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Amateurs by Choice: Women and the Pursuit of Independent Scholarship in 20th Century Historical Writing

[Gianna Pomata](#)

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Abstract

In the early decades of the 20th century, women's access to the historical discipline followed fundamentally two paths. For the first time, some (a small minority) entered the profession as academic historians; others worked outside or on the margins of academia, pursuing their research interests as independent scholars. What did being an independent scholar mean for these women? Was it always a form of externally imposed marginalization? My paper argues that this is not the case. First of all, being an independent scholar did not necessarily mean marginality. Some of these women scholars exerted a deep influence on 20th century historiography, and their work is still

influential today. Quite apart from posthumous fame, moreover, it should be noted that the lack of academic affiliation did not necessarily preclude for some of these women the possibility of recognition and influence during their lives. Secondly, we should be careful not to assume that being an independent scholar was invariably an externally imposed marginalization. Some of these women scholars can be defined as 'obligatory amateurs,' because they were frustrated in their attempt to pursue an academic career. But others, in contrast, deliberately chose independent scholarship over an academic job, and can thus be defined 'amateurs by choice.' What was the motivation behind this choice? I argue that an important factor was the resilience of the amateur tradition in historical writing. The amateur tradition offered a strong counterbalance to women's marginality in academia and a source of positive values and models for their participation in the intellectual life.

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1. Independent Scholars Ante Litteram

This essay examines the notable presence of independent scholars among the most eminent women historians of the first half of the 20th century – a remarkable fact that has yet to receive the attention it deserves. Obviously related to the particular conditions under which women entered the historical profession in that period, this trend crossed national boundaries: we find it in Anglophone, French, German and Italian historiography.¹ I should hasten to say that this is an exploratory essay, based mostly on qualitative, not quantitative, evidence. The data compiled for the *Atlas of European Historiography* tell us how many women held university positions in the early decades of the 20th century,² but numbers for non-academically affiliated scholars are harder to come by, and have not been collected yet. However, prosopographical studies for groups of women scholars, such as the collection edited by Jane Chance, *Women Medievalists and the Academy*, and bibliographies of historical publications by women for single countries, give significant *prima facie* evidence of a large proportion of non-academic women historians in the period from the 1880s to the 1950s. For instance, in the list of prominent medievalists appended to Chance's volume, 10 out of the 34 historians active in the first half of the century are defined as 'independent scholars.'³

In the early decades of the 20th century, women's access to the historical discipline followed fundamentally two paths. For the first time, some entered the profession as academically trained historians, even reaching eminence in its ranks. It is the case, for instance, of Eileen Power and Helen Cam in England, Hedwig Hintze in Germany, Marie Delcourt in Belgium, and Gina Fasoli in Italy – all distinguished scholars who were university-trained and pursued a successful academic career.⁴ For others, however, like Hope Emily Allen and Mary Ritter Beard in the USA, H  l  ne Metzger and Lucie Varga in France, Ricarda Huch and Elizabeth Busse-Wilson in Germany, Iris Origo and Romana Guarnieri in Italy, just to name a few, the trajectory was quite different: for a variety of factors, including in some cases their own choice, they worked outside or at the margins of academia, pursuing their research interests independently.⁵

Should we call these women 'independent scholars' or 'amateurs'? Neither label fits them exactly. The category of the 'amateur' or 'dilettante' developed in the 19th century as a consequence of professionalization in the sciences. In the *ancien régime*, non-institutionalized scholarship had been the rule rather than the exception. At the end of the 18th century, in history as in natural history – for Gibbon as for Buffon – it would have been hard to distinguish the professional from the amateur. The separation of the academic 'scientific persona' from that of the amateur has been intensively studied for both the natural and the social sciences, including history, but with a prevalent focus on the 'professionals.'⁶ In the case of history, for instance, many studies have been devoted to the institutionalization of this discipline in the universities, concomitant with its redefinition as a scientific field of inquiry. The role of Ranke's seminar at the university of Berlin as the site for the creation and diffusion of new professional standards, the transition from local societies of amateurs to national and international congresses, the organization of vast collective enterprises for the publication of sources, and the foundation of professional journals have all been identified as key aspects of the professionalization of history in the 19th century.⁷ In contrast with this strong focus on the professionals, the amateurs have been left in the shadows, a circumstance possibly related to the fact that the once honorable label of 'amateur' or 'dilettante' – someone who pursues study for the love or the pleasure (*diletto*) of it – gradually acquired a pejorative connotation. 'Amateurish' became synonymous with substandard work, and the amateur came to be perceived as the negative mirror image of the professional historian.

It was in reaction to this negative connotation that the expression 'independent scholar' was created in the USA in the 1970s and 1980s, when the term first became widespread as an alternative to other formulations such as 'private scholars,' 'freelance scholars,' 'nonaffiliated scholars,' or 'self-reliant academics.' The early 1980s saw a serious economic downturn in American higher education, when the ranks of scholars outside the academy swelled with graduates who could not find jobs and with faculty members who found themselves unemployed because of budget cuts. Some of these scholars, coming from the students' and women's movements of the 1970s, formed associations under the new label of 'independent scholars,' claiming a status as practitioners beholden to professional standards of research, though not supported by an academic source of income. In 1975, for instance, a group of women who had lost their jobs at the City University of New York organized under the leadership of the classicist Marjorie Lightman into an association of 'independent scholars' named the Institute for Research in History.⁸ The Institute for Research in History closed in 1988, but another association of non-academic historians, the Institute for Historical Study, founded in San Francisco in 1980, still exists today, and is affiliated with the American Historical Association.⁹ In the same period, similar groups sprang up for other humanistic disciplines. One of them was the Center for Independent Study, still currently operating with the mission of helping 'life in the independent lane' (as said on its website); another was the National Coalition of Independent Scholars, created in 1989 and also active to the present day.¹⁰ A new literature of guidance and support for independent scholarship was published in those years, such as Ronald Gross's *The Independent Scholar's Handbook* (1982). In this context, the label 'independent scholar' stood for the notion that lack of academic affiliation does not preclude the authorship of high-standard contributions to historical knowledge, and that professional efficiency is not necessarily linked to an academic career.

If 'independent scholar' is a category of the 1980s, it may seem anachronistic to apply it to the women I will examine in this paper, who were active in the first half of the century. But calling them 'amateurs'

would also be problematic. As we shall see, these non-academic women historians authored influential and widely recognized work – work that in no way can be called amateurish. Even more importantly, they differed in many ways from 19th century amateurs in being university educated and trained, and in participating in the activities of the historians' community, such as congresses and scholarly journals. We could say, in fact, that these women's profile represents a transitional stage between the 19th century amateur and the late 20th century independent scholar. They pursued a mode of intellectual life that was rooted in the amateur tradition, but they also participated, to some extent, in the new developments of professionalized historical research. Most significantly, their intellectual identity centered around a fundamental value – independence as an epistemic ideal – that forms a strong element of continuity between 19th century amateurism and present-day independent scholarship. In this respect, calling these women independent scholars *ante litteram* is less of an anachronism than one might think at first sight.

2. The Amateur Tradition

If an academic career was a new option for women historians, being an amateur, in contrast, was a well-trodden path, thanks to an illustrious tradition of women memorialists dating back to the early modern period.¹¹ Throughout the 19th century, in keeping with this tradition, women's contribution to historical writing came exclusively from outside academia, with the single exception, in the last part of the century, of the historians affiliated with the newly established female colleges in the UK and the USA. But though no other option was possible for women other than that of the amateur, they certainly pursued this option very vigorously, leaving a strong mark on 19th century historiography. An emblematic figure is Sarah Taylor Austin (1793–1867), who translated Ranke into English and authored a *History of Germany from 1760 to 1814*. A formidable and yet self-effacing Victorian intellectual, she corresponded as a peer with Jeremy Bentham and James Mill, Victor Cousin and François Guizot. Her salon in Paris and Berlin was called 'a centre where France, England, Germany, and Italy met, and learned to know and appreciate each other.'¹² No less striking is the Romanian-Albanian but internationally educated Elena Ghika, better known under the pen name Dora d'Istria (1828–1888), historian, feminist and early critic of orientalism, who was defined 'a link between Western and Eastern civilizations.'¹³

The women who contributed to 19th century historical scholarship in the amateur tradition (sometimes with remarkably innovative results) have met a varied posthumous fame. Some are now totally obscure like Mary Aucrum Young (d. 1867), author of a pioneering work on early modern religious history, *The Life and Times of Aonio Paleario, or a history of the Italian Reformers of the sixteenth century* (1860). Her only remaining trace seems to be her tombstone in the English Cemetery in Florence.¹⁴ Some were forgotten but have been recently rediscovered, like the Greek-born Margherita Albana Mignaty (d. 1887), a friend of the historian Pasquale Villari, and author herself of several works of history,¹⁵ or the German Ludmilla Assing (1821–1880), who wrote biographies of several protagonists of the Italian Risorgimento. Some, in contrast, were and remain famous, like Anna Jameson (1794–1860), an influential historian of art and religious iconography. Or Vernon Lee, alias Violet Paget (1856–1935),¹⁶ lesbian, feminist and pacifist – a protagonist, like Walter Pater and John Addington Symonds, of the esthetic and literary debate in the transition from Victorian culture to modernism.¹⁷ These women's

contribution to historical scholarship is an important component of 19th century historiography, whose extension and significance we are now starting to perceive.¹⁸ Particularly interesting and as yet unacknowledged – because studies, if they exist, have focused on individual figures – is that these scholars clustered around informal but clearly identifiable intellectual networks. All the five women listed above, for instance, belonged to the international community of 19th century Florence – a cosmopolitan Arcadia where a new vision of gender roles in intellectual life provided a particularly favorable ground for women's foray into historical research.¹⁹

3. Amateurs and Feminists

Another major cluster of amateur historians came from the ranks of the suffragist movement. Two political movements were especially significant in promoting women's participation in 19th century historical writing – nationalism and nation-building in the first half of the century and feminism in the second half.²⁰ Of the numerous scholars who deployed the amateur tradition under the auspices of feminism, inaugurating a new age of unprecedented research on women's history, a good example is Lina Eckenstein (1857–1931), the author of *Woman under Monasticism* (1896), a monograph that remained the standard work on this topic for almost a century.²¹ A proficient and prolific author, she was educated at home, and never held an academic position, though some of her work came out in specialized journals such as *The English Historical Review*. Her interests were broad and eclectic: in addition to women's religious history, she wrote on the Italian Renaissance, Egyptology, and linguistics, to which she contributed a comparative study of nursery rhymes.²² Another maverick from the same generation is Margaret Murray (1863–1963), the author of another book that opened new perspectives on women's history, *The Witch Cult in Western Europe* (1921). Like Eckenstein, Murray was a committed suffragist. She studied with the archaeologist Petrie at University College London, and was named an assistant professor of Egyptology at that institution in 1924. She left the job in tears 10 years later – tears due to the fact that she was still an assistant professor. After this unsatisfactory fling with academia, Murray pursued her various research interests as an independent scholar. We get a vivid glimpse of these two women from the splendidly humorous autobiography that Margaret Murray wrote in ripe old age, *My First Hundred Years*. Eckenstein and Murray had accompanied the archaeologist Petrie and his wife on a field trip to Egypt in the winter of 1902–1903. One moonlight night there was a rumour of hooligan looting at the excavation camp. Eckenstein, Murray, and Mrs. Petrie decided to go and investigate. Mr. Stannus, a member of the archaeological team, chivalrously offered to accompany 'the three defenceless women going into danger':

He got the shock of his life when we three women joined hands and danced with a great variety of fancy steps all the way from the camp to the dig (...) Poor Mr. Stannus, he had always been accustomed to the Victorian man's ideal of what a lady should be, a delicate fragile thing.²³

The story captures the buoyant self-confidence of these women, who combined the suffragist ideals with courage, creativity and determination in the pursuit of their intellectual interests.

4. In Transition: Mothers and Daughters

Born at the turn of the 20th century, these scholars lived in an age that saw young women make the transition from home schooling to college education. In the Victorian age, as Virginia Woolf denounced in *A Room of One's Own*, the daughters of the intellectual and professional middle class had been educated at home, in stark contrast with their brothers, who received, as a rule, an expensive university education. In the early decades of the new century, some girls from this social background went to college, a step that made it possible for some of them to accomplish the transition from amateur to academic historian. Emblematic of this transition are the lives of Julia Cartwright and her daughter Cecilia Ady, both prolific historians of early modern Italy. An art historian and the author of very successful biographies of Renaissance women, Julia Cartwright (1851–1924) was a home-schooled amateur.²⁴ Her daughter Cecilia Ady (1881–1958), in contrast, studied history at Oxford where she became a tutor in modern history and a major specialist of the Italian Renaissance.²⁵

At Oxford in the early 1920s, mothers and daughters could go through the same graduation ceremony. Older women, who had studied when the university did not grant degrees to female students, came back to receive their qualifications when the university finally capitulated in 1920. Joan Evans (1893–1977), an Oxford graduate who would pursue a remarkable career as an independent art historian, recalled that in October 1920, when women were finally admitted to degrees, ‘students of every generation came up to complete their qualifications.’ Her mother, who had studied classical archeology at Somerville in 1888, returned to Oxford to get her degree. ‘It was great fun – Evans noted – to be present as a graduate when my mother matriculated... and greatest of all when she took her M.A., and I watched the ceremony.’²⁶

Most girls of Ady and Evans' generation, however, still received a home education, as was the case, for instance, of the novelist Virginia Woolf and the historian Frances Yates. But even for those who had a formal education, a career as professional historian was the exception. By and large, the most accessible option remained that of the amateur, though some of them managed – as did Frances Yates – to accomplish the transition from amateur to academic professional in late middle age.²⁷

5. A Barely Open Door

It is for this generation of women, who had access for the first time to academic education in history, that the label of ‘independent scholar’ is more appropriate than that of ‘amateur.’ Indeed, they were coming out of the amateur tradition because they were no longer home-schooled, but entry into the academy as teachers and researchers remained an elusive goal for most of them. The data for women academic historians at the end of the 1920s show with stark clarity how very few of these women were able to attain a university position in history (Table 1).

Table 1. Women academic historians in 1928

Country	No. of women with academic jobs in history
United Kingdom	10

United Kingdom	40
Russia	9
Irish Republic	3
Belarus	3
Germany	2
Latvia	1
Finland	1
Czechoslovakia	1
Italy	1
France	1

Source: Porciani and Raphael, 2010 .

In the European countries not listed in the table, the number of women among academic historians is zero. The impressive figure for England is explained by the presence of separate women's colleges in London, Oxford and Cambridge (plus, in London, a new co-educational institution, the London School of Economics) – a development that had no parallel in other European countries. In fact, 27 of the 40 English women historians employed as academics worked in the Oxbridge and London colleges.²⁸

Given this situation, it is not surprising that some of these women pursued a career of independent scholarship. But what did being an independent scholar mean for them? Was it always an externally imposed marginalization? Were they 'obligatory amateurs,' as has been argued for British women astronomers of the early decades of the 20th century?²⁹ This is what I thought at first. But I soon discovered that for several of these women the answer is definitely no: independent scholarship appears to have been their deliberate choice. In fact, we can identify a variety of career patterns and professional identities pursued by these women. Some indeed had reason to see themselves as 'obligatory amateurs.' They actively pursued the possibility of an academic career, only to encounter insurmountable obstacles in their paths. But others, in contrast, self-consciously opted for a life of research outside of academia. They were in fact, we may say, 'amateurs by choice.'

6. Obligatory Amateurs

The German historian Elizabeth Busse-Wilson (1890–1974), one of the first generation of German women to receive an academic education, was awarded a doctorate in Leipzig in 1914. She wrote her study of Saint Elizabeth of Thuringia as her *Habilitationschrift*, and published it in 1931. Two years later, in the fateful year 1933, she applied for a position in the Department of History at the Pädagogische Akademie in Dortmund, but was rejected on account of her gender and her feminist and

social-democratic political views. Her effort to secure work and academic respectability within the German university system ended in failure: she did not enter academic life even after the war. And yet her study was widely recognized as an important scholarly contribution to the study of medieval hagiography by intellectuals like Hermann Hesse and Thomas Mann, and even more significantly by historian Herbert Grundmann, the author of a pioneering work on medieval female religious movements.³⁰

In France, in the same years, H el ene Metzger (1889–1944), now considered one of the most important historians of science of the 20th century, never achieved an academic position in spite of her impressive publication record (five books and a long series of articles) and her continued service in several associations for the advancement of the history of science. She lived on her pension as war widow plus some income from her dowry.³¹ Metzger was an independent but not a solitary scholar. Over the 1920s she actively made contact with those figures and institutions that were at the forefront of a fundamental reorientation in the history of science. In 1921 she started a correspondence with George Sarton, the editor of *Isis*, a journal of which she became a regular contributor.³² Most importantly, she developed links with institutions that promoted the establishment of history of science in France, the Institut d'Histoire des Sciences et Techniques at the Sorbonne and the Centre internationale de Synth ese directed by Henri Berr.³³ She served these institutions for years on a voluntary basis in various capacities (as secretary and treasurer), organizing conferences, networking and raising funds. She taught frequently at the Institut, and for a semester, in 1937–1938, she replaced Alexandre Koyr e at the  cole Pratique des Hautes Etudes, but no permanent appointment followed.³⁴ Metzger bitterly resented this lack of recognition and voiced her frustration repeatedly in her letters to Sarton: ‘As I don't have any official position – she wrote to him in 1926 – I'm classified into the category of amateurs.’³⁵

Metzger's career and life were tragically cut short by the Holocaust: she died at Auschwitz in 1944. Would the French academy have opened its doors to her after the war? Other cases suggest that in this later period the universities moved only reluctantly to give recognition even to internationally renowned women scholars. The Dutch Christine Mohrmann (1903–1988), who got her doctorate from the Catholic university of Nijmegen in 1932, was the founder of the journal *Vigiliae christianae* (1947) and a leading figure of the so-called Nijmegen School of Early Christian Latin. In spite of her scholarly achievement and international prestige, Mohrmann supported herself most of her life by teaching in a high school and after 1946 with a minor appointment at the University of Amsterdam. She did not get a position as full professor at the University of Nijmegen until 1961, when she was almost 60 and had long been the recognized authority in her field.³⁶

7. Amateurs by Choice

It is understandable that faced with the frustrating reality of an academy in which – to use Joan Evans' phrase – they ‘existed on sufferance,’³⁷ many female history graduates chose not to pursue the elusive goal of an academic position. Some of them opted for a publishing career at the borderline between history and literature, capitalizing on a tradition that had marked not just the novel in general but specifically the historical novel as a territory densely populated by women authors.³⁸ This is the case, among others, of the Irish scholar Helen Waddell (1889–1965), who never finished her Oxford PhD,

took a job in a publishing house, and became the acclaimed author of scholarly work that had the rare distinction of being successful both with specialists and general readers.³⁹ In Germany, Ricarda Huch (1864–1947) gained fame with her literary essays, her novels and, in her later years, a series of ambitious works on German history, in which she boldly experimented with new forms of historical narration.⁴⁰ Also on the borderline between historical writing and fiction are the works of the Scotswoman Agnes Mure Mackenzie (1891–1955), who held a doctorate from the University of Aberdeen, and like Huch moved from writing novels to authoring histories of Scotland for a wide public.⁴¹ The Oxford history graduates Veronica Wedgwood (1910–1997) and Cecil Woodham-Smith (1896–1977) made a successful career writing history books that combined scholarly accuracy with popular appeal, gaining many honors though not an academic position. It should be noted, however, that Woodham-Smith earned from her publications an income equivalent to the salary of a university professor. She also gained the distinction of being made Honorary Fellow of her college, St. Hilda's.⁴²

The most interesting cases are those of the women who deliberately declined an academic job or the possibility of a university career in order to devote their lives to independent historical research. Hope Emily Allen (1882–1960) is remembered today as the scholar who discovered the *Book of Margery Kempe*, the first autobiographical text written by an English woman, and a fundamental source for medieval women's religious history. Allen graduated at Bryn Mawr, a college that was a hotbed of women's historical studies. When offered a teaching position at Bryn Mawr in 1911, Allen, who had an independent income from her family, declined for the sake of uninterrupted dedication to research, and proceeded to devote her whole life to the study of medieval mysticism.⁴³

In the same age-cohort, Mary Ritter Beard (1876–1958), a leader and pioneer in the field of women's history, chose the advocacy of women's rights and militant suffragist history over an academic career.⁴⁴ Somewhat similar is the case of the British Alice Clark (1874–1934), who became a graduate student at the London School of Economics at age 38, and turned her doctoral thesis into a book that is a classic of early feminist historiography, *The Working Lives of Women in the Seventeenth Century* (1919). Clark combined her scholarship with militancy in the suffrage movement and other liberal causes. She had no interest in an academic job. After publishing her book, she went back to her previous work as businesswoman in the family factory.⁴⁵ Even more remarkably, the Swiss Eugénie Droz (1893–1976) after graduating in philology and history from the *École des Hautes Etudes*, created in 1924 her own business, the bookshop and publishing house *Librairie Droz*. She later founded the journal *Bibliothèque d'Humanisme et Renaissance*, and devoted her life to scholarly studies on the age of the Reformation.⁴⁶

The religious historian Romana Guarnieri (1913–2004) is remembered today, like Allen, for her discovery of an important source for the study of medieval female religiosity, Marguerite Porete's *Miroir des ames simples*. Like Allen, Guarnieri was not interested in an academic career: she gave up an entry-level position at the University of Rome to devote her life to independent historical research or, as she called it jokingly, the role of *massaia della cultura* – ‘housekeeper in the house of culture.’⁴⁷ For Guarnieri, the choice of renouncing academic security for the sake of what she called herself ‘a field of research totally new and all the more fascinating and adventurous,’ drew inspiration from an ideal of *libero studio* (free study) whose roots she saw as springing from the medieval religious movement of the Free Spirit, which she studied.⁴⁸ A somewhat similar calling was that of Anneliese Maier (1905–1971), who worked all her life in the Vatican Library on an ambitious research project on

the history of medieval philosophy and science, with only sporadic contacts with the academic world, though her research was financially supported, in part, by the Kaiser-Wilhelm-Institut für Kunst- und Kulturwissenschaft (Bibliotheca Hertziana).⁴⁹

Another case is that of Joan Evans (1893–1977). A precociously prolific scholar, Evans graduated from Oxford in 1920, and published two books immediately thereafter. She also took a job as librarian of her college, Saint Hugh's, but soon decided that the academic life would not do for her. She left Saint Hugh's in 1922: with several books already out or forthcoming, and her background of independent wealth and intellectual connections, she felt that the academic life might detract from, more than contribute to, her pursuit of scholarship. In her beautiful memoir, *Prelude and Fugue*, she reveals how difficult was her choice:

I left Saint Hugh's with a sense of severance and shock. If learning, self-realization, and friendship are indeed the chief part of the Oxford ideal of humanism, it may be that I was better able to follow it away from College; but at the time it seemed as if I were renouncing my heritage. It seemed impossible that St. Hugh's could cease to be my home or my chief preoccupation, and equally impossible that I could feel for long that I had any share in it. (...) St. Hugh's is still my spiritual home; and the old unhappiness, in any case partly of my own creation, is forgotten in fulfillment and fruition. *Fiat pax in virtute tua, et abundantia in turribus tuis. Propter fratres meos, et proximos meos, loquebar pacem de te.*⁵⁰

One can sense, in this passage, a knot of conflicting emotions: after many years, Evans has not forgotten the 'old unhappiness' of her academic experience, but she sends to her *alma mater* a solemn message of reconciliation.

8. 'Tipped with Fairy Gold': The Role of the Family

What made the choice of independent scholarship possible for these women? The first factor undoubtedly was independent wealth, provided by a supportive family. Class and family background played a fundamental role as alternative sources of support for independent scholarship. The family was important not only as a provider of financial backing – as was the case for Allen and Evans⁵¹ – but also as a source of intellectual stimulation and role models. Kinship ties had played a key role in the 19th century amateur tradition, when the writing of history often took place in a family workshop where both sexes were engaged, as for instance in the collaboration of François Guizot with his daughters Pauline and Henriette.⁵² Joan Evans was the daughter of John Evans, who established a chronology of prehistory, and the half-sister of Arthur Evans, the discoverer of the Minoan civilization. Independent wealth allowed both John and Arthur Evans to pursue their scholarly interests with great success without any academic affiliation: they both became presidents of the British Society of Antiquaries. No wonder that, faced with the tensions of academic life, Joan opted for the same path they had taken, a path she followed with equal success, becoming, in turn, the Society of Antiquaries' first woman president.⁵³

Hélène Metzger's intellectual interests were encouraged by her uncle, the philosopher Henri Lévy-Bruhl.⁵⁴ Iris Origo (1902–1988), an independent scholar who wrote innovative biographies and social history, always regretted that her mother had not allowed her to study at Oxford, but she admitted that her home-schooling, under the presiding spirit of the family friend Bernard Berenson, the great art historian and connoisseur, had given her an immeasurable advantage – an education ‘tipped with fairy gold.’⁵⁵

Mary Beard's choice of independent scholarship was possible, in part, thanks to the support of her husband, the eminent historian Charles Beard.⁵⁶ She was one of several independent scholars who married prominent historians. Other examples include Alice Stopford Green (1847–1929), wife of the historian John Richard Green; Dorothea Singer (1882–1964), wife of the historian of medicine Charles Singer, and author herself of important contributions to the history of medicine; and Barbara Hammond (1873–1961) who wrote a series of ground-breaking and influential works on labor history in collaboration with her husband, John Lawrence Hammond (a journalist, not an academic).⁵⁷ The close partnership of Romana Guarnieri with the Italian priest and scholar Giuseppe de Luca may be considered – as she herself considered it – in the religious tradition of spiritual friendship or kinship, and certainly was, for both of them, a primary source of inspiration and support.⁵⁸

Beyond the family, these scholars also relied on informal networks such as those I've indicated above: the suffragist movements on both sides of the Atlantic, and the circles of *expatriés* and exiles in the cosmopolitan community of late 19th and early 20th century Florence. Though marginal vis-à-vis the academic institutions, these networks held the potential of turning marginality into an advantage by encouraging a new and expanded vision of historical research.

9. The Real Sanctum: the Library

Another factor that made the choice of independent scholarship viable was the fact that, despite professionalization, historical research maintained (and still maintains) an artisanal quality. Compared to research in the natural sciences, say physics or chemistry, which required expensive laboratory facilities, historical research was far less tied to university resources (not only the salaries but labs and equipment). What was essential for the practice of history was simply the access to libraries and archives. The public character of these institutions, gradually established as part of the apparatus of the nation-state in the 19th century, allowed scholars without academic credentials access to the most fundamental resource for the production of historical knowledge. As restrictions on women's use of the libraries eased, women also profited from this public resource. It is no wonder that admittance to the library features as a climax in these women's recollections. In the late 1880s, Maria Sharpe, a friend of Lina Eckenstein, described her visit to the British Museum's Library in words that are strikingly similar to those that Virginia Woolf would employ almost half a century later in *A Room of One's Own*.⁵⁹ Maria Sharpe was a co-founder of the Men and Women's Club – a pioneering discussion group on gender issues in late Victorian London. In her ‘Autobiographical History’ of the Club, Maria recalled visiting the British Library with the purpose of researching the history of prostitution. It took a great deal of courage for a late Victorian woman to go and order books on such an unladylike subject. Through this daunting experience, however, Maria discovered the joys of scholarship: ‘The simple pleasure of finding myself capable of arranging facts intelligibly was new to me.’⁶⁰

In the memoirs of these women scholars, no page vibrates with such excitement as the description of their first entry into a research library, circumventing the obstacles in their way. Margaret Judson (1922–1991), who became professor emerita of history at Rutgers University, recalled in her memoirs how she got permission to use the Harvard law library in her early career with the proviso that she would enter ‘by the *back* door.’ When working in Lincoln's Inn library in London, she had to sit under special supervision, presumably, she wrote, because ‘the male librarians in that masculine sanctuary wondered why a woman should be interested in manuscripts.’⁶¹ Clara Longworth de Chambrun (1873–1955), an American transplanted in France by marriage and an amateur with a passionate interest in Shakespeare, gleefully recalled her triumph over the librarian of Corpus Christi College in Oxford, who tried to stop her from access to the manuscript she was trying to examine in her ‘Shakespeare hunt’:

My mother and I appeared one fine day in June [1914] at the portal of Corpus Christi College and asked to see the librarian with whom I had been in correspondence. (...) He was polite, embarrassed, and surprised, but though his greeting was affable, he made no move to welcome us into the sacred precincts of the library; (...) thereupon came the halting explanation that in asking me to come and see for myself whether the books were there or not, he had overlooked the melancholy fact that I was a woman, and my mother also, unfortunately! It seemed that according to the ancient monastic rule, which still governs Corpus Christi College, no one of the female sex had ever set foot in the library (...). We exchanged disappointed glances but did not, as the librarian hoped, offer to beat our retreat. With much affability, I called his attention to the fact that we had come far and with this sole end in view. It seemed, to my inexperienced mind, that books might be inspected. Even without forcing an entrance, the doorstep remained!⁶²

She succeeded in getting the manuscripts sent to the Bodleian Library, for which she had a letter of introduction. She would use these sources eventually for a book on Shakespeare and Florio, and subsequently for a doctoral thesis at the Sorbonne, which she presented at age 40 determined to disprove ‘the idea which had irritated me so much when “put over” by the New York publishers that, in order to talk about Shakespeare, a person must be a professor.’⁶³

The library was the symbol of the charmed circle of scholarship from which women had long been excluded. Entering the library was like acquiring a right of citizenship. Joan Evans said it eloquently for them all: ‘The youngest reader in Bodley has been received as a citizen in the Republic of Letters, and however humble, is inside the community.’⁶⁴

10. *Anch'io Son Pittore! The Resilience of the Amateur Tradition*

The story goes that the Renaissance painter Correggio, on seeing a painting by Raphael, exclaimed: *Anch'io son pittore!* – ‘I, too, am a painter!’ The anecdote has been often invoked to stress the bracing value of intellectual emulation,⁶⁵ but it is also a reminder of the powerful need of being recognized as a

member of the craft – of being accepted inside the community – that any practitioner of the arts and sciences is bound to feel. This aspiration goes with the deep conviction that the quality of the work matters more than any institutional credentials; the conviction that a fellowship of practice, rather than institutional affiliation, lies at the heart of the craft. This belief has deep roots in European intellectual history, and was a strong component of the 19th century amateur tradition.⁶⁶ Last, but not least, another primary motivation of independent scholarship was the persisting strength of the amateur tradition, which remained a source of ideals and values for historians even after professionalization. In fact, the establishment of history in the universities coexisted with a robust persistence of the time-honored independent practice of historical research and writing. In the Anglo-American context, in particular, it was still possible to play a respected and influential role in historical scholarship without being an academic. Even some eminent 19th century historians felt deep reservations about the transformation of history into an academic pursuit, as famously epitomized by Burckhardt's aversion to the *virī eruditissimi* of his times and his disdain for the academic conferences at which scholars, he bitinglly noted, 'sniff at each other like dogs.'⁶⁷ According to his student Heinrich Wölfflin, Burckhardt did not identify with the specialized scholar. 'He looked on the mere professional as a philistine, a laborer, in the classical Greek sense,' while his ideal was 'the dilettante, to whom work always remained pure pleasure (*diletto*).'⁶⁸ Very much in Burckhardt's tradition, the great art historian Aby Warburg, though fond of the honorific title of 'professor,' never accepted a university position, which would have implied relinquishing the total freedom of investigation that he saw as the birthright of the true scholar.⁶⁹

The example of Burckhardt, who taught all his life at the University of Basel, shows that the amateur tradition could be consciously cultivated also within the academy. The great American historian Henry Adams (1838–1918) hovered between his professional and amateur personae even when serving as president of the American Historical Association.⁷⁰ Frances Yates (1899–1981), whose innovative books changed the landscape of early modern intellectual history, worked as an independent scholar until she found a spiritual home in the Warburg Institute, newly relocated in London away from Nazi Germany. Thanks to the Warburg, later incorporated in the University of London, Yates made the transition from independent scholar to academic, although late in her life.⁷¹ But her autobiographical writings reveal that even in old age, when she was a university reader widely acclaimed as the grand old dame of Warburgian history, she clung tenaciously to her self-image as an independent scholar. Shortly before she died in 1981, Yates read the memoirs of Edward Gibbon, apparently to draw inspiration for her own autobiography. What struck her in the life of the great 18th-century historian was that he had been a self-taught man of letters. She wrote in her journal:

Gibbon avoided having [a] conventional English academic education through ill health in youth... So he was not fixed in [the] English academic world, instead he had a French and European education – but mainly read and studied for himself – hence became an original historian – some resemblance to my career.⁷²

This resilience of the amateur tradition explains the appeal that independent research had for the women I have called 'amateurs by choice.' Of course independent scholarship was also an option for men, though 'amateurs by choice' seem to have been much more rare among male historians of the first half of the 20th century. The few I have identified are mostly political personalities, who combined

the writing of history with a high-profile political career.⁷³ In some cases, a background of inherited or acquired wealth, plus a carefully managed capital of elite connections, allowed some male historians to combine independent scholarship with professional eminence. Few academic historians left as strong a mark on the historical discipline as did Henri Berr, who never rose beyond the rank of lycée professor, or Aby Warburg, who revolutionized art history and created a research institute without shackling himself to an academic job. Henry Adams left Harvard University to live the life of an independent gentleman scholar, and Charles Beard left Columbia after World War One to preserve his political and intellectual autonomy.⁷⁴ But they did so from a strong position, so much so that both became presidents of the American Historical Association after giving up their academic affiliation.

In the case of women, in contrast, independent scholarship was most often chosen from a disadvantaged position, and it acquired a compensatory value, given the discrimination and the very limited opportunities that women encountered in the academic world. The amateur tradition offered a strong counterbalance to women's marginality in academia and a source of positive values and models for their participation in the intellectual life.⁷⁵ Inspired and bolstered by this tradition, these women do not seem to have perceived their condition of outsiders vis-à-vis academia only or mostly as a source of depreciation of their work and intellectual identity. They saw it as the means of preserving an autonomy and range of interests that an academic affiliation would not allow. Though the condition of the independent scholar was a cause of insecurity and frustration in their lives, it was also a powerful inner source of intellectual courage and freedom.

In fact, a shared feature of these women's work is innovation, the drive to open up new fields of historical inquiry, which is also the most enduring value of their legacy. Hope Emily Allen pioneered the study of medieval women's religious life – and she is today the honoree of a Medieval Academy of America Dissertation Grant. When art history had not yet been established in British universities, Joan Evans created a field for herself with her studies on the history of jewels and magical gems, naturalistic patterns of decoration, and medieval monastic art. Romana Guarnieri was a prime mover in the development of a new kind of religious history, centered on popular piety rather than church doctrine, as advocated by the scholarly journal she created with don Giuseppe De Luca, the *Archivio italiano per la storia della pietà*, which still exists today. Without these 'amateurs by choice,' the legacy of 20th century historiography would lose much of its vitality and richness.

NOTES

- 1 The presence of independent women scholars is well documented especially in the case of US historiography: Des Jardins (2003 , pp. 24–30). For the Irish case, see the chapter 'Non-Academic Women Historians, 1922–1949' in Smith (2006 , pp. 116–56). For Canada: Boutilier and Prentice (1997). On France: Pellegrin (2006). On Germany: Friedrich and Mazohl-Wallnig (1996). On Italy: Casalena (2003 , pp. VII–XCVIII) and Porciani and Scattigno (1997). For a broader European perspective: Porciani and O'Dowd (2004).
- 2 Porciani and Raphael (2010 , p. 36). See Table 1, p. 202.
- 3 'Chronology of women medievalists profiled, with fields and institutional affiliations' in Chance (2005 , pp. xliii–xlvi); see also: O'Dowd (forthcoming).

- 4 On Power: Berg (**1996**) and Pomata (**2004**). On Helen Cam: Sondheimer (**1996**) and Taylor and Weaver (**2005**). Hedwige Hintze (1884–1942) was the first German woman to obtain a doctorate in history. She lectured at the Friedrich Wilhelm University from 1928 to 1933, when she was removed from her position by the Nazi government because of her Jewish origins. See her brief biographical profile on the website of the Humboldt University at <http://www.geschichte.hu-berlin.de/galerie/texte/hintzee.htm>. On Marie Delcourt (1891–1979): Detienne (**2012**). Gina Fasoli (1905–1992) was the first woman to obtain a chair in history at an Italian university. See her brief biography on the website of Centro ‘Gina Fasoli’ per la storia delle città: www.storiaeinformatica.it (accessed 30 March 2012) and Bocchi (**1993**). See also her delightful memoir: Fasoli (**1988**).
- 5 On Hope Emily Allen: Hirsch (**1988** , **2005**); on Mary Ritter Beard: Des Jardins (**2003** , pp. 225–267) and Cott (**1991**); on Lucie Varga: Schöttler (**1991** , **1992**). On Ricarda Huch: Köpcke (**1996**) and Dane and Hahn (**2012**). On Elizabeth Busse-Wilson: Wiethaus (**2005**). On Romana Guarnieri see below, n. 47. On Iris Origo: Pomata (**2007**).
- 6 On the concept of ‘scientific persona’: Daston and Sibum (**2003**). Recently, historians of science have argued that the 20th century distinction of ‘professional’ and ‘amateur’ should not be projected onto earlier sources: Desmond (**2001**); and especially: Lucier (**2009**). On the role of the amateur in the natural sciences: Drouin and Bensaude-Vincent (**1996**) and Charvolin, Micoud and Nyhart (**2007**). For a long-term perspective, from medieval times to the present, see the essays collected in: Strauss (**1996**).
- 7 It is impossible here to give adequate references to this vast field of studies. See, among others: Levine (**1986**), Jann (**1983**), Goldstein (**1990**), Carbonnell (**1976**), **Fulda (1996)** and Lingelbach (**2003**).
- 8 See: Lightman and Zeisel (**1981**). For the debate on independent scholarship in this period see also Perry (**1983**) and Currier Bell (**1984**).
- 9 According to its website, the Institute ‘promotes interchange between independent and academically affiliated scholars’: see <http://www.tihs.org/> (accessed 30 March 2012).
- 10 See their websites at <http://www.cistudy.org/> and <http://www.ncis.org/>. The Canadian Academy of Independent Scholars was created in 2001 and it is affiliated with the National Coalition of Independent Scholars. The Independent Scholars Association of Australia (<http://www.isaa.org.au/>) was created in 1995, see: Moyal (**2002**).
- 11 On early modern women memorialists, see: Hipp (**1976**), Beasley (**1990**) and Fiette (**2002**).
- 12 From a letter of Barthélemy St. Hilaire to Janet Ross, cited in: Ross (**1893** , p. vi). On Sarah Taylor Austin see the entry in: Spongberg, Curthoys and Caine (**2005** , pp. 42–43).

- 13 For her major historical work, see: d'Istria ([1873](#)). For her definition as 'anello di civiltà tra oriente e occidente' see: Greco ([1875](#) , p. 50). See also D'Alessandri ([2007](#)).
- 14 The inscription on her tombstone reads: 'Raccolse negli archivi notizie storiche con cui compose un libro assai stimato, *La vita di Aonio Paleario e i suoi tempi*', see *La città e il libro III: Eloquenza silenziosa: voci del ricordo incise nel cimitero degli inglesi*, international conference, 3–5 June 2004: <http://www.florin.ms/historians.html>. She was the first to write on Paleario, as noted by Frederic C. Church: 'It was an English Lady, a Mrs. Young, who made an industrious and sincere, and not unskilful effort to place the Italian Luther' (Church, [1931](#) , p. 459).
- 15 Of Greek origin, Margherita Albana Mignaty was adopted as a child by the English governor of the Ionian islands. Her Florentine *salon* in the 1840s was an important center of intellectual and political debate. See: Mori and Scaraffia ([2005](#)). On her friendship with Villari see: Dini ([1998](#)); and especially: Mori ([2005](#)).
- 16 On Ludmilla Assing: Casalena ([2002](#)). On Anna Jameson: Johnston ([1997](#)) and Holcomb ([1981](#)). On Vernon Lee: Gunn ([1964](#)) and Colby ([2003](#)).
- 17 Fraser ([1992](#) , pp. 212–260) (on Pater, Symonds and Vernon Lee) and pp. 225–227 (on Vernon Lee's studies on the Italian Renaissance). See also: Brown ([2005](#)).
- 18 Bonnie Smith has been the first to bring attention to 19th century women amateur historians; see: Smith ([1998](#) , especially pp. 37–69, 157–184). Unfortunately, the main contention of Smith's book seems unconvincing to me. She characterizes women's amateur historiography as 'a distinct historical language, similar to that of the discredited articulations of victims and the traumatized' (p. 172) – a far-fetched interpretation that does not seem supported either by the historical record of these women's lives or by a careful reading of their works.
- 19 On women's historical studies in the Anglo-Florentine milieu: Pomata ([2007](#) , pp. 121–124).
- 20 The connection between 19th century women's historical writing and nation-building has been highlighted by Porciani ([2001](#)). For German-speaking countries: Epple ([2003](#)). An early example of the connection between women's historical writing and feminism was the Greek Callirhoe Parren (1859- ?), a high school teacher and journalist who wrote a *History of Woman from the Beginning of the World to the Present Day* (Psarra, [2006](#)). Another interesting example is the Dutch Johanna Naber (1859–1941), a feminist activist who also wrote several works on women's history and founded the International Archive for the Women's Movement in 1935; see: Grever ([1994](#)). On the impact of the suffrage movement on English historical writing: Mayhall ([1995](#)) and Melman ([1993](#)).
- 21 On Eckenstein see: Johnson ([2005](#)) and Berg ([1996](#) , pp. 114–115) and the entry 'Eckenstein' in: Spongberg, Curthoys and Caine ([2005](#) , pp. 129–30). Cf. also: Smith ([1998](#) , p. 181).

- 22 See Johnson ([2005](#)). Her study of the Florentine Guidi family from the 10th to the 14th century appeared in *The English Historical Review* (Eckenstein, [1899](#)). Her *Comparative Studies in Nursery Rhymes* (Eckenstein, [1906](#)) was reprinted in 1911 and 1968.
- 23 Murray ([1963](#) , p. 116). Murray's *The Witch Cult in Western Europe* was reprinted in 1952. On this book's controversial reception see: Simpson ([1994](#)).
- 24 Among Julia Cartwright's works are *Beatrice d'Este* (1899) and *Isabella d'Este* (1903). On her, see the entry in: Spongberg, Curthoys and Caine ([2005](#) , pp. 86–87). Her diaries have been published, see: Emanuel ([1989](#)).
- 25 On Cecilia Ady see the entry in: Spongberg, Curthoys and Caine ([2005](#) , pp. 3–4) and Kohl ([2005](#)). On Cartwright and Ady see also: Smith ([1998](#) , p. 163).
- 26 Evans ([1964](#) , pp. 116–117); on Evans see: Coldstream ([2005](#)).
- 27 On Yates, see n. 71 below.
- 28 See the data presented in Porciani and Raphael ([2010](#) , pp. 36–37).
- 29 The label 'obligatory amateurs' is used by Ogilvie ([2000](#)).
- 30 Wiethaus ([2005](#)); Busse-Wilson has left an unpublished autobiography: 'Selbstdarstellung', typescript in Archiv der deutsche Jugendbewegung, Burg Ludwigstein, 1969.
- 31 Over the 1920s and 1930s Metzger published five books: *Les concepts scientifiques* (1926), *Les doctrines chimiques en France du début du XVIIe à la fin du XVIIIe siècle* (1923), *Newton, Stahl, Boerhaave et la doctrine chimique* (1930), *La Philosophie de la matière chez Lavoisier* (1935), *Attraction universelle et religion naturelle chez quelques commentateurs anglais de Newton* (1938), and several substantial articles on the method of the history of science. These articles are collected in: Metzger ([1987](#)). On her life see: Freudenthal ([1990b](#)) (p. 200 on her financial condition). On her intellectual context see: Chimisso ([2001](#)).
- 32 The correspondence between Metzger and Sarton, preserved at the Houghton Library, Harvard, is partly published: 'Extraits de lettres 1921–1944' in Freudenthal ([1990a](#) , pp. 247–269). Metzger published articles in *Isis* in 1922, 1926, 1927.
- 33 On Berr see: Biard, Bourel and Brian ([1997](#)) and Gemelli ([1990](#)).
- 34 Gender, not education (her lack of the *doctorat d'état*) was probably her disqualifying factor. Metzger had the *doctorat d'université* (less prestigious than the *doctorat d'état*). But Koyré did not have the state doctorate either, and this was no obstacle to his appointment, as it apparently was for Metzger. See Freudenthal ([1990b](#) , pp. 200–201).

- 35 Letter of H el ene Metzger to George Sarton, 22 April 1926, in: Freudenthal ([1990a](#) , pp. 254–255).
- 36 On Mohrmann see: Derks and Verheesen-Stegeman ([1998](#)) and Vircillo Franklin ([2005](#)). The main obstacle to her career was the fact that the Board of Dutch bishops, who governed the University of Nijmegen, did not want any woman teacher. Unavailing was even the support of her mentor, the Catholic priest Joseph Schrijnen, founder of the Nijmegen School of Early Christian Latin – one of the principal advocates for the establishment of the Catholic University of Nijmegen and its first rector. In 1961, Mohrmann was finally granted the position of ordinary professor in Nijmegen, occupying the chair that had been first of Schrijnen. See: Bastiaensen ([1991](#)). Among Mohrmann's papers is a short autobiographical text, 'Mijn ervaringen' (My experiences), cited in: Bastiaensen ([1991](#) , p. 56). For other examples of women historians' late access to an academic job: Smith ([1998](#) , p. 191) and Janson ([1995](#)).
- 37 Evans ([1964](#) , p. 71).
- 38 On women's strong contribution to the historical novel see the dated but still useful study: Cam ([1961](#)); and, more recently: Wallace ([2005](#)).
- 39 On Waddell see: Corrigan ([1986](#)) and FitzGerald ([2005](#)). See also FitzGerald ([2012](#)), for a fascinating double portrait of Waddell and her friend Maude Clarke, a portrait that sheds light on the two options that women historians had in this period – independent scholarship, as chosen by Waddell, or an academic career, as pursued by Clarke.
- 40 On Huch see: K opcke ([1996](#)) and Dane and Hahn ([2012](#)).
- 41 On Mackenzie see: Noble ([2007](#)) and Smith ([2004](#)).
- 42 On Wedgwood and Woodham-Smith see: O'Dowd (forthcoming).
- 43 On Allen see: Hirsch ([1988](#) , [2005](#)).
- 44 On Mary Beard see: Des Jardins ([2003](#) , pp. 225–267) and Cott ([1991](#)).
- 45 On Alice Clark see: Holton ([1999](#) , [2004](#)), also Berg ([1992](#) , pp. 311–312).
- 46 On Eug enie Droz see: Fran ois ([1977](#)), Marichal *et al.* ([1993](#)) and Davis ([1992](#) , p. 125). I would like to thank Dr. Alain Dufour, of the University of Geneva, for sharing with me his memories of Mademoiselle Droz.
- 47 On Guarnieri see Sensi ([2005](#)) and the other articles in the special issue of *Archivio Italiano per la Storia della Piet * , 18 (2005); some of her work is collected in Guarnieri ([2004](#)).

- 48 Guarnieri ([1998](#) , p. 202): 'Mi sentivo chiamata al libero studio e alla preghiera spontanea, segreta e continuata, in una *forma vitae* molto simile a quella delle mie care beghine del Milledue-Milletrecento che da qualche anno venivo studiando'.
- 49 On Maier see: Vogt ([2004](#)) and Maierù and Sylla ([2005](#)). For an introduction to her work, see the collection of her essays edited by Sargent ([1982](#)). Romana Guarnieri herself drew a parallel between her calling and that of other Catholic women scholars like Anneliese Maier and Christine Mohrmann, who, like Guarnieri, were part of the intellectual circle of the Catholic priest and historian Giuseppe De Luca. See: Guarnieri ([2001](#) , p. 41). On Christine Mohrmann, see above, n. 36.
- 50 Evans ([1964](#) , p. 122). The Latin quotation is from psalm 122: 'May peace be within your walls, and prosperity in your towers. For the sake of my brothers and friends, I will say: peace be with you.'
- 51 For Allen: Hirsch ([1988](#) , pp. 35–36); for Evans: Coldstream ([2005](#) , p. 399).
- 52 On Guizot and his daughters: Tollebeek ([2004](#)) and Smith ([1998](#) , p. 84).
- 53 Coldstream ([2005](#) , pp. 411–413).
- 54 Freudenthal ([1990b](#) , p. 198). Metzger herself acknowledged her uncle's support: see her letter to Sarton, 14 April 1927, in: Freudenthal ([1990a](#) , p. 255); see also: Metzger ([1930](#)).
- 55 Origo ([2006](#) , p. 1). On Berenson see: Samuels ([1979](#) , [1987](#)).
- 56 Mary and Charles Beard co-authored several history textbooks, among which *The History of the United States* (1921), *The Rise of the American Civilization* (1927), *The American Spirit* (1942). See Des Jardins ([2003](#) , p. 252).
- 57 On Alice Stopford Green see the entry in: Spongberg, Curthoys and Caine ([2005](#) , pp. 544–545), Holton ([2002](#)) and Smith ([2006](#) , pp. 37–60). On Dorothea Singer, see: McConnell ([2004](#)). Her papers and correspondence are held at the Wellcome Library. On Barbara Hammond, see the entry in: Spongberg, Curthoys and Caine ([2005](#) , p. 235); on her intellectual partnership with her husband see: Weaver ([1997](#)). Together, the couple wrote *The Village Labourer* (1911), *The Town Labourer* (1917), *The Skilled Labourer* (1919). Other prominent examples of historian couples include Hedwig and Otto Hintze, G. D. H. and Margaret Cole, Beatrice and Sidney Webb, who collaborated on some historical work, among other things. On the role of couples in science: Pycior, Slack and Abir-An ([1996](#)).
- 58 On her partnership with De Luca: Guarnieri ([1998](#) , [2001](#)). The correspondence between Guarnieri and De Luca has been partly published: De Luca and Guarnieri ([2010](#)). On De Luca's role in Italian historiography: Mangoni ([1989](#)).

- 59 Woolf ([1929](#) , p. 12). Elizabeth Benger, author of *Memoirs of Elizabeth Stuart, Queen of Bohemia* (Benger, [1825](#)) described her difficulties in getting access to the British Library: cited in Smith, [1998](#) , p. 65.
- 60 Cited in Walkowitz ([1992](#) , p. 161). On the Men and Women's Club: Walkowitz ([1992](#) , pp. 135–169).
- 61 Judson ([1984](#) , pp. 30, 34); see also pp. 109, 92.
- 62 Longworth de Chambrun ([1936](#) , pp. 199–200). She received a doctorate from the Sorbonne and was a cofounder of the American Library in Paris. See her two volumes of memoirs, *Shadows like myself* (Longworth de Chambrun, [1936](#)); *Shadows lengthen: the story of my life* (Longworth de Chambrun, [1949](#)).
- 63 Longworth de Chambrun ([1936](#) , p. 275). See also pp. 170–171, 294, 296, 299.
- 64 Evans ([1964](#) , p. 103); see also pp. 59–60, where she charmingly describes her first visit to Bodley.
- 65 As for instance by Montesquieu in the preface to *L'esprit des lois* (1748): 'When I have seen what so many great men in France, England and Germany have said before me, I have been lost in admiration; but I have not lost my courage: I have said with Correggio, "And I also am a painter".' Hélène Metzger also referred to this anecdote in her correspondence with the philosopher Émile Meyerson, but in her perspective Correggio's words took on the additional meaning of a cry for acceptance and recognition: 'When I read you, I do not feel humble, or like a little girl in the presence of your greatness; [rather], I long to work more and better. Like Correggio or Montesquieu, I want to cry out: I, too, am a painter,' cited in: Chimisso and Freudenthal ([2003](#) , p. 491).
- 66 Some of the roots of amateurism may go back to medieval and early modern intellectual traditions that extolled the value of autodidacticism, see: Ben-Zaken ([2011](#)).
- 67 Gossman ([2000](#) , pp. 238–239); see also pp. 284, 306–307.
- 68 Wölfflin ([1941](#) , p. 156), cited in: Gossman ([2000](#) , pp. 238 and 529 n. 157).
- 69 Gombrich ([1970](#) , pp. 6, 95, 99, 131, 139, 191–92). Early on in his career, apparently, Warburg decided to pursue his scholarly calling outside of academia. He wrote in his diary in 1897: 'I have decided once and for all that I am not suited to be a *Privatdozent*' (cited in Gombrich, [1970](#) , p. 95). Writing to his brother in the year 1900, he stressed his identity as 'a financially independent private scholar' (cited in Gombrich, [1970](#) , p. 131). In fact, he refused an academic job twice: a chair in Breslau in 1906 and a chair in Halle in 1912 (Gombrich, [1970](#) , pp. 139, 191–192).

- 70 Samuels ([1989](#) , p. 303 ff).
- 71 For a brief biographical profile see Yates's 'Eloge' in *Isis* , vol. 73 n. 3 (1982) pp. 275–322. See also *Frances A. Yates 1899–1981* (London: Warburg Institute, 1982). There is now a full biography: Jones ([2008](#)), largely based on Yates's autobiographical writings and her diaries held in the Warburg archives. Marred by errors and imprecision, this work is unlikely to be the definitive biography.
- 72 Journal entry for 11 March 1981, cited in: Jones ([2008](#) , p. 205). Apparently, Yates started to work on her autobiography already in the early 1970s. She left the manuscript unfinished. It was partly published posthumously as 'Autobiographical Fragments' in Yates ([1984](#)).
- 73 This, at least, is my preliminary impression based on the data provided by a biographical dictionary of 20th century historians in England, the US, France, Germany and Italy: Boia ([1991](#)).
- 74 On Adams see: Samuels ([1989](#)). After teaching at Columbia University for several years, Charles Beard resigned his post during the First World War for political reasons, and worked as an independent scholar ever since. He served as president of the American Historical Association in 1933. See: Nore ([1983](#)).
- 75 For a remarkable example of the resilience of the amateur scholarly persona even in present-day social science see: Wesseling ([2004](#)).

References

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