity in various periods, outside the economic boom years and their aftermath, when advertising influence is seen as essential in stimulating purchases. Advertisements of the inter-war years are prolific and indicate that women's roles, from household manager to hostess, extend to purchases requiring a greater degree of expenditure, albeit limited to the middle and upper-middle class woman.

Notable in the 1920s and 1930s are advertisements for banking services in magazines as diverse as *La massaia* and *Lidel*. Targeting of the woman, socialite or housewife, reflects a distinct awareness of women's role in managing personal and household budgets, savings and investments. These advertisements also reveal women's recognised influence in the selection of services, as much as of products, given the very function of household management attributed to them, irrespective of whether they are employed outside the home or not. This is a fact frequently minimised in later feminist discourse.

Significantly, the post-war demise of advertisements of this nature, despite their previous centrality in women's magazines and other press, persists throughout the decades that follow, with occasional exceptions to this day, thus stimulating various lines of enquiry. An analysis of the advertising of the financial services featuring in many Italian women's magazines in the early decades of the century, and in the fascist period, similarly allows for further useful exploration of contemporary visions of the Italian woman, of prevailing ideologies, and of the role of such advertisements within the different magazines targeted at Italian women.

The advent of the post 1970s 'donna moderna' is a further advertising issue awaiting analysis, to paraphrase the title of a new women's magazine launched by Mondadori in 1988, where complemented by the presence of a 'new' Italian man, she has variously featured alongside her male counterpart in the advertising image and language in women's magazines. The 'New Man' may be considered mainly a 1980s advertising invention, with posters for a whole range of products featuring images of muscular men embracing babies and playing with the children. Although this 'new' version of masculinity may be regarded as having a minority role in the advertising image and language of previous years, caring fathers have certainly always existed even if their participation in the children's upbringing is frequently debated with displays of affection probably more evident in certain cultures compared to others, and most developed countries having one factor in common: a lack of their participation in homecare and childcare. The advertising portrayal of this situation reflects a number of cultural influences with some men undoubtedly not participating, whilst others shy away from invading the realm of full-time homemaking partners. The 'New Man' in Italy may be considered essentially a post 1970s phenomenon as his entry into advertising is relatively recent.

Indeed, the changing nature of such domestic issues as childcare and housework see advertisers wavering between using established stereotypes and innovative approaches to communication. Advertisements for detergents, domestic appliances and baby products

tug at preconceived notions of masculinity and femininity, as men and women appear to be freed from gender and role-type constraints in some advertisements, yet confined within them in others. The presence of caring men, participative fathers and broom wielding male partners in advertisements targeted at women is open to investigation in the light of modern considerations based on Italian men's profound 'mammismo' and prolonged attachment to their mother's apron strings. In fact, according to ISTAT, the number of young men between the ages of 18 and 34 living with their parents rose from 51.8% in 1990 to 58.5% in 1997 (Burke, 1997). Although this appears to be a general European trend given the economic situation and high youth unemployment, in Italy the situation is striking with 30% of men in the 30-34 age group still living at home (Burke, 1997). Freedom within the family is also undoubtedly one of the advantages about living at home, with the 'mammoni', as these 'young' men are called, enjoying the luxury of being supported in style with few responsibilities. It is relatively unsurprising therefore that their numbers are increasing.

The economic boom heralds a situation where brand and magazine market share begins to dominate all other considerations, with advertising content increasingly oriented towards the brand's target market as reflected in the magazine's readership, as evident from an analysis of various periods. A significant issue is whether wider developments do become part of an advertising discourse increasingly influenced by market-driven needs, or whether such figures as the 'donna moderna' and 'new man' are merely refashioned post 1970s myths, created by international cultural influences and by advertisers identifying new advertising opportunities in a competitive market. The role of Italian women's magazines in the 1980s and 1990s in formulating advertising discourse to addressees in an environment conditioned by the enormous developments in the Italian media, advertising and industrial-service sector companies in this period, is also open to further investigation. Indeed, little research appears to have been conducted on the Italian woman's magazine sector, and on the advertising content of these magazines, in recent decades, despite the availability of general studies of the press and of the Italian advertising sector.⁴ The impact of Italian television advertising on other

forms of advertising, and in particular on the advertising in women's magazines is similarly open to investigation, albeit with an awareness of the difficulty linked to the analysis of different media forms in space and time. Nevertheless, the nature of the advertising language and image utilised in long-running, as well as new, middle-class women's magazines provides a means of considering other factors which have had a social, economic and cultural impact in recent times.

The developments of the 1980s are encapsulated in the reversal of economic fortunes, and of the 1990s in those of political change that characterise the years preceding the new millennium (Clark, 1996; Neal and Barbezat, 1998). The growth in national businesses and, in particular, of the fashion industry, lead to renewed doses of materialism stimulating consumers to continuously attempt to acquire all the trappings of a modern consumer culture. The media magnate Silvio Berlusconi soon circumvents restrictions with nationwide channels challenging the RAI state monopoly (Cassese, 1993; Barendt, 1995). The impact on advertising is remarkable as television surpasses other media forms in terms of importance and promotional power. The growth in mainly television advertising spending is indicative of Italy's entry into the marketing era, the upsurge in the economy and greater advertising possibilities. The increase is on an unprecedented scale: from a stable 911 billion lire in 1979 to 2.791 billion lire in 1981, reaching 3.293 billion lire in 1985. The role of television dramatically changed from obtaining only 12-13 per cent of advertising investment in the 1970s, given the importance of the other media, to obtaining over 50 per cent by 1985 (Ganapini and Gonizzi, 1994, p.326). This is an unprecedented change in an otherwise stable European setting. The transformation of Italy into a 'television culture' (Lumley, 1996, p.211) is further compounded by Italians' well-known aversion to the daily press, and paradoxically greater consumption of sport-related newspapers and weekly magazines, thus stimulating interest in the actual advertising directed at a population open to different television and magazine media.

Women's role in the new televised advertising world becomes a source of investigation in one of the studies conducted by Milly Buonanno (1983). Although rapidly categorised in terms of the staid housewife by Buonanno, given the frequency of this television stereotype, the marginalisation of contextual factors and developments in the use of advertising image and language may lead one to question whether advertising images of Italian women are, in fact, so static over time, and are reflected in other media such as Italian women's magazines. Indeed, lifestyle, consumption, socio-economic changes, expectations, and international media and culture, are amongst the factors inviting an analysis of the advertising targeted at Italian women in television, women's magazines, and even other media. A further significant, and correlated, factor in this period of renewal is the attempt by the publishing industry to breathe new life into the women's magazine sector, suffering from the post 1968 socio-cultural and media changes. The strategic choices allow the achievement of a stabilisation in the readership levels, whilst allowing for variations in content, style and formula, in established and new magazines. Typically, the role and advertising content of the weekly Mondadori publication *Donna Moderna* invites investigation, in view of declared circulation increases from a weekly average of 180,000 in 1988 to 618,000 in 1997 (Barbieri, et al., 1998), and the magazine's ability to target an Italian woman no longer satisfied with the fare provided by the established magazines.

A further area of recommendation for future research regards the product categories advertised in Italian women's magazines, given the consolidation of fashion in the advertising and market identity of middle to upper-middle-class women's magazines. This process becomes increasingly important in the 1980s and 1990s, as Italian fashion designers become household names, and the importance of the Italian sector of a growing international industry surpasses those of other countries. Indeed, fashion is one of Italy's main exports with the names of such top designers as Armani, Ferré, Valentino, Versace, Krizia and Dolce & Gabbana, to name but some of the most popular, becoming synonymous with style, transgression and the freedom to express oneself through their creations. Where Paris was the European and American centre for

fashion up to the 1950s, to be surpassed by London in the 1960s, Milan's primacy emerged in the 1980s with the difference that street fashion or style became replaced by profit-making businesses whose aim is not simply to provide a continuous expression of fashion, but to do so profitably. The importance of the Italian fashion industry was analysed in a special report in *TIME* magazine by Charles Wallace:

An entertaining debate has raged for years in the pages of the fashion press about whether Paris or Milan has emerged as the capital of fashion. From a business point of view, the argument was decided long ago - in Italy's favour. The reason is relatively simple: while high fashion couture houses continue to flourish in both countries, only Italy has maintained a strong manufacturing base for textiles. French, German and even American designers, manufacture their fashions in Italy, which boasts hundreds of years of expertise in textiles combined with such technological innovations as computer-aided design systems and laser fabric-cutters. Italy produced \$57 billion worth of clothes, shoes and leather goods last year, more than half for export. Italian firms accounted for nearly 9% of the world's textile exports, according to the World Trade Organization, nearly double the amount from the U.S. 'No country in the world can compete with Italy when it comes to high-fashion tailoring' (1997, p.82).

Fashion advertising plays a crucial role as much as the numerous fashion features in women's magazines, and the link established between fashion and different areas of daily life, appearance and acceptability. The diversification of the fashion houses into a range of other goods, and most notably perfume, is a further element that ensures international expansion, influencing to an ever greater degree the advertising content in women's magazines at home and abroad, as international advertising agencies mould the perfume advertisement addressee into a cross-cultural being. Generally, the advertising conducted by the fashion and cosmetics sectors infiltrate women's magazines to their core, despite the notable use of alternative advertising strategies by companies like

Benetton, that signal change and development in terms of advertising content and impact.

Emerging gender image patterns in fragrance advertising may be traced in Italian women's magazines, and play a fundamental role not simply in stimulating purchase, but also in formulating notions of masculinity and femininity, that given the increasingly trans-national nature of much advertising requires further analysis in terms of the location of such advertising language and image within specific socio-cultural and national contexts. The increasing analysis of fragrance advertising is indicative of its centrality in terms of language and image, and in the advertising content of women's magazines (Chapkis, 1986; Wolf, 1990; Stern and Holbrook, 1994; MacDonald, 1995). In fact the predominance of perfume advertising is considered by Philip Kotler (1988, p.617) who indicates that this category has a high level of advertising as a percentage of sales. Although undoubtedly referring to the American market, the situation cannot but be similar for Europe, if not even more relevant, given the concentration of designers in Europe and the advertising concentration of this product category in women's magazines. The influence of foreign language factors in branding and advertising, and in the reading of advertisements, is also an issue, in light of the increasing use of the English language and Anglo-Saxon concepts, correlated by the internationalisation of a number of cultural notions, and the presence or absence of gender, and even race, stereotyping.

In terms of the advertising in women's magazines, the body, health, lifestyle and various other factors relating to appearance abound in the 1980s and 1990s, complementing traditional discourses targeted at the homemaker, and appear to result in a further identification of women, and by women, with the body. The body is submerged by increasing cultural and social ambiguity, as the three elements of youth, beauty and consumption, central to much advertising discourse targeted at Italian women, are transformed into highly specialised forms of discourse using language and image that

invite women to empathise and participate in the message. The link between the fashion industry and the body is evident and reiterated by authors like Elizabeth Wilson:

One of the clichés of fashion history is the ‘triumph of the thin woman over the fat woman’, and feminists today often assume that the twentieth century female obsession with slimness and slimming is yet more evidence of the oppression forced on them by society. Clearly it is much more complicated than that, and the emergence of the thin woman as an aesthetic and fashionable ideal reflects wider concerns (1985, p.115).

Nevertheless, the use of a number of other discourses infiltrate advertising in Italian women’s magazines, as greater awareness of environmental, consumer, and country specific issues filter into advertising language and image. From this point of view, Italian women are increasingly targeted as informed consumers for some products, whilst other categories of products merely feed off the issue or concern of the moment to embellish otherwise routine advertisements.

Finally, a number of concluding remarks may be made in terms of the advertising conducted within women’s magazines across the decades. Comparative analysis of the advertising discourse utilised within women’s magazines in different national contexts may provide further insights into an as yet under-explored European and Western medium, whilst revealing diverging language and image in advertisements in different regions and countries for the same category of products or, indeed, for the same international brand. As the advertising strategies of large national and multinational corporations developed throughout the twentieth century, their impacts across generations, classes and national barriers, must be of interest to academic researchers. Advertisements can be seen to provide a wealth of material which can be explored from a variety of perspectives. In this work, those placed in Italian women’s magazines became the research focus as they were seen to have been an important vehicle for transmitting various messages considered of significance even beyond the advertisement

itself. In this way they can be seen to be symbolic in terms of both language and image, and they have been increasingly placed at the cross-roads of merging European national and international identities.

ENDNOTES TO CHAPTER 9

1 Generally, as noted by Elizabetta Mondello (1987), women's magazines are affected as much as other publications by the legislation governing the press. Between 1923 and 1926 various restrictions implemented by the government gradually bring much of the press under the fascist concept that this 'quarto potere' has the duty to reflect State policies and be a responsible vehicle for the furthering of the socio-political status of all citizens under fascism (Cannistraro, 1975). This view is further compounded by the view that without a significant degree of control, the powerful private groups controlling this sector would simply further their own ends rather than those of the State. It may also be noted that Mussolini's experience as journalist and newspaper director influences his particular vision of, and extent of control over, the press, in the early years of the regime, as well as accounting for his continued personal interest by means of daily perusals of the main newspapers, and numerous telegrams on content and form to editors. The importance of the press therefore lies in its utility and contribution to the propaganda machine, and its role in supporting a regime that increasingly uses the media to consolidate its power.

Legislation does bring the total elimination of free speech, despite attempts by various magazines to continue publishing as usual, especially in the wake of the Matteotti crisis and the near collapse of the regime. The democratic daily press is silenced to a significant degree, or remains hard pressed to publish given the numerous raids on offices and printing works by the increasingly violent fascist squads, with the result that anti-fascist rhetoric is diminished by means of intimidation or near total destruction inflicted on premises as in the case of the socialist *Avanti!*. Although women's magazines are never exposed to violence of this nature, mainly as a result of their diluted political content, even where obviously feminist or socialist, and given the greater availability and political influence of the daily press on public opinion, they are, nevertheless, targeted by legislation. Law no. 3288 of 15th July 1923 resuscitates some aspects of the 'Statuto Albertino' by providing Prefects with ample powers against those publications deemed to cause public order problems. Warnings exceeding two in a year lead to withdrawal of the permission to publish, effectively resulting in the closure of the publication. As new publications cannot be initiated, the result is the total demise of the newspaper or magazine concerned. Various laws and decrees are passed to bring the press under control and following an attempt on Mussolini's life in Bologna on 31st October 1926, all political parties are declared illegal and the opposition's press suppressed, as all sectors of life fall under fascist control.

2 The growth of advertising as an industry is such that various agencies are established, and rapidly expand, in the inter-war period, utilising a variety of modern advertising techniques (Pinkus, 1995), although much of the initial activity occurs in the wake of the arrival of multinational corporations, whose desire to expand into the Italian market leads to the establishment of various foreign branches of British and American agencies, that later fuel the post-war expansion of the sector (Marchi, 1993). Notably, as a result of these developments, the fluctuating opinions of the process of Americanisation influencing Italians' way of life is reflected in a limited way in the advertising sector, where positive views as to the superiority of American advertising and selling techniques even result in publications by the 'Associazione nazionale fascista dei dirigenti di aziende industriali' (Vito, 1932).

3 These factors are particularly significant in terms of fascist concepts of womanhood. Although the demographic and rural policies more clearly target women, the role of the Church becomes decisive as a 'good fascist' also becomes a 'good Catholic' following the 1929 Lateran Pacts, and the reorientation of middle-class women towards the home in the wake of employment legislation. As far as actual advertising output is concerned, a certain leeway for producers is ensured by the regime's asymmetric relationship with industry, generating mutually profitable ventures as funds are provided for the research and development of autarchic products, and the consolidation of market position for companies like Edison, Montecatini, Snia Viscosa, Pirelli and most notably Fiat, whose interests and influence permeate various economic sectors. The establishment of IRI ('Istituto per la Ricostruzione Industriale') in 1933 allows the regime's influence over economic policy to soar as holdings in various companies are bought following an unwise credit spree by banks. Salaries and labour conditions worsen considerably with many hard-won rights, such as the right to strike, and the eight-hour day, retracted as the regime favours the industrial and agricultural sectors at the expense of the workers. In contrast, the deliberate courting of the middle class becomes an increasingly dominant, yet not unproblematic, feature of a regime whose reliance on this ample social category providing the grass roots support for fascism heightens with economic sanctions, escalating autarchy and empire building (Castronovo, 1971; 1973; Quazza, 1973; Candeloro, 1996; Galasso, 1996).

4 The number of recent publications regarding the press and advertising activity in Italy is vast, with contributions on the press (Becchelloni, 1996; ISTAT, 1997) rarely considering women's magazines as a separate entity, whilst of the numerous publications regarding advertising in Italy, some recent contributions of interest focusing on the sector, the history or the language of contemporary advertisements may be considered (Brancati, 2002; Codeluppi, 2000; 2002; Falabrino, 1999; 2001; Grasso, 2000; Puggelli, 2000).

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