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Flora Derounian

The Invisible Work of Women Religious: Oral Histories in Roman Convents

Flora Derounian

There were 144,171 women religious in Italy in the year 1951,¹ accounting for twenty point one per cent of the unmarried female population.² Yet, the church remained, according to Adriana Valerio, ‘hierarchical, clerical, and male, [...] and was a space of institutional invisibility for women’.³ This is a claim which has very recently been echoed by the Vatican’s own newspaper, which ran an article entitled ‘The (nearly) Free Work of Nuns’, exposing the ‘free, poorly-paid and nonetheless hardly-recognised work of women religious’.⁴ Although thoughtful studies have been made of modern women religious and their work in Britain and Ireland,⁵ Italian academic study of women religious is almost invariably focused on medieval or early modern history.⁶ Existing literature about the work of women religious is largely – although not exclusively – restricted to convent records, or histories of individual convents, foundresses, or saints. This literature has not, as Tom O’Donoghue and Anthony Potts observe of the English-speaking world, ‘been accompanied by a major corpus of serious scholarship on the social history of the lives of the “religious”’.⁷ In Italy, the drive to record or celebrate the work of women religious often comes from within institutions themselves, rather than from academia. This article aims to both redress this scholarly oversight, and thus the invisibility of women (religious) of this historical period.

Women’s invisibility has also been more widely observed of post-Second World War Italy.⁸ Historian Paola Bonifazio argues that ‘work empowered and regenerated the male citizen’ in the post-war period.⁹ This article will ask whether the same can be said for women religious. Focusing on the period between 1945 and 1965 in Italy, it evaluates the church’s attitude to the work of women religious and the professional opportunities afforded to them through education and missions. Using a corpus of oral histories collected in three Roman convents, the article responds to historian and Dominican sister, Margaret MacCurtain’s call to ‘hear the voices of women religious’,¹⁰





revealing how their existences compared to those of other women living in post-Second World War Italy.

The oral histories studied here were collected in one-off interviews with sixteen women religious, aged between seventy-one and ninety-four, from three different Roman convents. The first two convents, the Suore Domenicane di Santa Caterina and the Suore adoratrici del preziosissimo Sangue di Cristo, are mother houses and retirement homes. As such, they welcome retired women who lived and worked both in Italy and abroad in community institutions and missions. This fact gave a particular richness and variety to the interviews, because of the breadth of experience of the women I encountered; from places as diverse as Bari and Vicenza, from seamstresses to war nurses, no two interviewees are the same. The final convent, the Piccole sorelle di Gesù, is also a mother house. Here, sisters do not wear traditional habits and they take up lay work, such as factory or administrative labour. All of the communities are apostolic. The defining characteristic of interviewees is that they lived and worked in the period between 1945 and 1965.¹¹

Post-war Italy, ‘a republic founded on work’

Post-war Italy was an era of (re)construction and renewal. Work was at the heart of this renaissance. The 1947 Italian constitution states that ‘Italy is a republic founded on work’.¹² Paola Bonifazio notes the restorative power of work for Italian male citizens after the Second World War,¹³ but can the same be said for women? In the period between 1945 and 1970, the percentage of women in employment actually decreased in Italy, standing at thirty-two per cent in 1950.¹⁴ Unlike other post-war European economies, women’s employment stagnated until the 1970s.¹⁵ These facts, and the return of discourse around women’s place as mother and domestic, lead historian Perry Willson to observe that the period between 1945 and 1967 in Italy was ‘the era of the housewife’.¹⁶ To what extent did women religious buck this trend? Historian John Pollard notes that ‘Catholicism, in various institutional forms, played a powerful, central role in the post-war reconstruction of Italy’.¹⁷ The present article reflects on the contrasting roles and opportunities that secular and religious women were given in post-war reconstruction.

Women’s work and the Catholic church

Of the 942,773 women religious in the world in 1956, over ninety per cent were members of apostolic orders and thus probably in some kind of work.¹⁸



Yet, the church remained, according to Valerio, insensible to women's contributions.¹⁹ To interrogate why, this article will first address the church's attitude to women's work during this period.

The employment of women, both secular and religious, has long been contentious for the Catholic church. In the period between the end of the Second World War and 1965, it viewed laywomen's work as complementary and secondary to their key mission as mothers. Lesley Caldwell notes that, in post-war Italy, 'the Christian representation of femininity was almost completely identified with motherhood'.²⁰ In 1952 the women's branch of Italy's Catholic Action group, Gioventù Femminile, which targeted younger female Catholics, warned women workers that 'our environment is strewn with dangers'.²¹ The emphasis here on the perils of women's work tied in with wider social tensions, where anxieties about women's work were often intertwined with concerns over their sexuality, financial (in)dependence and the americanisation of Italian society.²² Gioventù Femminile also advertised the ideal woman as 'an ultra-conscientious worker, an apostle to the point of heroism [...] a woman consecrated to heroism and sacrifice',²³ highlighting the crossovers in expectations for lay and religious women respectively. Even where women had a profession, the law forbidding firing them upon marriage was only passed in 1963.²⁴ Until this time it was standard for a married woman to give up work and dedicate herself to house and family.

Conversely, women religious are counted by the Italian census as professionals, belonging to the group of *professioni tecniche*.²⁵

Yet, within the Catholic church itself, the work of women religious has been looked upon with reserve. As the church turned to apostolic rather than enclosed orders – and thus to professional work – at the end of the 1800s,²⁶ 'the responsibilities of women religious became less wide-ranging and more compartmentalised'.²⁷ Carmen Mangion argues that 'it is this compartmentalisation and the emergence of teaching and nursing as professions [...] that contributed to the acquisition of a professional identity' for women religious.²⁸ The 1950 document, *Sponsa Christi*, encouraged religious to engage in remunerated work, and in the two *Congressi generali degli stati di perfezione* (in 1950 and 1957) preceding the Second Vatican Council, and indeed in the Second Vatican Council itself, the apostolic work of religious was a subject of debate. These congresses and the church at large grappled with the desire to differentiate religious from other workers, with the constant preoccupation that work might 'diminish the value of religious



vows'.²⁹ During the period under study convent recruitment figures faltered. We might argue that this was due to the rise in secular opportunities for women wishing to work in service jobs.

While, in some religious communities, 'women's religious and moral vocations were reconciled uneasily with the notion of the female professional',³⁰ others kicked back. In 1963 Cardinal Suenens argued forcefully for the apostolic work of women religious, affirming that 'yeast is not placed behind the dough it is to leaven, but right in it'.³¹ Women religious dominated the sectors of care and education in Italy at this time. Because of their professionalisation and power in these sectors, and because 'religion and politics in Italy have been inextricably intertwined',³² women religious are not only of interest to Italian religious history but also to women's labour history.

Education

Before women religious became professionals in their own right, they were educated and/or trained, often within the convent itself. Adding to the 'small but growing corpus of research [...] on convent schools as sites for female learning',³³ the present section evaluates the influence of religious vows on women's education and how nuns were 'empowered and regenerated' by their professions.³⁴ It looks at the influence of religious vows over women's educational opportunities. In my interviews, the importance and uniqueness of the convent as educator swiftly emerges. Interviewees link convent educations to their professional opportunities, more varied than those that the average woman could expect at this time.

Religious orders emerge in these testimonies as the guardian angels of women's education. The 1951 Italian census records that only a third of pupils registered in middle and upper schools were girls. At university, numbers drop to just 60,000 women enrolled nationwide, in comparison to 167,000 men.³⁵ In contrast, all of my interviewees received education and/or training as part of religious life. This is all the more pertinent as, contrary to my expectations, interviewees testified to having had little and poor education prior to religious profession. Some attributed this to the penury of their families, for example Sister C., who remarks:

When I finished primary school I asked, '*Mamma*, can I go on studying?' Mother said, 'If you go to school too we won't be able to support both of you. You go to work, help us pay for your brother. At



least one of you will go the whole way'.³⁶

As well as providing a solution to familial poverty, convent schooling resisted external pressures on education caused by the war. One sister recalled, 'Because I grew up during the war, I could only go to primary school', after her only teacher was killed in bombing in Foggia.³⁷ Religious institutions were a bulwark for wartime education for students within the convent. Whereas many schools were closed or suspended during war, Sister P. explains that she was able to go on studying because, in the convent, 'we had our own religious teachers with university degrees'.³⁸

Religious vows appear to make women's access to education longer and more comprehensive at this time. Nuns' access to education had long been on the church's agenda, and manifested itself in key concessions made in favour of women at the Second Vatican Council.³⁹ As I listened to interviewees, a clear system of career progression emerged: women were accepted into orders as novices, and then allotted training or education which would lead them into a professional field. There does not appear to have been much flexibility or choice in the pathways the women were given, nor did they necessarily fit with novices' existing talents. Sister Z. tells of how her profession was decided on the basis of her physique: 'They said, "get yourself a vocation", and they sent us to the clinic to see what it was all about. Then those who were a little weaker were sent to school. I was more robust because I've always been a bit chunky – you need to be strong to work. So I went [to the clinic] to work'.⁴⁰

Beyond the basic qualifications provided to women religious, many were offered professional training courses, if not access to higher education. The *Annuario Pontificio* for 1948 records twenty-two universities worldwide and twelve *istituti di studi superiori* in Rome under pontifical rule. Many interviewees discussed education and training provided inside the convent. Perhaps the best example of the transformative education provided for women religious is Sister CL.'s story:

I did my postulancy, and – at that time girls didn't study, I had just done primary school and that's it – secondary school, middle school, they didn't exist back in my home town, and then with the war, it was impossible. So some of the other girls didn't even know how to read or write, or even to sign their own names! [...] I remember during my postulancy they didn't know where to put me because I had only got halfway through primary school. So between the ages of eighteen



and thirty I studied for a degree in English. From not even having completed primary school I started studying in the Institute because we had our own school and I could go to the classes for girls and do my exams there. Skipping a few years, I got through middle school and my final exams. They made me do that, then they sent me to Rome to an institute for women religious.⁴¹

These testimonies illustrate the increased educational and professional opportunities religious life offered women. If interviewees remember their educations so forthrightly, it may be testament to their unusualness in the wider national context, and in contrast to their own humble origins. Memories of enhanced education highlight the empowerment of women religious as citizens.

One of the most remarkable and unusual features of women religious' educations regards their linguistic abilities. When undertaking the interviews, I was often asked in which language I would prefer to speak. Among the languages spoken by the sisters interviewed are Italian, English, French, Urdu, Punjabi, Swahili, Mandarin, German and Arabic. Most of these languages were learned either for or during overseas missions. The importance given to languages reflects the emphasis on transnationalism which characterises most religious communities. Although some interviewees spoke of thorough linguistic training in recognised institutes, there are other accounts of sisters learning languages in rather improvised circumstances. The case of Sister C. is an amusing example of this:

I first went to Kenya, and I spoke neither French nor English, because in Italy I had only completed middle school, nothing really. We had to pray in French because the other novices who came to Kenya were from French-speaking countries, and we did the psalms in French too. The *Osservatore Romano* came in English, and we made our confessions – this will make you laugh – with the sins already written out! [...] The English missionary sisters in Africa passed us a little sheet and we chose our sins from the list to say at confession.⁴²

These memories speak of a highly vocational education which went beyond the convent school to keep challenging and equipping women religious throughout their professional lives. In comparison to the thirty-two per cent of Italian women who did work in the post-war period – mostly in domestic, agricultural or administrative jobs – we can notice a significant difference.⁴³ The accounts of education by women religious demonstrate



the unique opportunities that religious life gave them, the chance to be regenerated and empowered beyond the constraining circumstances of their origins and gender.

Missions

Missions are of paramount importance to many interviewees' narratives of their work. All but one had been on missions, and exactly half of those interviewed had worked overseas. Most of the missionary sisters continued service work; however, this kind of work became exceptional because, 'although women's work on the missions (teaching, nursing and so forth) tended to reflect their traditional role as nurturer, the life there was often imagined to be "topsy-turvy"' .⁴⁴ This section evaluates Yvonne McKenna's claim that missions may have provided 'a space in which gender roles in *this* life might be negotiated or reinterpreted' .⁴⁵

As McKenna observes of her Irish interviewees, 'going "on the missions" was what first attracted most of the women to religious life' .⁴⁶ Sister S. recalls being inspired by an aunt who visited her before going on a mission: 'At the time I didn't say anything, but when I was fifteen, I started saying, "Mamma, I'd like to become a nun" [...] Then eventually I said "I want to go on a mission"' .⁴⁷ Missionary work was a point of enormous pride for interviewees. Descriptions of missions as 'a truly wonderful experience'⁴⁸ are typical. Contact with other cultures and religions is remembered as having been a particularly valuable element of interviewees' work. Sister A. affirmed: 'It made me grow up. Encountering a new culture, new people, for me it was an education in all senses of the word; an opening to a new culture, new values' .⁴⁹ Such statements evoke the opening of a world of opportunity for women, where new identities might be negotiated.

The reasons for feeling such an attraction to a missionary vocation are articulated around the idea of giving one's service in places of need. Sister B. recounts: 'I took my first vows in '65 and they needed people to go to Vietnam, so I asked to go [...] there was this war, this difficult situation in Vietnam, and that attracted me' .⁵⁰ Sister C. echoes this sentiment: 'After my perpetual vows I made myself available [...] whether you're in Africa, India, the world was my—why choose one place? I didn't specify, I just wrote "available"' .⁵¹ These statements recall missionary work as a calling to help and paint a picture of absolute charity. Interviewees discuss an attraction to service and sacrifice rather than to exotic travel and adventure, tying in with



post-war discourse about ideal femininity based on heroism and sacrifice, quoted above.

The work which the sisters performed was most commonly the provision of services like medical aid or education. Many sisters were qualified medical professionals but, even where they were not, they worked to provide medical supplies. Sister B., for example, made medicine containers by washing thousands of old Coca Cola bottles each day in Vietnam. Work was not only healthcare. Many of the interviewees had run or worked in mission schools. One, Sister I., had even become a diplomatic courier for the Vatican:

After thirty-eight years in Pakistan – because I spoke English – [...] I went to Nigeria, where you could only enter if you had a diplomatic passport. I lived at the Vatican embassy for two years. [...] They sent me around the world as a messenger carrying diplomatic messages. Very, secret, confidential messages [...] I took 108 flights.⁵²

Again, the importance and transformative power of languages, and the exceptional opportunities for travel and status which women religious had, come to the fore in discussions of missionary work. Many interviewees highlighted the importance of harmonious relations with indigenous communities, stressing that religious imperialism was not the goal. Sister A. worked in Burundi as a nurse. She recalls:

A lot of people helped me, especially because of language difficulties I needed them, and this brought us together [...] as equals. [...] Also at that time there were the Tutsi and the Hutu. There were lots of violent incidents. My staff were all Hutu, and then there were some Tutsi, and a fraternal atmosphere grew between us, like ‘we can work together, we can live together’. Truly, for me it was a beautiful experience of fraternity.⁵³

The picture Sister A. paints is one where missionaries, locals, and opposing factions are equal and work together for the greater good. She highlights the potential for missionary work to create social links which overcome religious or political divides. It would, however, be wrong not to note that ‘overwhelmingly the perspective taken by scholars writing on missionary activity has been to position their findings within discourse on colonialism’.⁵⁴ For structural reasons, Italy has perhaps been slower than other nations to make this critique.⁵⁵ In the light of burgeoning post-colonial theory, I was interested to see how interviewees would discuss relations with local populations.⁵⁶





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Although African countries featured strongly in interviewees' missions, they often referred to their destination quite simply as 'Africa', rather than specifying a particular country. One interviewee stated, 'Going to Africa, going to England, it was the same thing'.⁵⁷ This recalls some of the criticisms of colonialism, that developing countries are not understood in their individuality and portrayed as 'other', identifiable only by their poverty and lack of sophistication in comparison to the West.⁵⁸ Often the danger and violence encountered in these missions are highlighted by interviewees. For instance, Sister Z. remembers the civil war in Guinea-Bissau:

The missionaries went around collecting the poor, the sick, and the dead. They brought them home and I had to take the dead, the children, the elderly, and I had to untangle them. Sometimes my hands were soaked with blood because it was war, they were shooting, killing. A tribal war.⁵⁹

The foregrounding of indigenous violence differentiates narrators from missionary subjects and recalls Stuart Hall's critique of representations of black people in Western culture, 'portrayed in terms of [...] savagery and barbarism'.⁶⁰ Western presence is depicted by interviewees as paternalistic, swooping in and 'resolving' indigenous violence.⁶¹

Unequal ethnic and power relations are something which only one of the sisters acknowledges as problematic. In response to my question about how she found working with the local community, Sister C. replies:

I didn't know anything about tropical medicine [...] It was the locals who taught me, they had families, children, perhaps several wives, tiny salaries, and they were much better at the work than me. That made me feel bad, [...] sometimes I asked myself 'what right do I have to a higher salary than them, when they are worth much more than I am?'⁶²

Narratives of missionary work highlight the unusual opportunities available to Italian women religious, from diplomatic missions to community building. Elements of colonial discourse which permeate the interviews provide an interesting counterpoint to the usually masculine domain of colonial imperialism. However problematic missionary work may emerge as, these testimonies support Yvonne McKenna's claim that it had the potential to integrate women into new spaces and discourses.



Conclusion

Despite the qualms of the Catholic church over women's work, in post-war Italy women religious tell tales of professions affording them new and unique opportunities in education and work. In a context of poor access to schooling, women religious received privileged opportunities to learn. In a context of falling numbers of women in work, women religious worked in unusual and influential positions on a national and global scale. For these reasons, I argue that profession (both in its religious and secular senses) 'empowered and regenerated' women religious as women and as Italian citizens. Oral histories in which we 'hear the voices of women religious' contribute to the redressing of their historical invisibility,⁶³ and add new historical perspectives on women's labour in post-war Italy.⁶⁴

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Notes

- 1 In regions such as Umbria and Basilicata women religious accounted for over half of the unmarried female population in 1951: Giancarlo Rocca, *Donne Religiose: Contributo a una storia della condizione femminile in Italia nei secoli XIX–XX* (Rome: Edizioni Paoline, 1992), 53.
- 2 Rocca, *Donne Religiose*, 52.
- 3 Adriana Valerio, *Donne e Chiesa: Una storia di genere* (Turin: Carocci, 2017), 174. All citations of Italian language sources in this article have been translated by myself.
- 4 *L'Osservatore Romano*, March 2018, in its insert *Donne, Chiesa, Mondo* (Women, Church, World).
- 5 See Carmen Mangion, "'Good Teacher" or "Good Religious"? The Professional Identity of Catholic Women Religious in Nineteenth-Century England and Wales', *Women's History Review*, xiv, 2 (2005), 223–242. For a rich discussion of existing scholarship on religious and their work in education, see Deirdre Raftery, 'Religions and the history of education: a historiography', *History of Education*, xxxxi, no.1 (2012), 41–56.
- 6 With the exception of Rocca, *Donne Religiose*; Giancarlo Rocca, 'La vita religiosa versi il concilio vaticano II', *Chiesa e Storia*, iii (2013), 129–178; Lucetta Scaraffia, *Il Concilio in Convento* (Brescia: Morcelliana, 1996); the final chapter of Lucetta Scaraffia and Gabriella Zari, *Donne e fede* (Bari: Laterza, 2009); and various works by Grazia LoParco at the Pontifica Facolta di Scienze dell'Educazione Auxilium.
- 7 Tom O'Donoghue and Anthony Potts, 'Researching the lives of Catholic teachers

- who were members of religious orders: historiographical considerations', *History of Education*, xxxiii, 4 (2004), 469.
- 8 Anna Rossi-Doria, 'L'invisibilità politica delle donne: Alcune riflessioni', in Gagliani, Mariani, Tarozzi & Guerra, (eds), *Donne, guerra, politica* (Bologna: CLUEB, 2000).
 - 9 Paola Bonifazio, 'Work, welfare, bio-politics: Italian and American film propaganda of the Reconstruction in the age of neorealism', *The Italianist*, xxxi, 2 (2011), 163.
 - 10 Margaret MacCurtain, 'Late in the field: Catholic Sisters in twentieth century Ireland and the new religious history', *Journal of Women's History*, vi, 4 (1995), 58.
 - 11 Apostolic religious are more easily classifiable as workers. Nonetheless, the idea of contemplatives as workers merits further investigation, but does not fall within the scope of this article.
 - 12 *La Costituzione Italiana* (1947), art. 1.
 - 13 Bonifazio, 'Work', 163.
 - 14 Francesca Bettio, *The Sexual Division of Labour: The Italian Case* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988), 48. This figure is for women aged between fifteen and sixty-four.
 - 15 Perry Willson, *Women in Twentieth-century Italy* (Basingstoke: Macmillan International Higher Education, 2010), 118.
 - 16 *ibid.*, 120.
 - 17 John Pollard, *Catholicism in Modern Italy: Religion, Society and Politics since 1861* (London: Routledge 2008), 109.
 - 18 This calculation is based on the numbers of *religiose* (apostolic), and *monache* (contemplative) given in Rocca, 'La vita religiosa', 136, and does not include the labour of enclosed religious.
 - 19 Valerio, *Donne e Chiesa*, 174.
 - 20 Lesley Caldwell, 'What Do Mothers Want? Takes on Motherhood in Bellissima, Il Grido, and Mamma Roma', in Penelope Morris (ed.), *Women in Italy, 1945–1960: An Interdisciplinary Study* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), 225.
 - 21 La Scuola, *Chiesa e progetto educativo nell'Italia del secondo dopoguerra 1945–1958* (Brescia: La Scuola, 1988), 287.
 - 22 Willson, *Women in Twentieth-century Italy*, 123.
 - 23 La Scuola, *Chiesa et progetto educativo*, 290.
 - 24 Vanessa Maher, *Tenere le fila: Sarte, sartine e cambiamento sociale, 1860–1960* (Turin: Rosenberg & Sellier, 2007), 87.
 - 25 'Technici delle attività religiose e di culto' (<http://nup2006.istat.it/scheda.php?id=3.4.5.7.0>) (7 September 2017).
 - 26 Valerio, *Donne e Chiesa*, 185.
 - 27 Mangion, "'Good Teacher or Good Religious'", 224.
 - 28 *Ibid.*
 - 29 Rocca, 'La vita religiosa', 140.
 - 30 Kathryn Gleadle, *British Women in the Nineteenth Century* (Basingstoke: Macmillan International Higher Education, 2001), 144.
 - 31 J L Suenens, *The Nun in the World* (Westminster: The Newman Press, 1963), 1.
 - 32 Pollard, *Catholicism in Modern Italy*, 4.
 - 33 Raftery, 'Religions and the history of education', 44.
 - 34 Bonifazio, 'Work, welfare, bio-politics', 163.
 - 35 'Gli italiani' (<http://cinquantamila.corriere.it/storyTellerThread.php?threadId=>

- censimento1951) (23 March 2018).
- 36 Interview with Sister C. of Rome (22 January 2017).
- 37 Interview with Sister CL. of Rome (21 January 2017).
- 38 Interview with Sister P. of Rome (20 January 2017).
- 39 Valerio, *Donne e Chiesa*, 187, speaks of ‘the newfound awareness which was being established around the need for women religious to study’. Rocca, ‘La vita religiosa’, 142, ‘the fourth [point] related to the training of women religious and the Sacred Congregation of Religious requested that the Vatican II promote the training of female “juniors” or “scholars”, in the same way as male seminarians and scholars’.
- 40 Interview with Sister Z. of Rome (21 January 2017).
- 41 Interview with Sister CL. Although this is a remarkable achievement of religious orders, CL. goes on to tell the story of another sister who entered with her, and who only received a primary education, despite her brother urging the convent to let her study more.
- 42 Interview with Sister C.
- 43 Willson, *Women*.
- 44 Yvonne McKenna, ‘Entering Religious Life, Claiming Subjectivity: Irish nuns 1930s-1960s’, *Women’s History Review* 15, 2 (2006), 197.
- 45 Ibid.
- 46 Ibid., 196.
- 47 Interview with Sister S. of Rome (20 January 2017).
- 48 Interview with Sister A. of Rome (22 January 2017).
- 49 Ibid.
- 50 Interview with Sister B. of Rome (22 January 2017).
- 51 Interview with Sister C.
- 52 Interview with Sister I. of Rome (20 January 2017).
- 53 Interview with Sister A.
- 54 Raftery, ‘Religions’, 43.
- 55 Italian colonialism was comparatively smaller-scale than that of other western nations.
- 56 Works such as Ciro Poggiali’s *Diario AOI* (1936–37) detail the brutality of Italian colonialism.
- 57 Interview with Sister C.
- 58 Stuart Hall, ‘The West and the Rest: Discourse and Power’, in *The Indigenous Experience: Global Perspectives* (Ontario: Canadian Scholars, 2006).
- 59 Interview with Sister Z.
- 60 Gail Dines and Jean Humez, *Gender, race, and class in media: A text-reader* (Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications, 2002), 83.
- 61 John Cameron and Anna Haanstra, ‘Development Made Sexy: how it happened and what it means’, *Third World Quarterly*, xxix, 8 (2008), 1482.
- 62 Interview with Sister C.
- 63 MacCurtain, ‘Late’, 58.
- 64 I am grateful to Professor Deirdre Raftery for her advice and feedback on drafts of this article, and to Dr Carmen Mangion for her ongoing support and encouragement of research on women religious.