

# A Feminist Strike in the Kitchen: Gender and Food in Adela Turin's *Storia di panini*

*Anna Travagliati*

Food is one of the fundamental themes of human reflection and artistic production. It is rich in philosophical questions – food “bad to eat” is firstly “bad to think about” (Scarpi 14) and practical issues, such as the possibility, introduced by the invention of individually packaged snacks, to eat anywhere at any time (Bays 167-168). However, only recently have we witnessed the development of “food studies,” which are particularly interesting for their interdisciplinary nature, spanning from anthropology to history, passing through art and literature. Precisely from this perspective, Keeling and Pollard observe that food, the physicality of which captivates all our senses, is not simply bland nutrition, but a powerful and pervasive cultural object, essential to the “cultural imagination,” and therefore fundamental to literature (5-6). They also note that “whether in memoir, fiction, or poetry, writers continually hark back to childhood experiences of food, even when the intended audience is adults rather than children, as with Proust’s *Remembrance of Things Past*” (10). Furthermore, Blackford remarks that “food lies at the center of socialization rituals for children” (42), while Daniel emphasizes adults’ urgency to teach children how to behave and how to eat in a controlled and civilized manner, in accordance with the cultural rules of the society in which they live (12).

As noted by various scholars, children’s literature and picturebooks play a crucial role in educating young readers and presenting desirable models. Unfortunately, among other problematic issues, they often offer gender role models that are “extremely rigid, stereotyped, and even anachronistic”, as observed by Biemmi (“Not only Princesses and Knights” 100). The author continues:

While the condition of women changes, children’s books seem not to

acknowledge it and continue to perpetuate stories more tied to the past than the present, imprinted with tradition more than change or a reading that has been updated by reality. (100)

Indeed, in spite of second-wave feminism and its fierce attempt to lead women out of the kitchens and into the workplace – “Don’t Assume I Cook” was a popular American feminist slogan (Williams 59) – the old-fashioned belief that preparing and serving food is a fundamental female chore was and still is instilled through education: “While some current (public) female role/image alternatives appear to exclude the domestic, in popular media representations and in reality, the domestic and, in particular, food provisioning, are still very much linked to the feminine” (Daniel 105). Similarly, Fraustino, in her examination of various children’s books, highlights “how food is used, both literally and metaphorically, in the reproduction of patriarchal mothering” (58).

Fortunately, alongside this conservative production, some brave authors and publishers have put forth books that are less stereotypical and more attentive to gender role representation. After touching briefly on the origin and the mission of Adela Turin’s *Dalla parte delle bambine* (*On the Side of Little Girls*), Italy’s first publishing house for feminist children’s literature, and its approaches to food, this essay will use interdisciplinary theoretical-methodological tools from literary studies (especially concerning children’s narratives), gender studies, and cultural studies to close read and analyze the 1976 picturebook *Storia di panini* (Turin and Saccaro). While in 1977 Writers and Readers Publishing Cooperative translated this title as *The Breadtime Story*, a more literal English rendition of the Italian name would be *Sandwiches Story*.

This work will demonstrate how *Storia di panini* can be a stimulating instrument to open a dialogue with children about women’s exploitation and domestic labor, encouraging questions about the preparation and consumption of food. This chapter will also highlight how Turin connected female unpaid culinary work with other urgent feminist matters, such as the necessity of collective organization and the dangers of an otiose culture that ignores women’s struggles. Additionally, given the complexity of picturebooks, based on the “interdependence of word and image” (Hintz and Tribunella 160), special attention will be paid to the illustrations and their role in reinforcing the message of this unconventional tale. Finally, this work will reflect on the significance of *Storia di panini* nowadays, particularly regarding the persistence of the association between femininity and cooking.

### **A Publishing House for Feminism’s Children: Adela Turin’s *Dalla parte delle bambine***

In 1975, Italian feminist Adela Turin reacted to the sexist messages commonly found in

children's literature by founding *Dalla parte delle bambine*, Italy's first feminist publishing house for children. The name was inspired by Elena Gianini Belotti's famous essay *Dalla parte delle bambine*, which harshly criticized the traditional education reserved for young girls, aimed to create dependent and frail women. Turin, who wrote or edited almost all of her publishing house's books, presented innovative and subversive narratives that reached wide and unexpected critical and commercial success. This achievement was bolstered by her co-publishing project with French feminist publishing house *Des Femmes*, her collaboration with Spanish publisher *Lumen*, and the translations produced in various languages (Salviati 41). Salviati notes that Turin, who also created books for *Mondadori*, one of the biggest publishing houses in Italy, initially wished to distribute her picturebooks via traditional publishers in order to guarantee them the widest circulation possible. Unfortunately, no publishing company responded to her proposal, forcing Turin to independently establish *Dalla parte delle bambine* (40-41).

During its brief but intensely productive lifespan, *Dalla parte delle bambine* published about fifty titles, including books aimed at teenagers, such as the collection "Dalla parte delle ragazze" ("On the Side of Girls"), and at adults, such as the miscellaneous *Sessismo nei libri per bambini* (Sexism in Children's Books), edited by Belotti herself. Despite this variety, Salviati (37) observes that the publishing house's most successful publications were its first picturebooks, written by Turin and illustrated by artist Nella Bosnia, winner of the prestigious "Andersen - Il mondo dell'infanzia" prize<sup>1</sup> in 1996. These books offered their young readers alternative stories with independent heroines who chose their destinies and achieved unconventional happy endings. Bosnia herself highlights the importance of the first four titles,<sup>2</sup> stating that their messages were "direct and unambiguous."<sup>3</sup> Beyond their importance as overtly engaged feminist stories, Pederzoli commends the picturebooks' artistic and literary quality (*Adela Turin e la collana Dalla parte delle bambine* 264), which was overseen by Turin, who was both an art historian and a designer (Donzel). Hamelin also praises Turin's brave decision to challenge sexist stereotypes through picturebooks, a genre that typically reinforces normative gender roles (165).

Among the themes debated by *Dalla parte delle bambine*'s books – including divorce, domestic violence, the arbitrariness of gender roles, and unpaid domestic labor – the intertwined topics of nourishment and gender injustice appear frequently. In *Rosaconfetto* (*Sugarpink Rose*),<sup>4</sup> young female elephants are encouraged to eat edible but bland flowers in order to become beautifully pink; in *Una fortunata catastrofe* (*A Fortunate Catastrophe*), the male head of the household evolves from a petty self-appointed *gourmet* to a good cook himself; in *Melaraconti* (*Of Cannons and Caterpillars*), natural organic food is unknown in a dystopic world destroyed by men's wars; in *La vera storia dei bonobo con gli occhiali* (*The Real Story of the Bonobos Who Wore Glasses*), female primates have the onerous task of foraging for the whole herd. Finally, in *Storia di panini* (*The Breadtime Story*), the sandwiches symbolize women's

invisible and unpaid domestic labor. This essay will analyze this last book, written by Turin and illustrated by Margherita Saccaro. It was a critically successful book, as shown by its special mention in the *Critici in erba* category at the 1977 Bologna Children's Book Fair. First published in 1976, a revised edition of *Storia di panini* was proposed in 2001 by Motta Junior, following the republishing project undertaken by French Actes Sud in 1999.<sup>5</sup> Although this book was translated into English in 1977 by Writers and Readers Publishing Cooperative, this paper will focus only on the original Italian version. All English translations of the quotes from *Storia di panini*, provided to ensure international readers' understanding, are my own.

### **A Tale of Exploitation, Political Awakening, and Sandwiches: A Close Reading of *Storia di panini***

*Storia di panini* opens with a description of the main character's small village (literally: the grass and the flowers tower over the buildings), composed of thousands of little houses inhabited by women and children. The narration immediately emphasizes the contradiction between the importance of the town (thousands and thousands of residents) and its invisibility: "the village was so tiny that no one had ever thought of giving it a name" (Turin and Saccaro).<sup>6</sup>

Interestingly, the story makes it clear that only adult women live in the village, but the gender of the children is left ambiguous: at the beginning the author speaks of "bambine" ("female children"), but in other parts, the word "bambini" is used instead, suggesting the presence of little boys, too. Be that as it may, in this little nameless village, women and children (only female ones) have an important and unpaid task: every day, they must prepare giant sandwiches for the men, who are human-sized and work far away, in the Big House of Men. As Belotti comments in her presentation of Dalla parte delle bambine's catalog, "In the women's village, everything is minuscule. Everything except the sandwiches that are prepared for the men, who live in the *big* house" (Salviati 39). The women are proud of their job, and they even compete with their neighbors, since each woman wants to cook the best meal for the men. With irony, the author shows the patriarchy-fueled rivalry between women, already identified by second-wave feminism. A few pages later, it becomes clear how useless this competition is: the men devour the sandwiches thoughtlessly, without appreciating either the variety of the flavors or the women's labor.

The women spend many hours making sandwiches, which are a symbol of unpaid kitchen chores and domestic labor, and daughters are expected to learn how to cook from their mothers. This situation is called into question by the curious and independent main character, Ita (the name is evidently derived from that of the illustrator, Margherita Saccaro), whose objecting is a poignant subversion of the traditional trope of the young

daughter fascinated and charmed by her mother's culinary abilities. As observed by Blackford, in children's books female characters are often urged to learn how to cook for the whole family as a sort of initiation ritual:

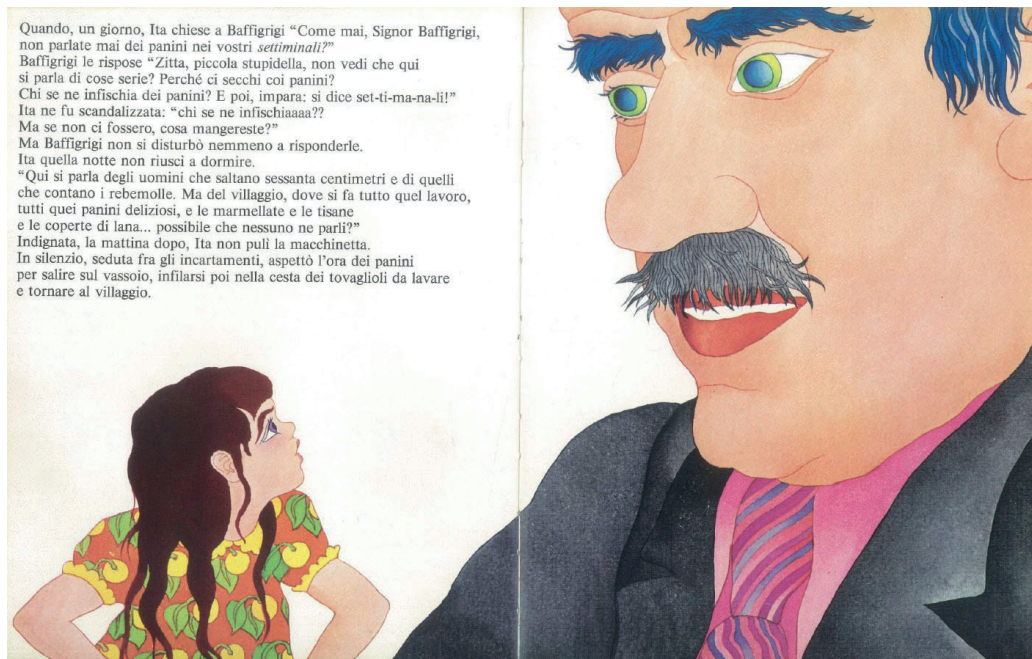
In girls' novels young female protagonists are often apprenticed to mother figures that are engaged in cooking activities. Such novels typically emphasize cooking at the expense of eating, partaking in the politics by which girls learn to curtail their own desires and sacrifice for others. Cooking is a form of self-control and a way to prepare the female character for repressing inner needs, packaging the self and female body for the pleasure of others. (42)

Even more significant, then, is the stance taken by Ita, who not only never makes a sandwich nor picks up any culinary tool but also inspires adult women to abandon the kitchen and, with it, their traditional subordinate role in society. The little girl starts to wonder what goes on in the Big House of Men, but the women's answers make it clear that they do not know what it means to "make a budget" or "send documents via registered mail." The narration's open disdain for office workers (a topic also prominent in *Una fortunata catastrofe*) is a reaction to their common depiction in children's books, where the briefcase of the head of the family is a prestigious object, a counterweight to the humble apron that characterizes the housewife (*Du Côté des Filles, Quali modelli per le bambine?* 7). The job of the father in picturebooks is rarely described, but nonetheless the children always think it is very important and superior to the mother's labor (*Du Côté des Filles, Cosa vedono i bambini negli albi illustrati?* 4).<sup>7</sup>

Returning to the plot, Ita, dissatisfied and determined to discover the truth, hides in one of the trucks that carry the sandwiches and makes her way to the Big House of Men. Here, the men, surprised by the little girl's presence, find her a job: sharpening pencils, with which they can write important things in their "biannual, monthly, weekly, daily, bimonthly, and also annual papers." The first bitter surprise arrives with lunch: Ita, seeing the sandwiches, expects some compliments, but, instead, the men devour the food without comments. Women's work is deemed unworthy of praise, a low and humble chore, and therefore the men do not concern themselves with the sandwiches or the efforts of the cooks. To use Loft's words, Ita discovers "that these men give no recognition to the nourishing, creative, and life-sustaining work accomplished by the women, who painstakingly prepare sandwiches – raise children – in their cloistered, protected existence" (224).

In the meantime, Ita thinks she did right to leave the village, because now she has an "important job." She even tries to draw the men's attention to the sandwiches, but no one notices her or the deliciousness of the food. These scenes introduce the young readers

to the feminist criticism of ancillary, poorly paid, autonomy-lacking jobs, of which the secretary was the emblem. In this respect, it is significant to recall the position taken by the Italian feminist monthly *Effe*, which claimed that the “golden islands” of secretaries were in fact just “ghettos,” and that the job was characterized by women’s exploitation and subalternity (Maggiori).<sup>7</sup> Similarly, Ita realizes that sharpening pencils does not mean having a role in the men’s work: she is not the one who writes, she is not the one who makes decisions, and therefore there is no emancipation. She also grows disappointed with the topics the men write about, as they are often otiose and irrelevant. Additionally, women never appear in their texts, even though in reality they carry out essential tasks.



**Fig. 1**

Ita arguing with Mr. Baffigrigi

Ita’s disdain harks back to the feminist distrust of traditional male culture: as many feminist theorists have observed, very few male thinkers had addressed the issue of female subalternity – for example, Kate Millet in *Sexual Politics* praised very few men, among which were Friedrich Engels, John Stuart Mill, and Jean Genet.

In a powerful scene (fig. 1), highlighted by the oblique composition of the accompanying image – the diagonal transmits force, dynamism, and rupture of balance (Boulaire, *Live et choisir ses albums* 112-113) – Ita fully realizes the low regard in which the men hold the women and their work. The moment occurs in an exchange with Baffigrigi [Greymoustaches]:

“How come, Mr. Greymoustaches, you never talk about sandwiches in your weekies?”

“Shut up, you little fool, can’t you see that we talk about serious things here? Why are you bothering us about sandwiches? Who cares about sandwiches? And then, learn: it’s w-e-e-k-l-i-e-s!”

“Who caaaaaaaaare?? But if they weren’t there, what would you eat?”

But Greymoustaches didn’t even bother to answer her.

That night Ita couldn’t sleep.

“Here they talk about men who jump sixty centimeters and those who count musical flats. But about the village, where all that work is done, all those delicious sandwiches, and jams and herbal teas and woolen blankets... can it be possible that no one talks about it?”

Outraged, Ita decides to return home and tell the women what is really going on in the Big House of Men and how no one cares about the sandwiches, their work, or the village. Shocked, the women reflect on Ita’s words, becoming aware of their subalternity. Now, they have neither the time nor the energy to work in the kitchen: instead of competing to make the best sandwich, the women unite, talk to one another, and take political action, organizing the sandwiches strike.

The women’s refusal to cook is a powerful, revolutionary action. Concerning the “sociocultural imperatives involving feeding,” Daniel reports DeVault’s and Murcott’s observations that the mother’s task of serving homemade meals to the family is considered vital to the health and welfare of the family itself (106-107). It is no coincidence that in children’s books problematic families are frequently characterized by the children’s disappointment in poorly prepared lunches, so different from the meals cooked with love (and hours of work) by idealized housewives (109). Furthermore, Daniel observes the persistence of the idea that “the good boy is the product of good mothering and good food,” and therefore of the belief that mothers who refuse to cook are bad mothers, destined to raise bad children (109).

In *Storia di panini*, on the contrary, the women, inspired by a brave little girl, reject both cooking and the whole paradigm of the patriarchal, sexist society. The strike is therefore presented as courageous and necessary.<sup>9</sup> Precisely because of this new political awareness, “a strange and wonderful thing happened: the village began to grow.” At first many men were outraged, but finally, “little by little, people started seeing in the streets of the village some dads playing with their children and some dads working together with the moms. Ita and all the other children were very happy about it.”

Thus, *Storia di panini* concludes with a happy ending: the start of a new, more equal, and fairer society, without rigid distinctions based on gender (albeit clearly women-led). This ending is particularly interesting, as it is the product of a compromise between differing artistic and ideological needs. The resolution is very different from the one

proposed in *La vera storia dei bonobo con gli occhiali*, where the female bonobos, exasperated by the constant discrimination they experience, leave with their children to form a new, peaceful society without males. The story suggests that some male bonobos later decided to change their obnoxious ways and follow the women, but this is presented as a mere possibility. In *Storia di panini*, on the contrary, the children are delighted at the prospect of living with their mothers and fathers, and in the last picture, they are seen spending time together with both parents, even though it is clear that not all men have agreed to live in this new women-led society. Interestingly, in a recent interview,<sup>10</sup> illustrator Saccaro disclosed that the original draft ended differently, with a separatist all-female society. Saccaro had objected to this ending, and ultimately Turin and the editorial staff of *Des Femmes*, partner of the co-edition project, agreed to revise it.

### **Cute Ribbons and Feminist Signs: An Analysis of Saccaro's Illustrations**

As mentioned earlier, picturebooks are hybrid literary objects – Boulaire calls them iconotexts (*Lire et choisir ses albums*, 13). It is therefore essential to pay particular attention to the images, not only because in picturebooks the illustrations are usually predominant but also because in children's books pictures may be more conservative and sexist than the text (Biemmi, *Educazione sessista* 139). Thus, it is especially interesting to analyze what a socially engaged book like *Storia di panini* offers.

Leafing through the book, it is clear that, despite the story's revolutionary nature, the accompanying images are aesthetically pleasant and superficially traditional. The rebellious protagonist herself wears a dress with a fruit print, has long hair embellished with ribbons, and dons white socks and cute shoes. This choice is characteristic of *Dalla parte delle bambine*, which used captivating stories, pleasant illustrations, and subversions of common children's literature tropes to make their feminist books attractive and appealing to young readers. In the same way, the visual (or iconic) narrator closely follows the textual (or verbal) narrator – to use Boulaire's<sup>11</sup> words – focusing on Ita with a traditional third-person perspective. There are some notable exceptions, however, starting with the first page of the book.

The tale opens with a view of the village from above, which immediately suggests that the story is not just Ita's, but that of a whole society. The smallness of the nameless village is effectively conveyed by the flowers that overwhelm it. Similarly, the journey to the Big House of Men is also shown from an outside perspective, allowing the reader to observe a cold, technological world, with giant screens reminiscent of Orwellian supervision (it is however worth mentioning that the protagonist, just arrived, describes the Big House as “definitely beautiful”). The pages relating to Ita's stay at the Big House also feature some disturbing images: Ita's pencil sharpener (also shown on the back cover) has a vaguely anthropomorphic and monstrous shape (fig. 2), with clearly recognizable eyes and



mouth, and some of the other office tools look threatening and ominous. The fact that Ita, while sharpening pencils, is almost covered (and thus again rendered invisible) by the by-products of her work helps to create an unpleasant atmosphere.



Fig. 2

Ita sharpening pencils in the Big House of Men

At the beginning of the book, Ita is always depicted below the adults, either the mothers who are not interested in her questions, or the towering men in the Big House. It is only after she returns home that Ita finally occupies the top of the page, rising above the other characters. When she communicates what she has discovered, the women look at her and listen carefully in a remarkable change from earlier in the story. Inspired by the child's words, the adult women themselves take a social and political stand. Ita briefly disappears – she is missing from the page about the sandwiches strike – but the reader finds her immediately afterward, a symbol of the development and new visibility of the female world: Ita's size gets bigger, exceeding the borders of the page that is now too small to contain her.

In the book's last picture (fig. 3), the viewpoint changes to a bird's-eye view of the village, reconnecting to the beginning of the story, and Ita herself is no longer visible. She was the catalyst for change, but this is no longer just her tale: it is the story of the liberation of the women and of the whole village. This final image is particularly important. Firstly, it is drawn in a different style, and, on the surface, it may be considered naïve. In truth, it is very complex, and children must look at it for a long time to grasp all the details. In the picture, mothers, fathers, and children are living together happily. For example, men sell

(or offer) sandwiches and sweets, little girls and boys climb a tree (a pastime often reserved for males in picturebooks), children watch a play together, an all-female musical group performs a concert, and some couples spend time together. In general, girls and boys, men and women, are engaged in various activities; there are no longer rigid gender-based distinctions.



**Fig. 3**

End scene – the village, after the sandwich strike and the change

In sum, Adela Turin offers children a captivating story, using pleasant illustrations and subversions of common children’s literature tropes, such as the themes of the absent father, employed at his important workplace, or the little girl elated at the idea of cooking lunch for the whole family. At the same time, the author was attentive to the adult readers, a significant element in most children’s literature (Hintz and Tribunella 6-7). The consideration for the adult audience – in this case, progressive mothers – is evident in the allusions to the Italian feminist movement: for example, in the last picture a sign reads “Edizioni delle donne” (“Women’s Editions”), the name of an actual Italian publishing house, while a woman is writing on a wall the feminist slogan “Io sono mia” (“I belong to myself”). Of course, these inclusions also provided children the opportunity to familiarize themselves with these concepts. Additionally, this book offers young readers the opportunity to reflect on the concept of invisible labor. Domestic work is indispensable and tiring, but because it is invisible (the village is literally hidden by the vegetation), not only do men not care about it, but they are not even able to think about it. Only political and social self-awareness enables the village to grow and become visible, allowing the

creation of a new, fairer society.

## Conclusion

While the historical context of second-wave feminism cannot be ignored and some of the book's content is outdated (e.g., the complete dichotomy between men and women), *Storia di panini* still manages to make several important points. Today, nearly fifty years after second-wave feminism, many people wonder whether women have ever really left the kitchen, and various answers are possible. Certainly, the association between femininity and cooking (and the importance of teaching it to children) has never disappeared, as is evident in the toy and publishing industries, as well as in advertising and popular media. Concerning the issue of modern sexist toys, Benn writes:

These types of advertisements are consistently forced onto girls and not boys. Traditionally, girls are pushed into home-maker roles, taking on tasks such as cooking, cleaning, child-care, etc. Even at a young age, girls are being groomed to unquestionably take on these roles suggested by these products. (17)

And a little further on, commenting a commercial for “Barbie Gourmet Kitchen” (a sparkly pink playset).

This is a prime example of mandated altercasting because the influence is aggressive; the obvious purpose of the product and its commercial is to push girls into the specific role of homemaker, as no boys are present in many of these types of commercials. When young girls view that commercial or play with that product, they're being altercasted into associating the play with their self-images (18).

Concerning children's books, Daniel (105-106), quoting Duindam, notes the permanence of the connection between femininity and domesticity, as well as the scarcity of men engaged in domestic chores (including cooking for the whole family). Regarding contemporary women's domestic labor, already in the 1980s *The New York Times* observed that women may have left the house, but they were not out of the kitchen:

A quarter of a century after Betty Friedan wrote “The Feminine Mystique,” the book credited with igniting the feminist movement, women are still doing almost all the cooking and grocery shopping.  
[...]

[Women] are still the primary care-givers and the people who pay attention to how, when, what and where their families eat. (Burros)

And yet, browsing through magazines, newspapers, bookshops, and cyberspace, from America to India, from teenage bloggers to experienced journalists, there is a common condemnation of (and guilt expressed by) women abandoning the kitchens, allegedly leaving their families and children at the mercy of fast-food companies and increasing the risk of obesity. This problematic assumption ignores the responsibilities of fathers, the affordability of healthy food, and the concurrent causes of weight gain. The deeply-rooted bond between femininity and cooking seems ubiquitous: in the 1990s Nigella Lawson climbed the best-sellers' chart with a book that taught its reader how to become a "domestic goddess" through the art of baking;<sup>12</sup> in the middle 2000s *The Guardian* published an article named "Why a woman's place is in the kitchen," whose abstract read: "Back in the 1970s, when she launched the feminist magazine *Spare Rib*, Rosie Boycott was adamant that women should not waste their time cooking. Now she wonders if she went a bit too far..." (Boycott); in a recent Indian survey, 52% of the young interviewees declared that a woman's main role is taking care of household chores – including cooking – and raising children (FP Staff). And, of course, in countless blogs and forums, women rejoice in narrating "the smell of the bread baked and cooked in the home oven" (Lipperini 81). In the meantime, the Council of Europe has highlighted the permanence of the unequal division of domestic labor and its harmful consequences for women's work-life balance and well-being ("Sexism: See It. Name It. Stop It").<sup>13</sup>

As important as it is to counter unhealthy eating habits – even Adela Turin, in Melaracconti, presents the joy of cooking with children delicious homemade food, contrasting it with the blandness of canned food (quick and easy!) – there is something disturbing about the renewed conviction that the kitchen (and the home) is the natural place for female creativity and self-realization. This resurgence is especially concerning given that data provided by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) demonstrate that women "still do most unpaid work" (190), with Italy being one of the countries where the gender gap is particularly egregious. As Lipperini observes: "How creative all this is. How industrious. How frightening it is to condemn themselves, and go back to being the proud owners of those hands that are always active, that sew and embroider and never stop" (82).

In the midst of current trends, there is still value in an alternative narrative – especially aimed at children – in which women abandon the kitchen, discover solidarity and political action, and enable the creation of a fairer society. Thus, *Storia di panini* still proves to be able to offer revolutionary and stimulating content for its readers, even nearly fifty years after its publication.

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## Notes

<sup>1</sup>The "Andersen - Il mondo dell'infanzia" prize is promoted by the homonymous Italian review. It is not affiliated with the Hans Christian Andersen prize promoted by IBBY.

<sup>2</sup>*Rosaconfetto*, *Una fortunata catastrofe*, *Arturo e Clementina*, *La vera storia dei bonobo con gli occhiali*.

<sup>3</sup>Quote taken from e-mail interview with Nella Bosnia on 24 November 2016. Translation provided by me.

<sup>4</sup>All the following English titles are the translations proposed by Writers and Readers Publishing Cooperative in the 1970s.

<sup>5</sup>Regarding this peculiar republishing project, I recommend Pederzoli's essay "La traduzione letteraria per l'infanzia in una prospettiva di genere: alcune riflessioni a partire dalla collana 'dalla parte delle bambine'/'du côté des petites filles.'"

<sup>6</sup>This picturebook, like all the others published by Dalla parte delle bambine, does not use page numbers.

<sup>7</sup>These observations were made by Adela Turin and sociologist Sylvie Cromer in the 1990s, following the research project "Attention album!" (organized by Turin's association Du Côté des Filles), which studied the 1994 production of picturebooks in France, Spain, and Italy, and then investigated how a sample of young readers interpreted the illustrations from a gender perspective. The results were published in booklets distributed by Du Côté des Filles in French, Spanish, and Italian.

<sup>8</sup><http://efferivistafemminista.it/2014/07/la-catena-di-montaggio/>

<sup>9</sup>Concerning this, it is interesting to note that American feminists had actually organized kitchen strikes. Williams (59) remembers the one held in 1970 in New York City, when feminists marched with signs reading "Don't Cook Dinner. Starve a Rat Tonight."

<sup>10</sup>From telephonic interview with Margherita Saccaro, 15 February 2021.

<sup>11</sup>Les deux narrateurs à l'œuvre dans l'album.

<sup>12</sup>Lawson, Nigella. *How to Be a Domestic Goddess: Baking and the Art of Comfort Cooking*. Chatto and Windus, 1998.

<sup>13</sup><https://www.coe.int/en/web/human-rights-channel/stop-sexism>