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WOMEN *in* *the* HISTORY *of* LINGUISTICS

EDITED BY
WENDY AYRES-BENNETT
HELENA SANSON

Women in the History of Linguistics

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WENDY AYRES-BENNETT
AND HELENA SANSON

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Women in the history of linguistics

Distant and neglected voices

Wendy Ayres-Bennett and Helena Sanson

1. Introduction

This volume investigates the role played by women in the history of linguistics—defined very broadly—throughout the centuries and across different linguistic and cultural traditions, both European and non-European. In view of women's often limited educational opportunities in the past, their contribution is examined not only within traditional and institutional contexts, but also within more domestic and less public realms.

Interest in the role played by women in language description and codification and their contribution to language teaching and other applied linguistic fields is situated against a backdrop of efforts to change the traditional male-dominated methodologies and canon across a range of disciplines. In her 1976 essay 'Placing Women in History: Definitions and Challenges', Gerda Lerner, one of the founders of the academic field of women's history, explained that in the early years when American historians began to develop women's history as an independent field, they sought to find a conceptual framework and methodology appropriate for the task. She identified three approaches adopted by historians for the writing of women's history. The first entailed writing the history of 'women's worthies', that is, notable women in history; this might be termed 'compensatory history', focusing on exceptionality (Lerner 1976: 5). The danger associated with this approach is that it may result in overshadowing the experience of those who could not escape *non-exceptionality* because of a number of limitations, including not least social class. The second stage in conceptualizing women's history might be characterized as 'contribution history', and describes women's contribution to, and their status within, history, or within a certain movement, field, or discipline (Lerner 1976: 5). Here the risk is that of trying to fit women's input into categories and value systems that take men and the male experience as the yardstick for measuring significance. In other words, our traditional understanding of a certain movement or discipline is foregrounded, and women's contribution is judged above all with respect to its effect on that movement or discipline as traditionally

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conceived, or by standards typically considered appropriate for men. 'Contribution history', we read, is a transitional, yet necessary, stage for developing new criteria and concepts and for creating a true history of women (Lerner 1976: 7–8). Lerner, however, suggests that the 'true history of women is the history of their ongoing functioning in [a] male-defined world, *on their own terms*' (Lerner 1976: 6). This may involve the addition of new categories and methodologies to those commonly used by historians to organize their material, so as to account for 'the complexities of the historical experience of all women' (Lerner 1976: 13).

Applying Lerner's framework to the study of women in the history of linguistics, the same need for new criteria and new concepts is evident, not least in the very definition of what we understand by 'linguistics' (see section 3 below). Almost thirty years ago, in 1991, Donna Breyfogle remarked that surprisingly little appeared to have been published concerning women in the history of linguistics, despite the great deal of research in the previous two decades on women's role in other disciplines. Breyfogle (1991: 18) concluded that 'the history of women in linguistics is, at most, in its infancy'. Indeed, it could be argued that this is still the case today, despite the contributions made by women to linguistics and the progress made in studying women's scholarship and intellectual achievements more generally.

The aim of this volume then is to fill this long-standing gap and, to paraphrase Lerner, contribute to a true history of the role of women in the history of linguistics on their own terms, challenging categories and concepts devised for male-dominated accounts and expanding the field of enquiry. Whilst inevitably pioneers and exceptional women will be of interest, space will also be given to the voices of non-exceptional women who nevertheless quietly moved forward our knowledge of languages, their description, analysis, codification and acquisition, *inter alia*.

This introduction will start by considering what research has already been conducted on women in the history of linguistics (section 2), before exploring some of the reasons for the relative dearth of studies (section 3). In section 4 we outline some of the challenges and opportunities encountered by women who wished to study the nature of language and languages. This is followed by sections discussing the geographical (section 5) and chronological (section 6) scope of this volume. In section 7 we outline some of the major recurring areas and themes discussed in the nineteen chapters, before concluding with a section on future prospects and directions for research.

2. Previous studies of women in the history of linguistics

Despite increasing interest over the last few decades in both linguistic historiography and the role of women in linguistics, there have not been any attempts to date to explore in a detailed and systematic way the contribution and works of women as linguists in the European and non-European traditions as a whole. Given the cultural and practical limitations imposed on women's access to education for centuries across all cultures, the term 'linguist' is understood here in its broadest sense, to include necessarily contributions offered to the discipline and the study of language structure and function outside of more institutionalized and traditional frameworks.

Considering, first, major histories of linguistics that serve as reference volumes for the discipline, virtually no women currently appear in these or, where they do, they are typically relegated to footnotes, difficult to find, or very limited in number. In the first edition of Harro Stammerjohann's monumental *Lexicon grammaticorum* (1996; 1,047 pp.) women's contribution to the prescriptive and speculative linguistic Western tradition is limited to just twenty of the total 1,500 entries; these comprise for the most part women who were active in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries (with the exception of Ann Fisher, active in the eighteenth century). Important names such as Johanna Corleva (Chapter 8) or Marguerite Buffet (Chapter 3) are thus absent. In the two-volume 2009 revised edition (1,692 pp.) an additional twenty-four entries on women are introduced (most of these active in the twentieth century, with the exception of Elizabeth Elstob (1683–1756), included for the first time, Carolina (Karoline Wilhelma) Michaëlis de Vasconcel(l)os (1851–1925), and Victoria Welby (Lady Victoria) (1837–1912)). Yet this does not really represent a substantial improvement in their representation, given the expansion of over 600 pages and 500 new articles in this revised edition. The single-volume histories of linguistics currently available (e.g. Robins 1997; Seuren 2004; Allan 2007; Graffi 2019) equally typically present a narrative based almost entirely on a canon of men who have been the most interesting and influential contributors to the field. Histories of individual languages or language families also seem to ignore women's role and contribution.

The lack of research to date on this question may derive from a (mistaken) belief that there is little to be found on the topic. However, this gap also relates to the fact that existing scholarly work on the history of linguistics tends to focus on the more institutional side of the discipline, whereas women's contribution must at times be sought within less public and even clearly domestic environments. An early contribution to the assessment of the role of women in the history of Western European linguistics is Ayres-Bennett (1994a) which considered not just women as authors of metalinguistic texts, but also as the intended readership and as sources of information about the specificities of women's language and good usage. Other studies have focused on particular languages and traditions such as Falk (1999) on the work of female linguists in the United States, Ayres-Bennett (2004) which includes a chapter on women and language in seventeenth-century France, or Sanson (2007, 2011) which offer extensive and systematic investigations into women's role in the history of the Italian language, its codification and the *Questione della lingua* debates, from the last decades of the fifteenth century to the beginning of the twentieth. More recently, Beck-Busse (2014) focuses on Italian and French grammars for women, particularly in France and German-speaking countries in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Whilst these works are important stepping-stones in shaping the discipline, there is a lack of a detailed and comprehensive treatment of women's contribution to language studies, and the geographical limitation to Western Europe in particular is striking.

It is important to note that our intention is not to promote a separationist stance on issues of gender. Rather, it is hoped that a volume entirely dedicated to women's role in the history of language codification and the history of linguistics will result in a more careful investigation of the presence of women in these areas and thereby open the way—as has been the case for other disciplines—for future, more balanced accounts of both women's and men's contribution to the field.

3. Why are women so little represented in classic works on the history of linguistics?

In addressing this question, a key issue is what is understood by the term 'linguistics'. Taken in its narrower sense, the beginnings of modern linguistics are often associated with the work of Ferdinand de Saussure, sometimes termed the founder of modern linguistics, and the posthumous publication in 1916 of his *Cours de linguistique générale* (*Course in General Linguistics*). It is in the mid-nineteenth century that we begin to find the first efforts to distinguish *linguistics* from the much longer-standing term *philology*, a discipline which itself has different conceptions according to differing national traditions (Adamson and Ayres-Bennett 2011).[1] August Schleicher in *Die Sprachen Europas in Systematischer Übersicht* (Schleicher 1983 [1850]; *The Languages of Europe Viewed Systematically*) attempts to differentiate linguistics and philology. He conceives philology as a historical discipline which considers language 'only as a way of gaining access to the spiritual nature and life of one or more language families' (Adamson and Ayres-Bennett 2011: 201). By contrast, linguistics, adopting the methodology of the natural sciences, is viewed as having theoretical and methodological rigour.[2]

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[1] For example, in the French and German traditions, the focus of philology has typically been the interpretation and editing of predominantly literary texts, whereas in the English tradition it has been more closely aligned with historical linguistics.

[2] Other terms in use in the nineteenth-century include *glossology* and *glottology*. As already mentioned, it is important to note that different terms were favoured in different traditions.

As linguistics becomes institutionalized, notably in the mid-twentieth century with the work of the American structuralists, the crystallization of the definition of linguistics as the 'scientific study of language' means that the focus narrows to particular approaches to language study which favour a canon of male figures holding academic posts. If we follow this definition, there are few women of note before the second half of the twentieth century. Typifying this position is the comment by Donna Jo Napoli in her address 'On the Progress of Women in the History of Linguistics', given at Georgetown University in 1978, that, as she had expected, she had been able to find very little work written by women in the general area of linguistics in the period up to around 1965. On the other hand, she had been able to identify 'a great mass of work reflecting very serious women's research since 1965' (Napoli 1978: 2), published first in linguistics journals in the USA and subsequently, from the 1970s, also in European and Japanese journals. In the last twenty years, she observed, there had been a flowering of a particular type of linguistics led by Chomsky, which she defined as 'descriptive, synchronic and generative' (Napoli 1978: 2), and which, in her view, allowed women to excel in the field of linguistics as never before.

Historically, however, the study of language has been situated in what today are considered other disciplines, such as literature, philosophy, religious studies, or anthropology, as studies such as Robins (1997) make clear. Yet, even this broader conception of what constitutes the history of linguistics tends to exclude women who had less access to education and thus to disciplines associated with scholarship and learning. A quarter of a century ago, Ayres-Bennett (1994a) noted that, when approached, colleagues first reaction to requests to potential contributors to the special issue of *Histoire, épistémologie, langage* was that few, if any, metalinguistic texts by women existed in the tradition with which they were familiar.

A key aim therefore of this volume is to broaden the definition of the history of linguistics—or, perhaps better, the study of language, to avoid any potential confusion—to include non-institutionalized, informal, and domestic contexts. This volume rather focuses on women's contribution to the production of grammars, dictionaries, philological studies, critical editions, notes, and writings of various kinds, to the description of 'exotic' languages, language teaching and acquisition methods, to language debates, language use and policy, and to reflections on ideas about language and writing systems (whether the material is in print or manuscript form), both in the European and non-European traditions. To uncover women's presence and contribution within the history of linguistics means taking the investigation beyond the traditional framework and understanding of what is, and is not, linguistics. We take linguistics to mean the study of language in all its guises, one of the oldest fields of human study, and by nature 'an interdisciplinary field' (Napoli 1978: 2).

The equating of linguistics with 'scientific approaches' perhaps explains why the study of women in our field has lagged behind that in other disciplines such as history, literary studies, or musicology. For example, women as musical performers and composers are catalogued much earlier, and by 1980 academic courses in 'women in music' began to be taught in American universities (Tick, Ericson, and Koskoff 2001). Similarly, the rise of 'women's studies' in the 1970s generated increased interest in women's writing, when, in particular, attention was paid to rediscovering and analysing unknown women writers.[3] In linguistics, the interest in gender studies led to studies of women's language, notably by Robin Lakoff in her pioneering work *Language and Woman's Place* (1975), rather than to analysis of women's work in shaping thinking on language. A few years later, studies such as Dale Spender's *Man Made Language* (1980) focused their attention on language being biased against women, arguing against the dominance of the 'male-as-norm' paradigm, while Casey Miller and Kate Swift (1977, 1981), among others, raised awareness on gendered and sexist language and argued for the need for changes in language policy. Scholars in other linguistic traditions too offered a feminist perspective on the analysis of language (e.g. Yaguello 1978; Violi 1986), and provided precise and well-researched recommendations for a non-sexist use of language (Sabatini 1986, 1987). Gendered conversational styles also became the object of scholarly attention (e.g. Coates 1986; Tannen 1990), often supporting the view that women's talk is a cultural product, and attracting widespread interest from specialists and non-specialists alike. A strong orientation to feminist theory and a dissatisfaction with gendered power relations underpins much of this research. Language is seen as a 'tool to constrain, coerce and represent women and men in oppressive ways' and linguistic analyses within socio-cultural contexts can help 'reveal some of the mechanisms of how this takes place' (Mills and Mullany 2011: 25).

Explorations of women's participation in the history of linguistics that extend the chronological horizon to many centuries before the twentieth seem initially at least to encounter an almost deserted landscape. However, when we broaden the scope of the investigation and look for evidence of women's presence beyond the more traditional scholarly contexts, things change. What we are facing is rather what we can define—to borrow the effective metaphor used by the Italian scholar Elisabetta Graziosi (2005: 145) to describe the verse production of nuns in early modern Italian convents—as an 'arcipelago sommerso' ('a submerged archipelago') of women who contributed to the study of languages over the ages. What Graziosi remarked with reference to those nuns who devoted themselves to writing poetry also holds for women linguists: not all of their writings have been preserved, but are rather lost, destroyed, or untraceable. In some cases, then, we may know the names of the women, but have no surviving texts or writings from them. In others, we may find writings that have been preserved, but we lack the names of their authors. In yet other instances, it is the authorship of the writings that has been challenged, based on the assumption that even when the work is attributed to a woman, there could be—or even must be—a male author instead. Not to mention those women who collaborated with male scholars, whether related or not, and who often worked in subordinate or supporting positions, deprived of recognition for their role in the advancement of knowledge. Since their contribution was often made anonymously, it ended up being neglected or altogether forgotten, the passing of time having effaced the memory of their intellectual commitment and scholarship. The negative association between femininity and scholarship may also have led women to publish under a pseudonym or to leave their works in manuscript. Women who chose to have their work published could be accused of self-advertisement and face potential social dishonour (Richardson 2004: 42).

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[3] The range of critical studies on individual figures, surveys of women writers within specific literary traditions, and editions of texts by female authors in many different languages is now vast. To cite just one example, within the subfield of modern editions of early modern texts by (or about) women (in original language and/or translation), there is the book series 'The Other Voice in Early Modern Europe', active since 1996, first with Chicago University Press and, more recently, by Iter and the Centre for Reformation and Renaissance Studies (University of Toronto). Nonetheless, much work remains to be done.

Not surprisingly, then, one of the greatest challenges for researchers who aim to recover women's agency within the history of linguistics, as this volume seeks to do, is the need to have expertise in a number of interrelated areas. Alongside the skills required for any historian of linguistics, including having the ability to analyse surviving print and manuscript sources and being familiar with the history of the discipline and linguistic theory, scholars also need crucially 'to be sensitive to the historical experience of women' and 'be willing and able to adopt a feminist theoretical perspective' in order to move beyond 'compensatory' and 'contribution' history (Breyfogle 1991: 21).

4. Challenges and opportunities for women in the history of linguistics

A recurrent thread throughout this volume is the challenges faced by women who expressed an interest in language and language study because of the educational restrictions placed upon them and their lack of access to formal education. In the early modern period, for instance, the learning of Latin and Greek—and the access to knowledge this implied—was largely considered a male preserve. Latin, and in general the curriculum of the *studia humanitatis*, implied coming into contact with the ancients—the source of all human knowledge—and was therefore necessary in order to prepare the individual for public life. Since women had no public role to fulfil, Latin usually remained beyond their reach and their education was meant to be, instead, fundamentally practical, following the adage that saw men associated with pens and women with needles.

It is not until the late nineteenth century when free and compulsory education was gradually opened up to girls, at least at primary level in Western Europe, that we begin to see significant changes. Before then, educational opportunities depended heavily on social class and family circumstances. As adults, women were associated with domesticity and family commitments, as we see repeatedly articulated in the different chapters of this volume. Their networks were therefore often largely restricted to a small circle of family and friends. As opportunities for work expanded, again in the nineteenth century, women were associated with lower-prestige jobs, and feminization of the professions was slow in arriving.

This is not to suggest that circumstances were entirely unfavourable towards women. Some Renaissance men of letters—among them Erasmus, Juan Luis Vives, and Henricus Cornelius Agrippa—wished for a richer and more varied education for women and did not completely oppose female knowledge of Latin, itself a gateway to much other scholarship. There was indeed a rich tradition of women across Europe who, throughout the centuries, and despite the prevailing difficult context, distinguished themselves for their use of the classical language in both manuscript and printed texts (Churchill, Brown, and Jeffrey 2002; Stevenson 2005). Moreover, already in the Early Modern period, we find accounts of women learning languages from private tutors or attentive fathers. The early lists of 'famous women' often refer to the linguistic abilities of the female figures they are cataloguing, languages being deemed a suitable area of study. Women were also associated with skilful polite conversation: in Baldassar Castiglione's *Il libro del cortegiano* (2003 [1528]; *The Book of the Courtier*) the ideal courtly lady is required to behave affably and to entertain politely every sort of man with agreeable conversation suited to the time and place and the quality of the person being addressed (III, 5). Women were similarly required to take a leading role, for instance, in refined conversation in the salons. In seventeenth-century France, the linguistic skills of women featured as part of the well-known *Querelle des femmes*. Poullain de la Barre in his *De l'égalité des deux sexes* (1679 [1673]; *On the Equality of the Two Sexes*) argues for the superiority of women over men in terms of their language use, and summarizes the differences between the language of educated men and of women in the following terms:

> Elles s'énoncent avec grace. Elles ont l'art de trouver les plus beaux termes de l'usage, et de faire plus comprendre en un mot, que les hommes avec plusieurs: & si l'on s'entretient des Langues en general, elles ont là-dessus des pensées qui ne se trouvent que dans les plus habiles Grammairiens. Enfin on remarque qu'elles tirent plus de l'usage seul pour le langage, que la pluspart des hommes ne font de l'usage joint à l'étude. (Poullain de la Barre 1679: 49)
>
> (They express themselves with grace. They possess the art of being able to find the finest terms in usage and to communicate more with one word, than men with several: and if one is having a conversation about languages in general, on

> this subject they have ideas which are only found in the most skilful grammarians. In a word, one observes that they draw more from usage alone of the language, than most men get from usage and study.)

If women's contribution to the history of linguistics and language codification seems to have gone unnoticed, the topic of women's language, in its many declinations, has recurrently been the *object* of discussion by thinkers, theorists, and men of letters, and indeed considered worthy of special attention. Here again we find positive and negative accounts of women's language. The specificities of women's use of language were already discussed by Latin authors. Cicero (*On the Orator* III, 45), for instance, touched upon the conservative nature of women's language, stressing how the female sex, not having experience of conversation with a multitude of people, more easily preserved the ancient language unaltered. In a much-quoted passage he explained how hearing his mother-in-law Laelia speaking reminded him of Plautus or Naevius, of the old uncorrupted language which women more easily retained. Others considered women's use of language as flawed, the defects in their expression to be attributed to inadequate linguistic training in their native tongue or to innate intellectual limitations. Women are singled out for their poor use of grammar, their inelegant and inaccurate writing, faulty pronunciation, poor diction and voice quality, or limited and erroneous vocabulary. Women's linguistic shortcomings were considered the unfortunate result of a neglected education, and even the more progressively minded theorists were not free from supporting misogynistic stereotypes, such as women's tendency to linguistic affectation or to introduce deplorable innovations that corrupt language. Not to mention, of course, their garrulity. Others, on the contrary, saw women as linguistically less creative and more conservative lexically, as well as on language matters more broadly.[4] They were said to use a different set of words, and to avoid coarse and gross expressions or swearing, and words related to certain specific topics or body parts, preferring euphemisms instead. The specificity of women's language could be found in their more frequent use of hypotaxis versus parataxis, an apparent ease in producing speech that nonetheless led to unfinished sentences on account of their inability to control their thoughts as opposed to men's slower production of sentences due to their instinctive cross-examination of every statement. Otto Jespersen's well-known chapter on 'The Woman', in his *Language, its Nature, Development and Origin* (1922) offers in this respect a compendium—and a grim one for that matter, filled with prejudices and misogyny—of long-standing commonplaces on women's contribution to the development of language. Tellingly, Jespersen commented: 'Men will certainly with great justice object that there is a danger of the language becoming languid and insipid if we are always to content ourselves with women's expressions, and that vigour and vividness count for something [...] Men thus become the chief renovators of language' (Jespersen 1922: 247). We return to the qualities associated with women's language in section 7.1.

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[4] For an outline of these views, with specific reference to the English context, see Baron (1986: 71–89).

This volume, as we shall see, will inevitably touch upon many of the challenges that women had to face throughout the centuries, at various levels, and in many forms, in the history of linguistics. However, what it reveals above all are the opportunities women were able to find and construct for themselves within the contexts in which they operated, often turning to their advantage precisely those same prejudices that constrained them.

5. Moving beyond the European and the Western

Many of the single-volume landmark studies of the history of linguistics have focused mainly, or exclusively, on the Western tradition in linguistics. Robins in his pioneering *Short History of Linguistics* (1997 [1967]) defended his choice of building his work around the framework of the history of linguistics in Europe on the grounds that this allowed him to trace a continuous line of development from ancient Greece, whereas, for instance, at that time relatively little was known of the origin and early stages of the Sanskrit work of the Indians (Robins 1999: 7). In his volume, for practical reasons, he therefore chose to consider how other traditions had influenced the European. Vivien Law, in her *History of Linguistics in Europe: From Plato to 1600* (2003) rightly observed that it was wrong to treat linguistics in other traditions, such as India, the Judeo-Arab world, and China, as if they were merely an appendage to Europe (Law 2003: 1), and there are now excellent studies of many non-Western traditions, including Versteegh on Arabic (2001), Wang and Sun (2015), and Behr et al. (2017) on Chinese, as well as Wolff (2019a, 2019b) on African linguistics. None of these, significantly, devote their attention to women or discuss their contribution to the field. With the growth of the field of the history of linguistics, it is increasingly difficult for a single scholar to cover a range of traditions in one volume, not least because of the lack of translations of major texts.

A key aim of this volume, then, is to open up the study of women beyond the existing, often very limited, studies of European traditions. It is perhaps worth emphasizing from the outset that we interpret, for instance, Chapter 7 on German to be about work by women which discusses the German language. Conversely, German women who worked on, for example, African languages are treated in Chapter 19 on Africa. In looking at non-European traditions, we have tried as far as possible to include the contribution of local women and not just that of European women, who were often missionaries.[5]

We make no claim that this volume is exhaustive. Rather, it aims to offer a very first—albeit wide-ranging—investigation of the subject, in order actively to encourage and promote further research across linguistic traditions, both within and beyond Europe. It seeks not only to cover a range of European traditions which have previously only been studied partially, or not at all, but also to explore many others worldwide, including Australia, North America, India, China, Japan, and the Arabic-speaking world. Success in securing contributions on both European and non-European traditions depended on a number of factors, including the general state of knowledge of that area and the period when interest in language began to flourish (see below). As a result, it has not been possible to include chapters on certain traditions we had originally hoped to explore, including, for Europe, Greece, Finland, Poland, and Rumania. In the case of Rumania, for instance, women's participation in the field of linguistics, despite the depth and breadth of their current contribution, appears to date back only to the 1950s and 1960s.[6] Beyond Europe, it proved impossible to secure chapters on Ancient Egypt, the Hebrew and Yiddish traditions, and South America.

Ancient Egypt affords a good example of the difficulty of tracing women's presence because of shortage of records and material sources. In the popular imagination, Ancient Egypt is closely connected to language in its written form through hieroglyphs and the figure of the scribe. It is also a land sometimes praised for the place granted to women, embodied by famous ruling queens such as Hatshepsut and Cleopatra. Yet public speech and acts of writing by women were not part of Egyptian decorum and they are therefore absent from most accounts and documents available to scholars.

As for female scholarship on the ancient Egyptian language, it developed of course almost 2,000 years later, when Champollion deciphered Egyptian hieroglyphics in 1822, opening the way to its study. Very few women focused on Egyptian languages in these early stages: women active in Egyptology during the nineteenth century were primarily aristocratic travellers, collectors, and sponsors of archaeological excavations, with things only changing slowly in the twentieth century, when university education gradually opened up to women. Yet, at first, women were limited to disciplines such as the history of art and museum studies, deemed more suitable for women of well-to-do extraction. As progress in the understanding of ancient Egyptian languages occurred in the second part of the twentieth century (a period which falls beyond the remit of this volume, see section 6 below), it is worth pointing out that one of the leading linguistic schools in the field, based at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, trained and hosted several leading female linguists.[7]

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[5] We hope that, for instance, the study of Africa (Chapter 19) which is for now focused largely on the work of missionaries and women in academia will lead to further exploration of the possible contribution of local women to language studies.

[6] Gabriela Dindelegan (Emerita Professor of Linguistics at the University of Bucharest) by personal communication.

Another good example of the problems posed by trying to explore the role of women in the history of linguistics before its institutionalization is provided by Yiddish.[8] Whilst there were early, summary descriptions of the language from the sixteenth century until the late nineteenth century, the study of the language was exclusively the work of outsiders or apostates. The descriptions, brief manuals, and wordlists were not written for native speakers, but for those who needed access to the language and culture for various purposes, ranging from trade and missionary work to the detection and prosecution of Jewish criminals. In the late nineteenth century, simple dictionaries and textbooks of Yiddish for native speakers and learners were produced, but it remained an exclusively male domain. Although there were attempts to establish academic Yiddish studies before and during World War II (e.g. 'cabinets' at the academies of Minsk and Kiev, a chair of Yiddish philology in Vilna, and an *ad hominem* chair at CUNY), Yiddish only became an accepted object of study in the post-war period, both as an academic topic and as a (foreign) language which could be learned like any other. Yiddish was—and still is—studied at a small number of universities worldwide. Women have played a considerable part in the development of all aspects of Yiddish linguistics, but only since the academic study of Yiddish became established during a period in which women studying for advanced degrees and appointed to faculty positions were no longer an exception.

Inevitably, success in securing contributions also depended on the willingness of colleagues to embark on what may well have seemed a truly daunting enterprise that might potentially lead to no more than meagre findings. Our first contact with possible contributors often elicited very enthusiastic and positive responses that both confirmed a great interest in the topic and a clear awareness that recovering women's role within the history of linguistics meant mapping unexplored territories. It was clear to all that such investigation would require, as has indeed been the case, extensive and painstaking research into a range of primary sources, manuscripts, and printed texts, in libraries and archives. In many instances, work had to start from something close to a *tabula rasa*. Needless to say, we are therefore extremely grateful to our all collaborators for accepting the challenge, responding to our questions, suggestions, and comments, and especially for pointing us towards topics and subfields that we had not initially considered as preserving evidence of women's contribution.

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[7] Our thanks to Chloé C. D. Ragazzoli (Faculty of History, Université Paris-Sorbonne) for these comments (by personal communication).

[8] We are very grateful to Marion Aptroot (Institut für Jüdische Studien, Heinrich-Heine-Universität Düsseldorf) for these details (personal communication).

6. Chronological scope of the volume

The chronological scope of the volume was, at least initially, conceived as the period which starts with the first attempts at standardization and codification of the national languages of Europe (late fifteenth century on) and ends with the institutionalization of linguistics in the early decades of the twentieth century. However, it became clear that, whilst this period should remain at the core of the volume, flexibility was also required, as regards both the starting and end points for our analysis.

For the *terminus a quo*, a number of important exceptions were essential. Even within the Western European tradition, understanding of the Greek and Latin traditions on which so much of European vernacular grammar was founded is key (Chapter 1). Outside Europe the case for flexibility was even more pressing. China, for instance, has one of the world's most ancient and impressive traditions of philological studies, above all in the fields of lexicography, glossography, graphic etymology, and phonology. All of these, explains Mariarosaria Gianninoto (Chapter 16), were strictly connected with the constitution of the Confucian canon and with the imperial examination system, which entailed knowledge and exegesis of canonical texts. Deeply rooted prejudices, and, as a result, very limited access to instruction, meant that women could not participate in the imperial examinations and therefore are almost completely absent from the landscape of Chinese philology. However, as Gianninoto observes, there are early examples of learned women, and their linguistic and Sinographic education should be taken into account. A case in point is Bān Zhāo (44–116 CE), respectively the daughter and the sister of the Han dynasty historians Bān Biāo (3–54 CE) and Bān Gù (32–92 CE). After the death of her brother, she was ordered to complete the compilation of the Book of the Han (Hànshū), destined to become the model for all future dynastic histories in China. Bān Zhāo is also believed to be the author of an annotated version of the *Biographies of Eminent Women* by Liú Xiàng (79–8 BCE), a critical edition unfortunately now lost to us, but which represents a rare example of women's contribution to glossography, an important field of Chinese philology. Likewise, it was important to capture the fact that, in the oldest Vedic texts, speech is associated with the feminine—particularly in the Ṛg Veda (RV), the earliest group of poetic sacrificial hymns dated around 1500 BCE (Chapter 17).

The choice of the institutionalization of linguistics as the *terminus ad quem* was dictated by the fact that women scholars such as Deborah Tannen, Anna Murpurgo Davies, or Deborah Cameron, all cited by Allan (2007), work(ed) in very different circumstances from their predecessors in having access to higher education and academic posts. There is clearly considerable variation as to when lectureships and chairs in philology and linguistics were established in different countries even within Europe. Moreover, once again, opening up to non-Western traditions necessitated allowing a somewhat later endpoint, notably where study of the language area had more recent beginnings than in Europe. Nevertheless, all the chapters take the onset of World War II as the absolute limit for their analysis.

7. Recurring themes

Contributors were asked to consider women's role in a number of different areas, and in this section we highlight some of the recurring themes which feature across sometimes otherwise very different traditions.

7.1 Women's language

As we saw earlier, women's use of language has been the object of attention since ancient times. Attitudes towards women's language—both positive and negative—regularly shaped the description and analysis of the language in question.

One prevalent view of women's ideal use of language was that they should speak as little as possible. Silence as the ideal ornament for women and a testament to their modesty is recommended across different linguistic and cultural traditions, starting from the classical world (Chapter 1). In Ancient Greece, women's speech was thought to be particularly seductive and dangerous, as exemplified in the singing of the sirens, but also ambiguous, as in the speech of Pythia, the famous priestess of Apollo at Delphi. In archaic and classical Greece, women did not receive formal rhetorical training, because they had no public role to fulfil. Occasionally, however, women gained distinction for their learning or verbal cleverness, even when they were of less respectable social extraction, Aspasia being a case in point. Catalogues of illustrious women from the classical world record female figures as gifted orators delivering well-crafted speeches in public to promote their cause, such as Hortensia, the daughter of a famous orator. Others distinguished themselves for their skills also in writing: Cornelia, the daughter of Scipio Africanus (the Elder) and mother of the Gracchi, was renowned for her fluency in Greek as well as for her excellent style of speaking and writing. Sappho is the most famous of the twenty female poets from antiquity known to us.

The rich production of conduct books that, across the centuries and a range of traditions, aim to define women's role and behaviour in society often perpetuate long-standing beliefs about women's appropriate use of language, devoting entire sections to this topic. Some texts adopt a more restrictive and prescriptive approach, taking the injunction to silence as their starting point. Others catered for a female readership that was required to participate in elegant conversations. In the Japanese tradition, for instance, women's silence, modesty, and the need to restrain from speaking are defining elements of women's use of language (Chapter 15). Throughout the history of Japan, there has been a tenacious circulation of normative discourse about women's speech in the form of etiquette manuals for women's manner of speaking, starting with women's conduct books, *jokunsho*, in the pre-modern period. These early conduct books, written by upper-class Japanese women in preparation for their daughters' marriage, contained lessons on speech. In the Edo period (1603–1868), there was a wealth of such publications produced by men, extending their influence to other social classes. These kinds of works have contributed to making women's language the primary means for expressing widespread ideals of femininity.

Finally, it is important to note that some accounts take a more positive view of women's language, seeing it as a model for good usage, as in the French tradition (Chapter 3). Indeed, in seventeenth-century France women are viewed by some grammarians as the most authentic and natural authorities on good usage, not least because their judgments have not been coloured by knowledge of the classical languages or formal grammar. Sometimes it was linguistic usage of individual women that rather served as the model: for Russian, Vassili Trediakovskii chose Empress Elizabeth I as the person whose language could serve as a standard for the common tongue (Chapter 6).

7.2 Women and language acquisition and teaching

Semasiological and onomasiological investigations across languages have highlighted long-standing links between women and language acquisition,[9] for instance in the idea that women, as mothers or wet nurses, can exert a positive or negative influence on the transmission of language. In the early fourteenth century Dante, in his *De vulgari eloquentia* (*DVE*; *On Eloquence in the Vernacular*), explicitly stressed the association between language and mothers in his discussion of the role of the vernacular compared to Latin, calling the former the *materna locutione* ('mother tongue'), 'nostra vera prima locutio' ('our first true language') (*DVE* I, II, 1), which can be learnt 'sine omni regula' ('without any rules') and 'nutricem imitantes' ('by imitating the wet nurse') (*DVE* I, I, 2).

Indeed, a recurrent theme across traditions and across the centuries is the key role attributed to women in the transmission and acquisition of language. Women could be influential in the linguistic education of their children, we read in Chapter 1. In this respect, Cornelia, the mother of the Gracchi, is mentioned by Quintilian and Cicero as an example of a mother capable of affecting positively the spoken skills of her children. As Mariarosaria Gianninoto remarks with reference to China in the imperial era (Chapter 16), women's contribution to the transmission of literacy, even within the domestic sphere, can be regarded as part of their contribution to the history of linguistics: by supervising children's early linguistic and literary education and supporting their studies, they offered a crucial contribution to language teaching.

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[9] See on this Lepschy and Sanson (1999).

Initially, this role in language acquisition is principally limited to early childhood and the domestic context—the privileged sphere assigned to women as nurturers and first educators. From the Enlightenment onwards, in the European context, women's role as educators starts progressively to extend beyond the domestic sphere, inasmuch as mothers are assigned an important role as educators of future citizens that can benefit society as a whole, and that female education, at least in some traditions, starts to witness gradual, but positive developments. However, it is above all from the second half of the nineteenth century that women's role as linguistic educators of children spreads more generally into new, more official, contexts. It is no coincidence that we find at the same time a growing number of women who composed and published metalinguistic texts for children and school pupils (see section 7.3 below). The fundamental importance of the establishment of state educational systems, alongside the opening up of higher education to women, in enabling them to contribute to language study and linguistics in more systematic and varied ways, cannot be overstated. In this respect, we should also remember the important role played by the creation and establishment of teacher-training institutions for women. The specific circumstances and realizations of giving women access to education are elaborated in the relevant chapters and will not be discussed here.

Beyond Europe, women were also able to have a presence within certain educational fields. Starting from the end of the Ming (1368–1644) and throughout the Qing (1644–1911) periods, an important contribution to Chinese language studies came from Western missionaries (Chapter 16), who played an active role in the educational and linguistic fields, creating schools and thereby contributing to the development of linguistic training for Chinese women. A different, though related role is their contribution to the transmission of language. In the Arabic-speaking world, for instance, the ninth-century *Ṣaḥīḥ* (*Authentic*)—the most widely adopted of the six acknowledged collections of *Ḥadīth* in Islam, that is, of the saying and deeds of the Prophet Muḥammad—extensively record women's central role in reporting and narrating *Ḥadīth*, something which is corroborated by numerous ancient sources (Chapter 18). Women's oral testimonies of the words of the Prophet were used not only as religious precepts, but also, from a strictly linguistic point of view, to express and transmit a normative linguistic legacy.

Women's contribution to language teaching is not, moreover, restricted to the 'mother tongue'. Early modern catalogues of illustrious women often recorded with admiration learned women skilled in a range of classical and foreign languages. Across the centuries we find a number of women who distinguished themselves for their admirable linguistic skills: Anna Maria van Schurman (1607–1678), for instance, was a multi-talented polyglot. She was proficient in

French, German, and English, had a profound knowledge of Greek, Latin, Hebrew, Aramaic, Arabic, Syrian, and Ethiopian, with Dutch and German her home languages for daily matters (Chapter 8). Alongside the queens, aristocratic women, and women humanists who actively contributed to the restoration of classical learning, we should not forget those female figures who, against the odds of their lower social status, still succeeded in achieving distinction for their language skills. From the eighteenth century on, if mastery of classical languages continued to be considered unsuitable for women, knowledge of foreign languages was deemed not only acceptable, but in some cases an essential component of the education of well-to-do young women. As Jespersen wrote (1922: 249), 'foreign languages, long before the reform of female education, belonged to those things which women learnt best in and out of schools, because, like music and embroidery, they were reckoned among the specially feminine "accomplishments"'. This privileged association between women and foreign language acquisition means, as we shall see, that some women could offer their contribution to the history of linguistics by means of translation (see below section 7.6).

Another interesting example of a specialized role for women in language acquisition is their decisive contribution to the history of deaf education in the United States (Chapter 12). The struggle between the two different pedagogies of manualism and oralism illustrates how their incorporation into language studies may be founded on gender-based identities, that is, on deeply rooted beliefs about the specific capabilities and roles of women. As oralism replaced manualism, the proportion of women teachers of the deaf rose steeply. Since oralism was a labour-intensive pedagogy that required a higher number of teachers, hiring women allowed for cheaper salaries. The need for oralism to be introduced at the earliest possible age and the tireless patience it requires meant that women, with their 'innate' maternal disposition, were seen as the perfect fit for the job. Whilst the higher levels of the discipline remained the prerogative of men, women could become figureheads representing deafness to the public. Female educators depicted the plight of deafness on girls while also showcasing the accomplishments of deaf women in their attempts to attract funding for deaf education.

7.3 Women as creators of new languages and scripts

Women did not only 'transmit' or teach language, they also actively contributed to the creation of new languages and scripts. The idea of a female creator of the Roman alphabet has a long history. Boccaccio recalls in his fourteenth-century gallery of illustrious women, *De mulieribus claris*, that the Ancients considered the legendary Nicostrata (Carmenta in the Latin world) to be the inventor of the Latin alphabet, and the first-ever teacher of the elements of grammar (Boccaccio *Decameron* XXVII, 6 and 13). Within the history of Chinese and Japanese linguistics, women were able to play a role in the creation of scripts and specific uses of language. Whilst women's contribution to language and script policy in China was extremely rare, due to their marginal place in society, there is nonetheless evidence of their role in the invention and transmission of characters, such as the list of characters promulgated under the reign of the controversial Empress Wǔ Zétiān (Wǔ Zhào 623/624–705), used for headstones, manuscripts, and epitaphs over the empire (Chapter 16). Another fascinating example comes from the *nǚshū*, 'women's script' or 'women's characters', a variant of the Chinese script used, in the late imperial period, exclusively by women in a rural area of South China, and discovered only in the 1980s.

In Japan (Chapter 15), women played an important role in the formation of the Japanese language, and in particular of Japanese poetry and vernacular literature in the Heian period (794–1185). Of the two major script types in use in contemporary Japanese writing, *kanji* and *kana* (which comprises *hiragana* and *katakana*), the former finds its origins in Chinese logographs, whereas *hiragana* and *katakana* developed in Japan. Aristocratic women have been associated with the creation of *kana* and native writing: a direct precursor of today's *hiragana* is a type of *kana* called *onnade* ('feminine hand'), which is widely accepted to have enhanced the development of Japanese language and vernacular literature in the tenth century. Later, in the late nineteenth century, girls were also the creators of schoolgirl speech (*jogakusei kotoba*), from which, in turn, some of the features of 'women's language' (*onna kotoba*) derive, one of the prominent styles of speech of modern standard Japanese, together with honorifics. *Onna kotoba*, a relatively novel ideological construct, adopted its linguistic features, among others, from the speech style created by female students after 1872, when they were officially permitted to study in schools by governmental decree. Previously lacking a specific 'female' identity—they were reported to have spoken, dressed, and behaved just like male students—it was in their speech that they succeeded in creating this identity, while resisting the Confucian emphasis on the good-wife-wise-mother model prescribed by the authorities. At first objected to and excluded from national language under gendered nationalization, by the 1940s schoolgirl speech had come to be redefined as constituting part of the speech style common to all women (women's language).

7.4 Women as dedicatees, patrons, and intended readers of metalinguistics texts

Before women begin to compose grammars and dictionaries themselves, they are the intended dedicatees and recipients of some of the earliest metalinguistic texts in Europe. In Spain, the *Gramática de la lengua castellana* (1492; *Grammar of the Castilian Language*) by Antonio de Nebrija, the very first printed grammar of a vernacular language in Europe, was commissioned by, and dedicated to, Queen Isabella I of Castile (1451–1504) (Chapter 4). According to Juan de Valdés, the grammar was meant to be of benefit 'para las damas de la sereníssima doña Isabel' ('for the ladies-in-waiting of Her Very Serene Highness Queen Isabel'). As part of her interest in women's cultural education, she also commissioned Alonso de Palencia to produce the first Latin dictionary with a translation into Spanish, the *Universal Vocabulario en latín y en romance* (1490; *Universal Vocabulary in Latin and Romance*). Significantly, it was Queen Isabella who further encouraged Nebrija to provide a Spanish translation (1773 [1488?]) of his *Introductiones latinae* (1481; *Latin Introductions*) so that religious women could acquire Latin without needing to rely on men.

The tradition of women patrons for promoting work on languages has a long history. A notable example, discussed in Chapter 6, is Catherine the Great (1729–1796) who founded the Russian Imperial Academy in St Petersburg on the model of the French Academy and appointed Princess Dashkova (1743–1810) as its President, in charge of the Russian language normalization project. The first article of its Statutes declares that the Academy is under the exclusive patronage of Her Imperial Majesty, whilst the second sets out its goals to purify, enrich, and codify the Russian language.

Another important feature of the history of the codification of European languages is the production of grammars and other metalinguistic texts aimed specifically at women. As early as the sixteenth century, we have evidence of grammars that included women as possible readers, often also targeting at the same time children, foreigners, and those who did not know Latin, strengthening women's association with those of limited intellectual abilities and the illiterati. We also have evidence of metalinguistic texts aimed at women and produced by other women. An early example is Marguerite Buffet's observations for women, published in 1668, which we will discuss in section 7.5 below (see also Chapter 3), but most *Grammaires des dames* were published in the second half of the eighteenth century and the first decades of the nineteenth century (see Beck-Busse 2014). Analysis of such grammars in Italy and France (Chapters 2 and 3) shows that the (mainly male) authors of these works believed that it was necessary to simplify the content for women and to make it more accessible for a female readership unversed in Latin grammar and metalanguage. It is striking that women are thus often identified, alongside children or the unlearned, as a group in need of a clear and simple exposition of grammar.

7.5 Women as authors of metalinguistic texts

When thinking about the role of women in the history of linguistics, the most obvious area to explore is women as authors of metalinguistic texts. It should, however, be noted that it is not necessarily the most fruitful avenue, especially for earlier periods. Frequently an initial approach to a contributor about writing a chapter for this volume elicited the response that they were unaware of any metalinguistic texts by women in the relevant period in the tradition with which they were familiar.

This is not to say that there are no early interesting texts by women. We may point in the French tradition (Chapter 3) to the collection of essays of Marie Le Jars de Gournay (1565–1645) published in the early seventeenth century which include alongside discussions of the role of women in society, studies of metaphors, rhymes, and other aspects of the French language. Marguerite's Buffet's (d. 1680) observations on the French language, the *Nouvelles observations sur la langue françoise* (1688; *New Observations on the French Language*), aimed particularly at a female readership, shorten and simplify much of the content of Vaugelas's celebrated remarks on the French language, the 1647 *Remarques sur la langue françoise*, for her female readership.

Other female authors of metalinguistic texts are better known. Johanna Corleva (1698–1752), for instance, published a Dutch translation of Port-Royal's celebrated general and rational grammar (Chapter 8). In England (Chapter 10) two well-known figures are Bathsua Makin (1600–1675), who, as Carol Percy explains, promoted English grammar as an instrument to teach Latin to girls in her 1673 *An Essay to Revive the Antient Education of Gentlewomen in Religion, Manners, Arts & Tongues*, and Elizabeth Elstob (1683–1756) who, in 1715, produced *The Rudiments of Grammar*, the first English grammar of Old English.

In considering where the works by women sit in the history of the writing of metalinguistic texts for a particular language, contributors were invited to consider whether there are particular features which characterize women as authors of grammars and dictionaries. We have already indicated one of these—the adaptation of material for a female audience. For example, in Portugal (Chapter 5), in 1786, at a time when the majority of women did not have access to formal education, Francisca de Chantal Álvares (1742–post 1800) produced a compendium of Portuguese grammar for the use of female pupils who studied in convent schools, the *Breve compendio da gramatica portugueza para uso das meninas que se educaõ no Mosteiro da Vizitaçaõ de Lisboa* (*Brief Compendium of Portuguese Grammar for the Use of Girls Educated at the Visitation Monastery in Lisbon*). Another area of expertise is the production of school books. For example, in Denmark (Chapter 9), Julie Heins (1822–1902) produced a series of Danish ABC-books and readers in the nineteenth century. Having founded a school in Odense, she developed her own method for teaching girls to read, and published readers for younger and older children, as well as a comprehensive six-volume reading system to cover reading and writing at all levels of grammar-school education. Published in 1899, the first of the six volumes, *Hanebogen, A-B-C med billeder efter skrivelæsemetoden* (*ABC with Pictures according to the Writing-Reading*

Method) was particularly popular, running to twenty-three revised editions in the period up to 1932.

Women also played a leading role in compiling textbooks for the learning of foreign languages. For instance, in Italy (Chapter 2), Clementina Scagliarini published a *Vocabolario domestico francese* (1876; *French Domestic Dictionary*), whilst Emma Widmer-Gotelli produced a manual for the teaching of German, *La lingua tedesca insegnata senza maestro* (1888; *The German Language Taught without a Teacher*). The second half of the nineteenth century also witnesses an intriguing production of grammars nominally intended for mothers, structured as mimetic dialogues reproducing domestic scenes and conversations between mothers and children.

Women similarly demonstrated their skills in lexicography. In England, some women devoted their efforts to what could be termed 'domestic lexicography' (Chapter 10). An example of this is Hester Piozzi (1741–1821) and her *British Synonymy; or, An Attempt at Regulating the Choice of Words in Familiar Conversation* (1794), which recalls that of a line of women educators who produced glossaries and dictionaries for children and their mothers. In the field of Italian dialectology (Chapter 2), the two-volume dictionary *Vocabolario bolognese italiano* (1869–1874; *Bolognese–Italian Dictionary*), by Carolina Coronedi Berti (1820–1911) was well received by male linguists and dialectologists alike soon after its publication. Coronedi Berti succeeded in her enterprise, despite lacking the formal education and philological training male lexicographers enjoyed, and while juggling her intellectual aspirations with a busy domestic life.

In Denmark, the translator and philologist Margrethe Thiele (1868–1928), supported by an annual stipend from the Carslberg Foundation, made a significant contribution to the field of lexicography in producing a Danish–French dictionary (Chapter 9). She collaborated with the young scholar Andreas Blinkenberg until her death in 1928. Blinkenberg completed the project and the two volumes of their *Dansk-fransk Ordbog*, then the largest dictionary of its kind, were published in 1937. In Spain, at the very beginning of the twentieth century, Luisa Lacal de Bracho's *Diccionario de la música técnico, histórico, bio-bibliográfico* (1900 [1899]; *Technical, Historical, Bio-Bibliographic Dictionary of Music*) received widespread acclaim at the time (Chapter 4).

Another field that awaits more detailed studies to recover women's contribution is philology. Remaining in the field of research on Spanish, María Goyri (1873–1954) was one of the first women to be officially granted admission to the Central University of Madrid in 1892, to obtain a degree (1896), and a doctorate (1909). She specialized in exploring the literary and philological problems posed by the Spanish ballad collection (*Romancero*), collaborating with her husband Ramón Menéndez Pidal, the founder of the Spanish school of philology, In her work to locate verses from ballads cited in Spanish and foreign literary works, she also produced countless index cards that became part of the Ballad Archive and which were then used not only by Menéndez Pidal, but also by numerous other scholars who subsequently consulted the Archive.

Carolina Michaëlis de Vasconcelos (1851–1925) early on had a clear interest in the study of the classical, Romance, Slavic, and Semitic languages and literatures, and she was only 17 years old when her first papers were published in scientific journals. Born in Berlin, but living in Portugal after her marriage in 1876, she is discussed in Chapters 5 and 7. She distinguished herself in the field of Romance philology, embracing different disciplinary domains, including historical comparative philology, synchronic and diachronic aspects of Portuguese linguistics, the history of the Portuguese language, etymological studies, and lexicography. She published a number of important critical editions, including, in 1904, that of the *Cancioneiro da Ajuda* (*Songbook of the Ajuda Palace*), one of the main extant manuscript collections of Portuguese medieval lyric texts. Vasconcelos was also the first woman to teach in a Portuguese university, in Coimbra, where she gave lectures on Portuguese philology from the academic year 1912/1913. Her wide-ranging achievements as both a linguist and activist working to improve the condition and education of women were acknowledged by a number of prestigious institutions: she was made honorary member of the Berliner Gesellschaft für das Studium der neueren Sprachen (Berlin Society for the Study of Modern Languages) (1877), was conferred the title of Doctor *honoris causa* by the universities of Freiburg (1893), Coimbra (1916), and Hamburg (1923), as well as the insignia of an official of the Order of Santiago (1901).

In certain traditions, evidence of women's activities within the field of grammar or lexicography is inevitably very scant. In the Arabic world, there are sources that record the names of female scholars who are said to have contributed to compiling dictionaries and grammars, were authorities on Arabic language and poetry, or studied with notable grammarians. Yet, all we are left with are their names and at times nothing more than a few words or few brief sentences that pay tribute to their knowledge, and there are no traces of any metalinguistic texts they may possibly have produced (Chapter 18).

7.6 Women as interpreters and translators

We saw earlier how a number of Native American women played a crucial role as interpreters and linguistic mediators that allowed the establishment of Native American-European contacts. They also acted as linguistic and cultural mediators in their role as translators, both from classical languages and other modern languages, across a number of traditions. In Italy, France, and Germany, there is evidence of women active as translators starting from the sixteenth (Chapters 2 and 3) and seventeenth centuries (Chapter 7). Later, in France, Anne Dacier

(?1647–1720) entered the debates on language by means of her translation of Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, siding with the Ancients. In Germany, whilst translation was often considered a way for women to improve their language learning, it could equally be understood as important work that helped to improve and refine the German language, prompting writers to find new ways to express their ideas. Louise Gottsched (1713–1762), for instance, applied her translating skills across a number of fields and genre, rendering into German works originally in French, English, Latin, and Greek. She was supported in her work by her husband, the critic Johann Christoph Gottsched, and her translations were greatly appreciated by contemporary critics.

We might argue that, indeed, translation was a form of applied linguistics for women, a way to contribute to language codification and standardization when other channels were closed to them. In this respect, a telling example comes from eighteenth-century Italy and the work of the sisters Maddalena (1673–1744) and Teresa (1679–1767) Manfredi, and Teresa (1693–1732) and Angiola (1703–1735) Zanotti (Chapter 2). Their collective work on the translation from Italian into Bolognese of the poem *Bertoldo con Bertoldino e Cacasenno*, in *ottava rima*, and from Neapolitan into Bolognese of Giulio Cesare Croce's *Pentamerone*, respectively published in 1740–1741 and 1742, offered a crucial contribution to the codification of the Bolognese dialect, becoming a model for all subsequent works of this kind. In light of the pervasive restrictions placed upon women's scholarly expression in the field of language studies, translation therefore became at times a means for women to channel their scholarship in the field in a less direct and therefore more acceptable manner that did not seem to invade 'male' preserves. In early twentieth-century Japan, many of the attempts by novelists to experiment with different ways of writing involved translating Western vernacular stories into Japanese (Chapter 15). The linguistic choices made by Wakamatsu Shizuko (Matsukawa Kashi) (1864–1896) in her vernacular style were already acknowledged in her own time by male critics, despite their evident prejudices against women, and have been more recently hailed as having had a direct impact on the development of a modern written language for Japanese prose fiction.

In China (Chapter 16), evangelization activities required an important effort of translation of the Gospels into the local vernaculars, in which Chinese women and Western missionary women actively collaborated. Translation of the Bible also implied the need to develop the Latin letter transcription of Chinese vernaculars. The American missionary Adele Marion Fielde (1839–1916) served for twenty years in China, teaching in the southern part of the country, at the Baptist mission of Swatow (*Shàntóu*). Fluent in the Shàntóu vernacular, she compiled primers to teach the language, which included also sections on the tones, the use of Chinese characters, and Latin letter transcription.

7.7 The role of women in language documentation, preservation, and folklore

In our exploration of women's contribution outside institutionalized contexts, we should not overlook the work of Indigenous women, notably in the interpretation and documentation of their native languages. In American Indian linguistics, beyond formal academia, a number of women played an important role in the history of Indian-European contacts, as interpreters and linguistic mediators; two well-known examples are Pocahontas in the seventeenth century and Sacajawea in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries (see Chapters 12 and 13). Native and non-native women also directly contributed to the documentation and description of Native American languages, and others translated, interpreted, and taught Indigenous languages. The dominant research methodology of the early twentieth century consisted of usually male linguists or anthropologists visiting places where a local language was to be recorded and studied. Women would act as consultants when they were among the very last speakers of a language or, more rarely in the period under consideration, when the scholars they worked with were women. A number of native women, such as Ella Cara Deloria (1888–1971), were able to make significant contributions to the study of their language, collecting notes, and publishing or co-publishing works. Their manuscripts and correspondence often remain unpublished, although they undoubtedly deserve to be made more readily available.

At times, besides limited education—and the resulting lack of those skills needed to record languages—restricted financial means, the demands of family, as well as societal expectations and prejudices, women also had the extra disadvantage of being remote from centres for research and people with similar interests. This is the case of colonial women in Australia (Chapter 14). The few who were able to make a contribution focused on language study, translation, ethnography, or language teaching. Some women settlers, with support from their male relatives, were able to record, often in letters and journals, words and names for Aboriginal people, having had the opportunity to talk with Indigenous Australians. They also collected and shared their notes and research in the forms of vocabularies, novels, and legends. Collaborations with fathers and husbands sent to Australia in an official capacity also led to records of words and sentences. If some women compiled other people's writings on Aborigines and their languages, others offered their own more systematic linguistic and cultural assessment of the local languages and populations that were later published with the support of the local government. In Africa (Chapter 19), the wives of some Protestant missionaries assisted their husbands in their linguistic research. Some missionary societies would also send women in their own right, training them to become teachers or nurses. Some, thanks to the education they had received in their home countries, were able to focus their attention specifically on the production of grammatical sketches, glossaries, manuals with exercises and conversational sentences for the benefit of other missionaries, as well as of translations of the Bible into the local languages with the assistance of native speakers.

Also active outside institutionalized contexts were those women who worked as collectors of language in the Celtic-speaking world (Chapter 11). From as early as the second half of the eighteenth century, female scholars compiled and preserved oral or manuscript material that was felt to be in danger of being lost to posterity. Some, taking advantage of the role played by music in female education, collected, alongside the tunes, the words of traditional songs. Preservation of language and interest in the folklorist and musicological aspects of the traditional songs often went hand in hand with political aims, such as the support for Irish nationalism, with some women taking on the additional role of language activists.

The difficulty in recovering women's contribution to linguistics, as we mentioned earlier, is in part due to the fact that their work has been lost or remained unpublished, and therefore accessible only to a limited number of specialists. In recent years, women's linguistic work has benefited from the creation of digital projects and databases that have made their legacy more widely available. A telling example comes once more from Australia (Chapter 14), and the rich documentation on Aboriginal languages left behind by Daisy Bates (1859–1951), the best-known ethnographer of Indigenous Australia of her time. Bates was a fascinating figure in her own right, with an adventurous life that saw her first leaving Ireland for Queensland, then travelling back to England, without her husband and son, to become a journalist in London, before finally returning to Australia to devote her life to the study and dissemination of Aboriginal societies and culture. Whilst she lacked a formal training in linguistics, anthropology, and folklore, Bates was able to rely on her intelligence, passion, wide reading, and clear skills as a writer. After years of fieldwork with local communities, she succeeded in producing an enormous amount of material which, despite her efforts, remained unpublished. In recent years, scholars have started to reevaluate her work and the *Daisy Bates Digital Archive* at the Barr-Smith Library, University of Adelaide, has at last made her writings accessible.

7.8 Women supporting male relatives and colleagues

We have already alluded to the fact that a number of women worked as assistants to male family members or colleagues. An early example from the seventeenth century is furnished by the Bengali woman Sanskritist Vaijayanti, daughter of a Sanskrit pandit Mūrabhatta, who learned Sanskrit from her father and married a well-known Sanskritist, Krişṇanātha (Chapter 17). She was proficient in the Vedic ritual theory of Mīmāṃsā, and was known to have corrected her husband's grammar and textual interpretations from time to time. Working in a very different context in the second half of the nineteenth century, Lucy Catherine Lloyd (1834–1914) assisted her brother-in-law, the German linguist Wilhelm Bleek, over a period of thirteen years, becoming his most important collaborator. Together with Bleek, Lucy Lloyd was the creator of the nineteenth-century archive of ǀXam and !Kung texts (later called the Bleek and Lloyd collection, today the Digital Bleek and Lloyd), which is an invaluable resource for linguists working on Khoisan languages (Chapter 19).

If Lucy Lloyd's contribution is duly celebrated, in many cases, especially in the case of wives supporting husbands, their work remains largely uncredited. Carobeth (Tucker) Laird (1895–1983), discussed in Chapter 13, was the wife of the American linguist and ethnologist John Peabody Harrington, who documented numerous languages, especially the Indigenous languages of California. A year after taking a course with Harrington in 1915, they were married, and she became his full-time assistant, collaborating with him on all aspects of his fieldwork, but receiving little or no credit for it. The problem of a lack of recognition for women did not disappear even when they began to break into more institutionalized contexts. The case of Mary Haas (1910–1996), also discussed in Chapter 13, who was once married to the prominent linguist Morris Swadish, is a telling example. In order to support her fieldwork on Native American languages, Haas considered getting a teaching certificate to teach in public schools in Oklahoma, but as a married women she was unlikely to obtain such a position. Haas asked Swadesh for a divorce to allow her to pursue her career. On her death, Klara Collitz (1863–1944), perhaps the first woman to follow a traditional academic pathway and enjoy a career of sorts in German philology (Chapter 7), left an endowment to fund a Hermann and Klara H. Collitz Professorship for Comparative Philology. For decades, however, the chair was known simply as the Hermann Collitz chair, before the name of the woman who actually endowed it was restored in the 1990s.

Women often accompanied their missionary husbands on their overseas travels. When Cinie Louw (1872–1935) followed her husband Andrew to South Rhodesia (today Zimbabwe) to work on the Morgenster Mission, she learned the local language, Karanga, a Shona dialect, and became a fluent speaker (Chapter 19). Their translation of the Bible into Karanga, published in 1919, was a joint effort, which was preceded, just a few years earlier, in 1915, by her 397-page manual of the Chikaranga Language. This text, according to the leading Banthu languages specialist of the day, Clement Martyn Doke, comprised 'the best grammatical sketch of any Mashonaland language' published up to that point.

In the field of Celtic Studies, a number of women actively contributed to the preservation and promotion of Celtic languages alongside male scholars, assisting them in a number of roles, as journal editors and co-editors, philologists, teachers, translators, and unacknowledged co-authors. They also participated in the long-term project of the *Dictionary of the Irish Language* (Chapter 11). Male scholars shared their interests with daughters and other family members, involving them in their projects: the native Gaelic speaker Elizabeth Catherine (Ella) Carmichael (1870–1928), for instance, assisted her father, the folklorist Alexander Carmichael, in editing his well-known *Carmina Gadelica* (1900; *Gaelic Songs*), as the acknowledgment included in his introduction to the first volume testifies.

In Sweden, the collaboration between Valborg Olander (1861–1943), a Swedish-language teacher and the best-known female author of early Swedish grammars, and Gustav Cederschiöld, a Gothenburg professor, was a fruitful and productive one: starting from 1896, they published a number of grammatical works, mostly aimed at primary-school pupils, that reveal a rather modern approach to the differences between spoken and written language (Chapter 9).

Other women's linguistic work has been neglected for a long time, overshadowed by the apparent achievements of the men with whom they collaborated and who reaped the benefit of their efforts. A case in point is the young Chiri Yukie (1903–1922) who helped codify the oral tradition of the Ainu people of Hokkaido in northern Japan. Her bilingual and bicultural knowledge allowed her to collect a wide range of oral performances, thus preserving them for posterity, but also making them accessible by translating them into Japanese. Her invaluable work, nonetheless, as well as the data provided by other Ainu speakers, ultimately ended up promoting the career of a prominent, male academic who then went on to be awarded the Imperial prize for his work on the Indigenous language.

7.9 Women breaking into institutionalized contexts

Before women were able to gain access to academic posts, it was difficult for them to enter institutionalized contexts. A notable exception, discussed above, is the Russian Imperial Academy. Even when they were officially excluded from official institutions such as universities and academies, some women still managed to play a role in their work. In Italy (Chapter 2), for instance, Caterina Franceschi Ferrucci (1803–1887) was the first woman to be admitted, on 13 June 1871, to the Accademia della Crusca, the oldest linguistic academy of Europe, as a corresponding member. Carolina Coronedi Berti, mentioned earlier, was invited in September 1874 to join the renowned and well-respected Commissione per i testi di Lingua (Committee for the Publication of Texts on the Italian Language) founded in 1860.

When institutionalized contexts still excluded women, in spite of their advanced studies and formal training, certain women nevertheless managed successfully to create other scholarly settings in which they could pursue their interests at the highest level and gain recognition. Elisabeth (Lis) Jacobsen (1882–1961) came from an upper-class Jewish family of Copenhagen. With the support of her husband, the philologist and cultural historian Jacob Peter Jacobsen, she was able to pursue her intellectual aspirations, embarking on a research career and becoming in 1910 the first Danish woman to gain a doctorate in Scandinavian linguistics, with a dissertation on the history of the Danish standard language (Chapter 9). Yet, no university positions were available for her at the time. Undiscouraged, Jacobsen went on to create a scholarly milieu where she could fruitfully employ her skills, founding in 1931 Det danske sprog- og litteraturselskab (The Danish Language and Literature Society)—of which she was the President until 1951—while actively and energetically conducting her own research and publishing a range of important scholarly works.

At times, women managed to enter more institutionalized contexts through the experience they first gained in other contexts. In the US, missionary work created opportunities for women that would not otherwise have been open to them (Chapter 12). As an institution, the Summer Institute of Linguists (SIL) mirrored the general reluctance to support women's ambition and independence. Nonetheless, SIL missionary linguists, with the unusual freedom they had, apparently played an important role in advancing women's participation in language studies which then seems to have spread into the discipline of linguistics in the early twentieth century, clearing a path for and raising the profile of American women as language scholars.

While still remaining within the limits of what was considered acceptable for them, these first achievements gave women the opportunity to take the first, small steps needed to break into institutionalized contexts. However, as we hope this volume will show, contributions to the development of a discipline can be made well beyond formally recognized institutions, and in the case of women are very likely to exist outside 'man-made' contexts and institutions that for a long time ignored and deliberately excluded them. Which is why the work achieved by women within the history of linguistics, as in other disciplines from which they were marginalized, is even more worthy of our attention: what has emerged from the work conducted for every chapter in this volume, across all cultures and traditions, are also the individual, personal stories of these women, whether they are well known or not. Each chapter includes remarkable tales of determination and commitment to overcoming the obstacles, prejudices, and constraints they had to face. The overwhelming majority of these women were not in search of official recognition, but rather worked for the sheer love of the discipline—often without even being fully aware of the existence of a 'discipline' as such—for the benefit of others, and simply for the pleasure of learning.

8. Future perspectives

The richness and variety of the chapters included in this volume pave the way for future research in the field of women and linguistics. Much remains to be done, not least on the twentieth century. There are manuscripts to be discovered and pseudonyms to be deciphered. There are women who have yet to find their place in the traditional male canon of linguists. We hope scholars working in traditions not represented in this volume will be inspired to take up the challenge to find the distant and neglected women's voices in their area.

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1

Visible and invisible women in ancient linguistic culture

Anneli Luhtala

1.1 Introduction

Philosophy was the branch of knowledge from which all intellectual inquiry originated in the Western tradition, including discussions on the nature and use of language. The Greek philosophers from the seventh century BCE on were concerned with such issues as the nature and origin of gods, the natural versus conventional basis of laws and other human institutions, education, the best way to govern society, and the proper forms of rhetoric to be used in political discourse. They also raised questions concerning the nature of the soul, whether it ceased to exist together with the body or was immortal, whether women's souls differ from men's, and whether all people are capable of attaining virtue and happiness, the ultimate goals of moral philosophy.[1] As regards language, the natural versus conventional basis of name-giving was one of the earliest preoccupations of ancient philosophers, and the first grammatical treatise, Plato's *Cratylus*, is devoted to this topic.[2] In Aristotle's early logical and metaphysical texts, the *Categories* and *On Interpretation*, the categories of human language, such as the noun and the verb, are related to ontological categories and to the human mind.[3]

We do not know women's answers to many of these questions, although most philosophical schools in antiquity had some women among their members and they probably shared the views of their teachers. Women were involved in all aspects of philosophical inquiry, natural philosophy, ethics, and logic, although the specific views they held are not recorded. The earliest Pythagorean women philosophers discussed the nature of the soul, the relationship between women's and men's virtues, and moral and social aspects of women's roles in marriage, religion, and the community (Waithe 1987; Pomeroy 2013). They probably also

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[1] On early Greek philosophy, see Long (1999).

[2] Such treatises established themselves as the foundational texts of Western linguistics, see Sedley (2003).

[3] For scholarship on Aristotle's early works on logic, see Kneale and Kneale (1962: 23–4), Ackrill (1963), Arens (1984), and Struck (2004: 59–63).

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shared their school's preoccupation with etymological analysis, and regarded names, together with numbers, as one of the avenues for exploring reality. A woman philosopher, Aspasia (d. 401 BCE), associated with Plato's Academy, used her rhetorical skills in the centre of political life in Athens, and daughters of philosophers became the successors of their fathers in minor philosophical schools, such as the Cyrenaic and Cynic (see Waithe 1987). In late antiquity, Hypatia (b. 370/375 CE) became the head of the Academy, at that time the most important philosophical school, following in the footsteps of her father Theon of Alexandria. She was one of the few women in antiquity who would be familiar with the most advanced language theories of her day, since the Neoplatonist school in late antiquity had integrated the foundational texts of language and logic composed by Plato and Aristotle into its curriculum. However, these were exceptional women, privileged by birth and social status, often born into philosophically inclined households or married to philosophers. The norm for respectable women was to be married and produce children and to practise their virtue in the traditional role of wife and mother. Women did not normally go out into society with their husbands; their proper domain was the *oikos* ('household' and 'family'; Blok 2001: 100). The only social events in which women played a significant part were religious festivals, weddings, and burial rituals: women said prayers and sang hymns and other songs to honour the goddesses, and girls' choirs performed (Stehle 1997: 72; Blok 2001: 112–15). Although several aspects of women's lives have been researched, to date there has been no distinct study on their contributions to the ancient study of language.

The study of literature and language skills formed a crucial part of ancient education, when educational institutions began to establish themselves in the fifth century BCE (Beck 1964: 169–70). The teacher expounded the works of the great poets containing descriptions of ancient heroes and famous men, worthy of imitation, and to be learnt by heart (Plato *Protagoras* 325e–326a). Girls generally only participated in primary education and, if they progressed further, it was normally through private tuition (Clark 1993: 135, see below). If girls did receive primary education, their curriculum was the same as for boys, except that girls did not practise gymnastics (Pomeroy 1984: 60). Many ancient women were well read in both Latin and Greek literature, but they generally lacked training in formal rhetorical skills (Gagarin 2001: 166). All the same, we know of brilliant figures, such as Aspasia and Hypatia, who received higher education and even taught philosophy (largely in private houses), poetry, or theology, and gained renown for their rhetorical and literary skills.

In Greek thought, the possession of speech, *logos*, was a characteristic property of human beings, intimately associated with rational thinking (Aristotle *Rhetoric* Book 1, 1355b1–2). It is this quality which enables men to form households and civic communities (Aristotle *Politics* Book 1, 1253a9; Gera 2003: 36–7). In philosophical discussions, rationality and speech had to do with the quality of the soul, which for Aristotle was fully autonomous in a free-born male human being. In Aristotle's view, the souls of women, children, and slaves lacked full autonomy, and therefore the man should have authority over them in the household (*Politics* Book 1, 1254a22–33; see Osborne 2007: 128–30). Speech was also an important cultural marker which served as a criterion for distinguishing between societies. Starting with the *Iliad* (Book 3, 1–7; Book 4, 433–8), the incomprehensible speech of foreigners was often compared to animal sounds in Greek literature, and their speakers tended to be regarded as culturally inferior barbarians. Indeed, in Greek anthropological thinking, evolution of language and society were closely associated (Gera 2003: 2–3, 6). In Greco-Roman culture only Greek and Latin were regarded as civilized languages based on reason (*logos*, *ratio*), which implied that only they could be described by means of rational (i.e. grammatical) rules.

In earlier, mythological accounts the emergence of human speech was presented as a punishment, akin to illness and old age; in fact, the use of language was among the features of the new human culture which resulted from the separation of men from the immortal gods. During the Golden Age, as depicted in Hesiod's (*c.*700 BCE) *Works and Days*, men lived like gods without toil or grief, enjoying the good things spontaneously produced by the earth (109–26). When the Golden Age was followed by the ages of silver, bronze, and iron respectively, human speech was introduced, together with such things as fire, sacrifice of animals, marriage, sexual reproduction, and agriculture (see Gera 2003: 46–9). These achievements were attributed to Prometheus and Pandora, the latter presumably being the first to possess a form of mortal speech (*Works and Days* 59–68). She brought countless woes and diseases to mankind (94–104), and Hermes, the messenger of the gods, placed 'lies and guileful words' in Pandora (77–80). Human speech contained many lies, and men could no longer rely on speech being limpid, transparent, or truthful (Gera 2003: 54–7). As a result, men had to strive to examine and resolve its ambiguities.

It is undoubtedly significant that Pandora, the bringer of evils—including deceptive language—was a beautiful woman. Women's speech was thought to be particularly crafty, seductive, and dangerous, an outstanding mythological example being the sirens (*Odyssey* Book 7, 245; 9, 32; see Nagler 1996: 148–9). It was also regarded as ambiguous. The voice of Helen of Troy was multiple and layered, and she was depicted as a dangerous figure, capable of deceit (Worman 2001: 20). The nine Muses, the patrons of poetry, were represented as being capable of two contradictory speaking modes, those of truth and deception, which parallel the two kinds of discourse attributed to women throughout Greek tradition (Bergren 2008: 14). Ambiguous speech was also characteristic of Pythia, the famous priestess of Apollo at Delphi. Prophetic language was generally regarded as ambiguous in Greek literature, but a number of scholars have pointed to a persistent link between ambivalent speech and the female sex (Detienne 1967: 79; Bergren 1983: 71). Weaving, the defining element of women's activity in antiquity, was also construed metaphorically, as pointing to cunning, trickery, and deception. Both poets and prophets adopted this metaphor, describing their activity as weaving or sewing words (Bergren 1983; McClure 2001: 5).

Many common prejudices concerned the inferiority of women and their intellectual capacities. According to Aristotle, the female body differs from the male because it has a lower level of vital heat. As a result of the greater coldness, women are inferior to men in their intellectual and moral capacity and unable to keep desire fully under the control of reason. Some Hippocratic texts (see Allen 1985: 46–52) and the pre-Socratic philosopher Parmenides (*c.*539–500 BCE) advanced the view that women in fact possessed much heat (see Allen 1985: 24–56), and this view was also held by Plutarch in the second century CE (*Table Talks* Book 3, 4, 1–3 651a–c). Misogynistic attitudes were also expressed by Theophrastus (*c.*287–*c.*371), Aristotle's most famous pupil, who thought that women should receive training in letters only to the extent that it would be useful to them for household management. Further study would make them lazy in regard to their other responsibilities, as well as garrulous and officious (fr. 662). Similar prejudices were also promoted by some school exercises disparaging many aspects of women's lives, including education—as in, for instance, the following maxim by Menander (*c.*342–*c.*290 BCE), whose plays were popular in schools up to the time of the Byzantine Empire (fr. 70 ed. Körte): 'The man who teaches a woman letters is making a mistake, he is giving extra poison to a frightening snake'. According to Pericles, the prominent statesman, 'great is the glory of women, of whom there is least talk among men whether in praise or in blame' (Thucydides *The Speeches of Pericles* Book 2, 45, 2).

Plato saw no difference between men's and women's souls in attaining intellectual and moral virtues (Allen 1985: 57–61), and this view was adopted by the Stoics. However, Aristotle's position became the standard, being adopted by Christians, although many early Christian communities maintained highly egalitarian values. In the earliest Christian communities, women assumed roles as tutors, but their roles were gradually restricted by men who invoked the words of Saint Paul: 'I do not permit a woman to teach' (1 Tim. 2:12).

1.2 Education in Archaic (700–500 BCE) and Classical (480–330 BCE) Greece

In Archaic Greece, the ability to learn was regarded as an inherited trait of aristocrats and other nobility. With the arrival in the middle of the fifth century BCE of the Sophists, travelling professional teachers of rhetoric, teaching became available to anyone who could pay their fees, regardless of inherited social class (Beck 1964: 158–62; Joyal et al. 2009: 6–7, 32). These travelling intellectuals offered a kind of higher education that focused on language skills, rhetoric, and argumentation (Beck 1964: 154; Clarke 1971: 12, 28). In democratic Athens greater numbers of individuals took part in political life and needed to be taught how to compose elegant and persuasive speech to be used in assemblies and law courts. Practical study of model discourses by renowned masters and constant practice of making speeches were at the heart of the teaching of rhetoric in the rhetoricians' schools (Beck 1964: 167–9).

The study of language and literature constituted a fundamental part of a child's upbringing (Beck 1964: 166–72), when schools began to emerge in Athens and other Greek cities in the fifth century BCE. At that time the curriculum generally consisted of physical training (*gymnastike*), music—which included singing, dancing, and playing the lyre—and letters (*grammata*); the last involved reading, writing, and the study of literature, especially Homer and the tragic poets (Beck 1964: 166–72; Joyal et al. 2009: 31). In Greek society, primary education began at the age of 7, being imparted either in public schools or by a hired tutor. It was largely restricted to boys from wealthy families, who could go on to secondary education at the age of 14; it involved training in rhetoric, natural science, geometry, astronomy, and meteorology (Clarke 1971: 1–2). At the age of 18 young men would participate in military service, after which they could choose to pursue higher studies, for instance in a school of philosophy.

Girls normally received their primary education at home, but archeological evidence suggests that at least some girls attended school outside the home. From the middle of the fifth century BCE we commonly find depictions on Athenian vases of women reading from scrolls, and some paintings depict girls on their way to school. If they wanted to participate in secondary education, they normally did so through private tuition. Women did not receive formal rhetorical training, because women's lives lacked the objective of this education, that is, a role in society as a public speaker or lawyer (Hemelrijk 1999: 20–2). In Aristophanes' (*c.*446–*c.*386) *Assemblywomen* (110–245), women's ignorance of rhetorical skills is parodied. In this comedy, women are taught how to speak in an assembly. One woman, Praxagora, already knows how to speak in public and explains that she had learnt it by overhearing speeches given in the assembly (Gagarin 2001: 166). Although these ideas are expressed by fictional characters, it is fair to assume that women did learn male public discourse by listening and imitating it. In *Lysistrata* (1126–7), the eponymous character reports having learnt her skills by listening to her father's conversation with his friends. Since women did not receive rhetorical education, their speech would have little or no authority in a public context (Gagarin 2001: 176).

Poetry was the principal literary form in Greece in the sixth and fifth centuries BCE. Some twenty female poets are known from antiquity, fourteen of whom come from the Greek-speaking world, and a few of them from the Archaic period. The most famous of them was Sappho (b. *c.*630 BCE), a teacher of young women and a lyric poet, who lived on the island of Lesbos in the late seventh or early sixth century BCE. Sappho's school was a religious fellowship, in which the girls were educated in dancing, musical performance, and singing (Beck 1964: 127). The study of music which accompanied the study of poetry was thought of as creating harmony in children's souls as well as self-control—a fundamental virtue in ancient society (Kaster 1988: 15–18). Because the poetic genres pursued by women were intimately associated with religious festivals and rituals, they included prayers and ritual formulations, such as prophecies, curses, supplications, and chants. Religious festivals, such as the one in honour of Demeter and her daughter Persephone celebrating human and agricultural fertility, also involved ritual obscenity and were accompanied by shameful talk. Such speech, which involved mocking invective, sexual joking, and 'unspeakable' expressions normally forbidden to women, challenged the silence and restraint normally imposed on them while simultaneously threatening to disrupt the normal social and political order (McClure 1999: 47).

1.3 Women poets from Archaic and early Classical Greece

In describing the world of women from a female perspective, Sappho's poetry consisted of short stanzas in a variety of metres using her own Aeolic dialect. Her poems were probably performed in a private context, that is, they were sung to her own accompaniment on the lyre, the audience being a small circle of women friends and pupils (Campbell 1985: 202). The themes and genres of her poetry—love and choral poetry, laments, wedding songs, hymns to goddesses—were closely related to situations where women spoke in public, including prayers to female goddesses, laments, and praise of young brides, and provided a model of imitation for several later female poets. Sappho was called, by Plato and others, 'the tenth Muse', and was included in the canon of nine lyric poets or 'mortal Muses' established in Hellenistic Alexandria.

Another renowned female poet, also included as a tenth Muse in the Hellenistic canon of the nine 'mortal Muses', was Corinna (*Anthologia Graeca* Book 9, 26; Barnard 1978: 204), a public poet who wrote for weddings, funerals, and women's religious festivals and ceremonies, that is, as mentioned earlier, the festivals and family occasions in which women played significant roles (Vos 2014: 420). She is reported to have been the teacher of the famous Theban poet Pindar and to have defeated him five times in a poetry competition (Pausanias *Description of Greece* Book 22, 2–3). She had criticized Pindar for not introducing myth into his poetry and for using unusual and obsolete words (Plutarch *On the Fame of the Athenians* 4, 348a), but her victory over him was diminished by attributing it to her beauty and her use of the simple literary dialect that appealed to her townsmen.

Some of the women poets became known not only for their art of poetry but also for entering into distinctly male areas of society. Telesilla (*fl. c.*450 BCE) from

Argos became renowned for her heroic role in the leadership of Argos through a military crisis, and Cleobuline of Rhodes (*c.*570 BCE), the daughter of the philosopher Cleobulus, one of the 'Seven Wise Men', was praised as a 'wise and far-famed' woman with 'a statesman's mind' for having influenced her father to rule Rhodes more fairly (Plutarch *The Dinner of the Seven Wise Men* 148d–e).

1.4 Pythagorean women philosophers

Many women philosophers were members of a religious society founded by Pythagoras in the sixth century BCE. The Pythagoreans cultivated study and followed strict rules for life, entailing abstention from flesh, observation of precepts, and rigorous self-examination as the means of purifying the soul. Early Pythagoreans viewed the universe as orderly and harmonious, as being based on a particular mathematical relationship to everything else (Waithe 1987: 12). Pythagoras received his aesthetic principles from a priestess-philosopher, Themistoclea (Diogenes Laertius *Lives of Eminent Philosophers* Book 8, 8), who is otherwise unknown. Pythagoras maintained the superiority of immortal reason in human identity, which may imply a sexless soul; yet he thought that harmony between man and woman depended on women's obedience to the rule of men (Allen 1985: 20–2).

The Pythagorean community involved women as long as it continued to be an active and popular school of philosophy, that is, until the second and third centuries BCE. Of the fifty women philosophers known from antiquity, twenty-six are Pythagorean (Ménage 1984: 93–5). They are the first women in the Greek world whose prose texts are extant, either completely or fragmentarily, and the only ones before the Christian era. Early Pythagorean women included Theano of Crotona, wife of Pythagoras, and their three daughters (Myia, Damo, and Arignote), and among the later philosophers were Theano II, Phintys of Sparta, Aesara of Lucania, Perictione, possibly Plato's mother, and Perictione II (Waithe 1987: 11; Pomeroy 2013: 42). Many of them were authors of philosophical treatises, fragments of which have survived. These women also composed letters of exhortation which, although addressed to individual women, were probably copied and circulated more widely. These letters observed the rules of style which were taught in epistolary manuals such as the anonymous *Typoi Epistolikoi* (Pomeroy 2013: 59).[4] As regards the study of language, we know that the Pythagoreans regarded etymologies as a valid intellectual and exegetical tool in expounding their philosophical and theological ideas; this method would probably also concern Pythagorean women.

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[4] This treatise has been attributed to Demetrius of Phalerum (*c.*350–*c.*280 BCE), but it is dated between 200 BCE and 300 CE probably as a result of modifications during the centuries (Malherbe 1988: 2, 4).

The comic poet Cratinus (second half of the fourth century BCE) parodies female Pythagoreans in his comedies, such as the *Tarentines* and the *Pythagorean Woman*. When they encountered strangers, it was the habit of these women to examine them on doctrines and to confuse and confound them with antitheses, definitions, equations, digressions, and magnitudes (Meineke 1840: 376). This list of abuses shows that these women were not only capable of discussing contemporary ideas of cosmology and the nature of the soul, but were also familiar with some principles of astronomy and geometry. They were also able to apply the fundamentals of the intellectual discipline dialectic, which teaches people how to produce arguments and form definitions, using the basic tools of conceptual analysis, such as genera and species. Natural science, dialectic, astronomy, and geometry belonged to higher education in antiquity. In summary, these women had to master the basic knowledge of the *enkyklios paideia*, a wide general education, which came to be known as 'the Liberal Arts' in the Latin tradition (for *enkyklios paideia*, see Clarke 1971: 2–5; Hadot 1984).

1.5 Women in Plato's philosophical circle

Although Plato is best known for his metaphysical theory of Forms or Ideas, which relates to concepts beyond the material world, he also had a theory of society, which aimed at changing radically the political reality of his time. In fulfilling these aspirations, education played a central role, and it is in the *Republic* and the *Laws* that we come across his most explicit statements concerning education. In the *Republic* (Book 5, 451c–457b), which is among his early dialogues, Plato maintained that men and women should receive the same education—a view that he continued to hold in his later work (*Laws* Book 7, 804d–805b). According to Plato, the practice of excluding women from higher education is irrational, as it leaves half of the potential of the state unused (*Laws* Book 7, 805a). If men can ride, women can also do so, as well as doing physical training in the gymnasium. Platonists and Stoics agreed that men and women shared a common human nature and were equally capable of intellectual and moral attainment. If properly trained, women were as capable of manifesting virtue as men.

The list of students who attended Plato's school during his lifetime included two women, Lastheneia of Mantinea and Axiothea of Philesia. Inspired by reading Plato's *Republic* and *Laws*, Axiothea decided to join Plato's Academy (Diogenes Laertius *Lives of Eminent Philosophers* Book 3, 46; Themistius *Orations* 23, 17, 295c). Ironically, for a long time, she attended Plato's lectures dressed as a man (Dicaearchus fr. 44, ed. Wehrli). However, the only two women who are described as philosophers in Plato's dialogues are Diotima, a priestess from Mantinea, and Aspasia from Miletus (Waithe 1987: 83). One of Plato's dialogues, the *Symposium*, depicts a dinner party at which the guests make a speech about the nature of love (*eros*), and Socrates reports a conversation he has had with Diotima on this subject. Scholars have argued that Diotima, of whom no other mention can be found in any ancient source, is a fictitious person—in fact, the only fictitious character created by Plato.[5] The historicity of Aspasia, the companion of Pericles and mother of one of his children, cannot be questioned. Yet the idea expressed in Plato's *Menexenus* that she had taught rhetoric to Socrates and Pericles has proved most difficult for scholars to accept (Pomeroy 1975: 89–91; Joyal et al. 2000: 39).

Aspasia distinguished herself as a rhetorician in the circle of the Sophists, earning herself the moniker 'mistress of eloquence' and the title of poetess (Suida 1935: I, 387, s.v. Aspasia). She was a foreign-born courtesan who ended up as the consort of Pericles (Pomeroy 1975: 89); the comic poet Cratippus and others called her—less kindly—a whore (Plutarch *Pericles* 34, 3–6; see Pomeroy 1975: 89–90). A funeral speech composed by her and delivered by Pericles, her husband, is the subject of Socrates' conversation in the *Menexenus* (235e–236c, 249d). Plato, who was highly critical of the Sophists, seemed to consider her as representing the misuses of Sophistic rhetoric, that is, to deceive the public, and in this sense she taught rhetoric to him and to Socrates. For Plato and other classical writers, Aspasia, the witty and seductive courtesan, was an example of women's deceptive speech (McClure 2001: 5). Her public trial on charges of impiety shows that she was perceived as a threat. She was acquitted after Pericles came to her defence, because of her public participation in Greek intellectual life (Waithe 1987: 78–80). She is memorialized in a fresco over the portal of the University of Athens in Greece, shown in the company of Socrates, Phidias (the sculptor), Sophocles, Pericles, Plato, and others (Waithe 1987: 75).

Aspasia was one of the several sophisticated women representing less respectable areas of society who occasionally gained distinction for their learning or verbal cleverness (Pomeroy 1984: 53–4). Athenaeus reports that Greek courtesans very often devoted themselves to humanities and mathematics (*Deipnosophista* Book 13, 596f). Leontium, an Athenian courtesan and a friend of Epicurus, is mentioned by Cicero (*On the Nature of the Gods* Book 1, 34, 93), because she had dared to write a book refuting Theophrastus. All the same, he has to admit that she wrote in fine Attic style.

1.6 Hellenistic philosophers and learned women (330–27 BCE)

Women also participated in philosophical groups other than Platonist and Pythagorean, namely the Stoic, Cynic, Cyrenaic, and Epicurean schools. Many of them owed their intellectual achievements to the presence of a father or other male member of the family who introduced them to the male world of higher cultural pursuits. Hipparchia (*c.*300 BCE), the wife of Crates, the founder of the Cynic school, was inspired by his brother Metrocles, who was a pupil of Crates (Diogenes Laertius *Lives of Eminent Philosophers* Book 6, 7, 96–98). Arete of Cyrene (*fl.* fifth—fourth century BCE) was the daughter of Aristippus, who founded the Cyrenaic school some time after Socrates' death. This school of philosophy was among the earliest proponents of hedonism, but its members also applied themselves to the study of logic (Ritter 1838: 88). Arete became her father's successor in that school, and because she taught her son, Aristippus the Younger, he was nicknamed 'Mother-taught' (Pomeroy 1984: 65–6; Waithe 1987: 197–8).[6] Diodorus Cronus (d. 284), who lived at the court of Alexandria, distinguished himself as a dialectician in the so-called Megarian school. In the footsteps of their father, the five daughters of Diodorus equally distinguished themselves as dialecticians, according to Clement of Alexandria (*Stromata* 4, 19).

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[5] For a detailed discussion in favour of her historicity, see Waithe (1987: 83–116).

The art of dialectic, from which the Megarian dialecticians drew their name, represented the summit of ancient rational thought, which provided all the arts with their methodological principles. From dialectic, an ancient scholar would learn, for instance, how to form definitions and divisions, and how to argue rationally. It is also within dialectic that the most advanced language theories were developed in antiquity. The discussion on the nature of language and its relationship to reality initiated in Plato's and Aristotle's metaphysical and dialectical works was developed further by the Stoics, who elaborated their theory of meaning within their logic, dividing it into two components: that which signifies (*semainonta*) and that which is signified (*semainomena*) (see Luhtala 2000: 55–117). We have no evidence of women contributing to Aristotelian and Stoic theories of meaning in antiquity, but it is likely that the five daughters of Diodorus Cronus, who earned themselves the titles of dialecticians, were introduced to the logical and metaphysical theories of their own school. Zeno of Citium, the founder of Stoicism, was a pupil of Diodorus Cronus. Thus, it is possible that the women scholars of the Megarian school were familiar with the more theoretical aspects of ancient language science—an area which generally seemed to fall outside the scope of women's province.

As regards language issues at a less theoretical level, any women who took part in intellectual conversations would probably be familiar with the practice of etymologizing and solving riddles and ambiguities. A concern with the origins of names, of gods, mythological figures, geographical places, and so forth, would also be part and parcel of the female poet's art. Arguments used in speeches and theoretical treatises were frequently supported by etymological analyses of names. We know that etymologies were pursued eagerly by the Platonist, Stoic, and Pythagorean philosophers alike. According to Dillon (1996 [1977]: 181), there was 'a consensus among Platonists, Stoics and Pythagoreans [. . .] that words are attached to things by nature, not by convention'. In this field, Aristotle's view that name-giving was conventional, did not become authoritative. The female dialecticians do not have any theories or points of doctrine to their name, and the only known linguistic work by a woman appears to be a treatise on dialects attributed to Myro, the Rhodesian, who is also regarded as a philosopher in Suida's lexicon (Suida 1935: III, 429, s.v. Myro). She also composed elegiac and lyric verses and wrote a work on women who had been queens, as well as fables. None of her works survive.

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[6] Less well-known women with philosophical interests were Magnilla, daughter and wife of a philosopher, and Phila of Macedonia, who was probably attracted to philosophy through the influence of her son Antigonus Gonatas (Pomeroy 1984: 66). Martialis (7, 69) mentions Theophila (fourth or third century BCE), an Epicurean woman.

Forensic cases sometimes require the presence of women in the court, and women make an appearance in a number of speeches of the Attic orators (*c.*420–320 BCE). The logographers writing these speeches normally keep these women nameless (if they are respectable) and speechless, but occasionally they are given voices, most often in relation to domestic or family matters. In nine cases they express themselves in either direct speech or indirect speech that is very close to direct speech (Gagarin 2001: 162). Gagarin has examined all these instances in order to determine to what extent their speech represents the reality of these voices. The longest of these speeches, *Against Diogeiton*, by the anonymous 'daughter of Diogeiton' in *Lysias* 32, has been used to challenge the traditional view of women's silence and lack of power in society (Walters 1993). It uses a style which is appropriate to forensic discourse and employs 'a full range of rhetorical effects, such as parallelisms, repetitions, anaphora, asyndeton, and direct address of the accused' (Gagarin 2001: 165). Sceptical of Walter's view, Gagarin (2001: 167–71, 176) comes to the conclusion that the speech delivered by the daughter of Diogeiton and the other speeches written in formal forensic style were not composed by the women themselves; it was Lysias who wrote these speeches in the language that was appropriate for the occasion and for the audience. However, in two other passages, women speak in an ordinary, non-technical language, which would seem to correspond to women's everyday speech (Gagarin 2001: 171–2).

1.7 Women's literacy and education in the Hellenistic period

Both literary and non-literary sources lend support to the view that the opportunities for female education improved in the Hellenistic period, especially for the women from elite families. A few Hellenistic cities, such as Teos and Xanthus in Lycia, extended endowments for primary instruction to boys and girls alike, and an inscription excavated from the gymnasium of Pergamum suggests that some girls had won prizes in contests for epic, elegiac and lyric poetry, reading, and calligraphy (Cribiore 2001a: 83–4). Terracotta figurines of schoolgirls looking at a diptych of tablets placed in their lap proliferated across the Hellenistic empire, and there are images of girls on their way to school. Some of the girls wear cloaks which suggests that they went to school outside of their home. Since these figurines were mass-produced and not very expensive, it can be assumed that the activities portrayed on them record the realities of everyday life of even lower middle-class families (Pomeroy 1984: 60). Some funerary monuments also depict girls with reading and writing implements, and girls appear to be receiving instruction from female teachers on a number of sarcophagi; the teachers are regularly interpreted as their mothers. The schoolbooks known as *Hermeneumata* from the Roman period originating both in the Eastern and the Western world from time to time mention female students (Cribiore 2001a: 85–6). All this scattered information is incomplete and lends itself to alternative interpretations, but together with the evidence from the papyri it suggests a substantial growth in female literacy in urban environments, though it was by no means a norm.

Despite women's education being largely restricted to elementary level, it was not uncommon for women to achieve a familiarity with the written word by means of grammatical tuition. Women occasionally acted as scribes, copyists, and even as teachers. Although letters were normally dictated, we also have women's letters written by senders who have differing levels of education. The letters of a certain Herennia to her father Pompeius, which concern mostly domestic issues, betray a superficial level of education, whereas the letters of an otherwise unknown Isidora to Asklepiades reveal a woman in a position of power, who was capable of commanding. In her letters she adopts an imperative and condescending tone and in every letter she urges Asclepiades to 'behave in a manly fashion' (*diandragathein*), using a very rare word, which was possibly part of her personal lexicon (Cribiore 2001a: 92–3; for women's letters, see also Cribiore 2001b: 225–6).

1.8 Language arts: Philology

With the creation of an important intellectual centre in Alexandria, a new literary and scientific community established itself, whose members claimed for themselves the titles of philologists and grammarians. The name of the famous institution, the *Musaeum*, implies that it was a temple dedicated to the Muses, but it included, in addition to the library, a botanical garden and an observatory. The *Musaeum* librarians and scholars undertook the collection of as many books as possible and by providing new editions of literary masterpieces they aimed to save the ancient literary treasures from damage and corruption (Pfeiffer 1968: 87–104). Textual criticism was among their primary interests, and their achievements in

Homeric studies were remarkable. As well as new editions of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, they produced commentaries and monographs on specific Homeric questions. They also engaged in the editions of lyrical poetry, comedy, and tragedy, and pursued lexicographical and etymological work. It is worth noting that although the majority of the work of the outstanding philologists, such as Aristophanes of Byzantium (*c.*257–180 BCE) and Aristarchus of Samothrace (*c.*217–145 BCE), focused on the works of poets, the members of the *Musaeum* also included many scientists, such as Erastosthenes, Zenodotus, and Apollonius of Rhodes.[7] This means that all kinds of texts, not only literary masterpieces, were studied using the philological method.

Several Homeric scholars and poets in Alexandria were women. Diophila is reported as having composed a poem on astronomy in the later fourth or early third century BCE (Pomeroy 1984: 61). Agallis of Corcyra (second century BCE) was a Homeric scholar and the daughter of Agallias, a pupil of Aristophanes of Byzantium. Another Homeric scholar, Hestiaea, wrote a treatise on the Trojan War. The treatises of these philologists have not been preserved, but fifty lines of the treatise on Pythagorean and Peripatetic musical theory written by Ptolemais of Cyrene are extant; she was a Pythagorean woman, who came to Alexandria around 250 BCE (Pomeroy 1984: 161; 2013: 44, 47, 95–8). According to the lexicographer Suida, Pamphila (mid-first century AD) was the author of thirty-three works on miscellaneous topics, including abridgements of histories, a work on controversies, and a work on love (Suida 1935: III, 14, s.v. Pamphile). She was an Epidaurian from Egypt and daughter of Soteridas, a very famous grammarian. Suida calls her ‘the wise woman of Epidaurus’.

It is from the philological study of language and literature that grammar—a discipline which deals with these two fields—gradually differentiated itself and became a subject to be taught in secondary schools in the first century BCE. The *Tekhne* attributed to Dionysius Thrax (*c.*170–*c.*90 BCE), a pupil of Aristarchus, has long been regarded as the earliest grammatical treatise in the Greco-Roman tradition, and as the culmination of philological study in Alexandria. However, only the initial paragraphs of the *Tekhne* (*c.*100 BCE) are today regarded as genuine.[8] In these paragraphs, *grammatike* is defined and its tasks are listed. This description of grammar reflects the work of the Alexandrian scholar poets, who regarded the study of language as ancillary to textual criticism and interpretation:

> Grammar is the practical study of the normal usages of poets and prose writers. Its six divisions comprise: 1. Skill in reading (aloud) with due attention to prosodic

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[7] For Aristophanes, see Pfeiffer (1968: 171–209) and Callanan (1987); for Aristarchus, see Pfeiffer (1968: 210–53) and Matthaios (1999).

[8] On the authenticity of the *Tekhne*, see Di Benedetto (1958, 1959) and the various articles in Law and Sluiter (1995).

> features. 2. Interpretation, taking note of the tropes of literary composition found in the text. 3. The ready explanation of obscure words and historical references. 4. Discovery of the origins of words. 5. A detailed account of regular patterns. 6. A critical assessment of poems; of all that the art includes the last-mentioned is the noblest part. (trans. Kemp 1987: 172)

1.9 Women teachers and grammarians in Hellenistic times

From the first century CE on, we can catch glimpses of female teachers of letters, but our knowledge of them again depends on incomplete and scattered evidence. In the papyri from Greco-Roman Egypt, women occasionally appear with the title *he didaskalos* ('lady teacher') or in a shortened form, *deskale* or *deskalos*. This term usually points to the teacher of elementary letters, unless it is specified that a manual activity, like weaving, is at issue (Cribiore 2001a: 81–3). A Hellenistic funerary monument from the fifth or fourth century BCE found in Cyrene, called *The Tomb of the Swing*, has six metopes narrating a series of events in the life of the deceased woman. The second metope relates to a school environment: a female teacher is depicted in an open-air setting holding a rod and pointing to something while the female 'pupil' sitting in front of her counts on her fingers. If this interpretation is correct, this is one of the earliest pieces of evidence for formal teaching by a woman in the Greek world (Pomeroy 1984: 48–9; Cribiore 2001a: 79).

Although some of the metopes involve items of luxury, it seems improbable that a respectable upper-class woman could occupy a teaching profession in an open-air setting, which was quite common for schools. We know, however, that some women from low social groups and of limited literacy played a role in primary education. Further visual evidence for women teachers is offered by a mummy portrait head of a woman, Hermione, who is referred to as *grammatike*. It is not, however, clear whether this term refers to the woman's profession or to her learning; she certainly came from a wealthy family (Cribiore 2001a: 79). An inscription from the second to third century CE found in North Africa lends additional support to the presence of women teachers. In this inscription a woman called Volusia Tertullina is referred to as *grammatica*, the female form of grammarian (*grammaticus*) (Cribiore 2001a: 79).

Women always played a part in the education of children at home. Eurydice (b. *c.*410 BCE), the mother of Philip II of Macedon and grandmother of Alexander the Great, was one of several women in the Macedonian court who became famous for educational and intellectual attainments (Pomeroy 1984: 59), as is reported, for instance, by Plutarch in *The Education of Children* 14b–c: 'We must [. . .] follow the example of Eurydice, who, despite being an Illyrian and a barbarian thrice over, nonetheless embarked on her own education late in life in order to provide her children with an opportunity to be given instruction'. Erudite women such as

Eurydice provided role models for Hellenistic women and inspired other royal women, such as Arsinoë II (b. 316 BCE) and Berenice III (120–80 BCE), to become active patronesses of learned literature (Pomeroy 2013: 142). Eurydice started a continuous tradition in educating the female members of the Macedonian ruling houses (Pomeroy 1984: 59).

In his treatise *The Education of Children* 6b, Plutarch pointed out that linguistic skills were crucial in the choice of a teacher. The teacher must be a native Greek speaker who is 'sound in character, and distinct of speech, so that the children may not be contaminated by barbarisms and persons of low character'.

1.10 Language arts and education in Rome

The beginnings of literary culture at Rome in the third century BCE owed a great deal to Greek scholarship. The earliest play in Latin was composed by a Greek slave Livius Andronicus, who translated the *Odyssey* into Latin, and Ennius, the author of a historical epic in hexameters and the future national poet, was called half-Greek by Suetonius (*c.*69—122 BCE; *Grammarians and Rhetoricians* Book 1, 1), because he came from the Greek-speaking areas of southern Italy. The great majority of primary teachers were Greek prisoners of war brought to Rome as slaves, and they often became tutors of young children in their households or possibly even in other families. They imparted primary education, which involved the basics of reading, writing, and arithmetic as well as some reading of poetry, as a way of teaching literacy. Thanks to their Greek-speaking tutors, Roman upper-class children were able to learn to speak Greek at home (Bonner 1977: 20–3).

In the second century BCE Greek influences reached Rome through visits by Greek scholars who were free citizens. According to an anecdote reported by Suetonius, the study of grammar was introduced to Rome by Crates of Mallus (second century BCE), a Stoic philosopher, who had been sent to Rome from Pergamum by King Attalus (Suetonius *Grammarians and Rhetoricians* 12). His lecturing in all likelihood concerned the study of literature, including Homer, rather than the study of grammar in the technical sense.

The art of rhetoric, another creation of the Greeks, reached Rome in the second century BCE. When Greek teachers of rhetoric entered Rome, the new learning was not received without tensions, and both rhetoricians and philosophers were expelled from Rome on the basis of a decree by the senate in 161 BCE. The Roman audience was suspicious of the Greek persuasive art and the philosophical argumentation pro and contra. There is no evidence that the *oratores* ('spokesmen') of early Rome had received any formal training, and rhetoric was learnt through a student's careful observation of his elders (Bonner 1977: 65–6). The kind of rhetoric which owed nothing to exercises and textbook rules was called 'natural eloquence' (*naturalis eloquentia*) by Quintilian (35–96 CE) (*Institutio oratoria*

Book 12, 10, 40; see Cicero *On the Orator* Book 1, 4, 14). Despite the opposition, a Latin school of rhetoric was established *c.*94 BCE by Plotius Gallus and was followed by others (Bonner 1977: 71).

The first century BCE marked the beginnings of Roman rhetoric and philosophy, which found their most prolific exponent in Marcus Tullius Cicero (106–43 BCE) (Long 2003: 184–5). Moreover, it is in Cicero's works (*Pro Archia poeta* 1, 2) that we first encounter the Greek educational ideal of the Liberal Arts, which—in their canonical form in late antiquity—consisted of three linguistic and logical disciplines—grammar, dialectic, and rhetoric—as well as four mathematical disciplines—geometry, arithmetic, astrology, and music theory. Here, grammar appears as an independent discipline distinct from philology.

It is only in the first century BCE that treatises began to focus on what came to be the core of traditional grammar, namely the parts of speech. Such is Marcus Terentius Varro's (116—27 BCE) treatise *On the Latin Language*, composed in 44 BCE. Several linguistic treatises by Greek scholars visiting Rome were also compiled in this century. For instance, Philoxenus wrote a treatise, *On the Roman Dialect*, in which he maintained that Latin was a Greek dialect very close to Aeolic. Several treatises were composed on the principles of analogy, for instance, by Varro, Pansa (end of the first century BCE), and Didymus (late first century BCE), all of them bearing the title *On the Latin Speech*. One such has been attributed to Marcus Antonius Gnipho (Suetonius *Grammarians and Rhetoricians* 7, 1), who was tutor in the home of Julius Caesar when he was a boy (*c.*89 BCE). That Caesar himself pursued this topic in his treatise *De analogia* (*On Analogy*) attests to the prominence gained by linguistic issues in Roman society. These treatises are related to the linguistic reforms that aimed at standardization of language with a particular concern for purity and clarity of expression (Garcea 2012: 28, 98–100). The reform was needed, because groups of foreigners with poor language skills had found their way to the new capital of culture and learning. In this reform, analogy, that is, a systematic comparison of the lexical forms of Latin, offered the tools to purify the language of the elements regarded as unacceptable (Garcea 2012: 98–100).

As a result of the Social or Italic War (91–88 BCE), Italy, south of the river Po, began to be united by the common bond of Roman citizenship, and the Roman institutions began to spread to the Italic peoples. Concomitant with this political unification came the ideal of linguistic unification, knowledge of Latin being understood as a precondition for acquiring citizenship (Garcea 2012: 7). As in ancient Greece, language, along with political institutions and laws, was thought to constitute the fundamental feature defining the identity of a people. This linguistic nationalism was characterized by a historical awareness: language reform was needed because contemporary usage represented a decline from the Golden Age, projected onto the second century BCE (Garcea 2012: 8–9). In his dialogue *Brutus* (46 BCE), dealing with the history of Roman oratory, Cicero described some of the orators of the previous century, such as Scipio and Laelius, as expressing themselves in a style that is *purus* ('uncontaminated, unaltered'), innate, and spontaneous. In the Scipionic Age, even uncultured men could acquire this style, if their language habits had not been contaminated by, for example, long stays abroad (Garcea 2012: 57, 98).

Crassus, one of the interlocutors of *Brutus*, maintains that the pure and correct language of the authors of the second century BCE could be achieved by reading and imitating their works, or even by an upbringing in the traditional family environment. Curio is depicted as someone 'completely untutored and unskilled in any one of the liberal arts; he knew no poet, he had read no orator, he had acquired no knowledge of history' (*Brutus* 58, 214). However, he spoke Latin well, as he had been accustomed to uncontaminated speech at his home, having been adopted as an orphan in the house of Scipio (*Brutus* 58, 213–14). Both Cicero and Quintilian emphasize the influence of the language spoken in the family of origin in the development of language skills. Cicero sees women as the custodians of original pronunciation and uncontaminated language, because they are confined to the house and are therefore less exposed to external corruption. This emerges from the following passage, in which Cicero recalls the observation by Crassus of his mother-in-law's pronunciation:

> When I hear my wife's mother Laelia—since it is easier for women to keep the old pronunciation unspoiled, as they do not converse with a number of people and so always retain the accents they heard first—well, I listen to her with the feeling that I am listening to Plautus or Naevius:[9] the actual sound of her voice is so unaffected and natural that she seems to introduce no trace of display or affectation: and I consequently infer that that was how her father and her ancestors used to speak. (*On the Orator* Book 3, 45)

As for ornamentation, the approaches of Cicero and Caesar differ in a significant manner. While Caesar prefers usage that is close to daily speech, avoiding rare or alien words as well as too many tropes, Cicero places more emphasis on the tropes and figures. Caesar's ideal of clarity which is close to daily speech seems to imply that women's ideal use of language comes close to 'natural eloquence'. Emperor Augustus praised the rhetorical skills of his granddaughter Agrippina, who had written memoirs of his father (Tacitus *Annales* Book 4, 55), but exhorts her 'to take care not to write and talk affectedly'. Augustus himself preferred a simple style of speaking and writing. However, it is after all learned women who are praised for their linguistic skills in ancient sources. Agrippina had received an education which involved, in addition to a full grammatical curriculum, an introduction to prose composition, as a preliminary to rhetorical education.

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[9] Plautus and Naevius were third- and second-century-BCE playwrights.

Quintilian points out that both parents ought to be as highly educated as possible. As an example of a mother who was capable of affecting positively the spoken skills of her children, he mentions Cornelia the mother of Tiberius and Gaius Gracchus (*Institutio oratoria* Book 1, 1, 6). Cicero also emphasizes the importance of the language spoken at home for a future orator, likewise mentioning Cornelia as his example:

> It is of great importance what a person hears every day at home, with whom a boy converses, how the fathers, pedagogues, and mother speak. I have read the letters of Cornelia, the mother of the Gracchi, and it would appear that her sons were actually raised not so much in their mother's bosom as in her language!
> (*Brutus* 58, 210–11; Keener 2007: 750)

Cornelia had invited Diophanes of Mytilene, the finest orator in Greece at that time, into their home as tutor in rhetoric to his son, and Blossius of Cumae as his teacher in philosophy (Cicero *Brutus* 27, 104). Thus, women could be influential in the education of their children, for instance by finding them the finest possible tutors. Cicero (*Brutus* 58, 211) also praises the language and conversational skills of Laelia, the daughter of Gaius Laelius, and her two granddaughters, both of whom had excellent spoken skills. Cornelia was an upper-class woman, daughter of Scipio Africanus (the Elder), and wife of Tiberius Sempronius Gracchus who twice served as consul. She became distinguished for her fluency in Greek as well as her excellent style of speaking and writing, and her letters were admired for their style (Cicero *Brutus* 58, 211).

It appears, then, that the eloquence praised in women was an outcome of formal studies, although it may have owed something to natural talent. The notion of 'natural eloquence' had, according to Quintilian, been questioned by some people, who claimed that the only true natural eloquence is the everyday speech which we use when talking to our friends, wives, children, and slaves. Such speech simply expresses our intentions without seeking anything studied or elaborate; anything else is a mark of affectation or ostentation, remote from reality. While admitting that there is some truth in this argument, Quintilian points out that everyday speech is content to indicate the facts without going beyond the correctness of speech, whereas the duty of an eloquent man is also to please, move, and induce feelings in his hearers (*Institutio oratoria* 12, 10, 40–4). It is this latter aspect of eloquence, persuasion, moving, and inducing feelings that apparently did not properly fit into the ideas of female eloquence.

The nostalgic discussion on the natural eloquence which is innate and spontaneous seems to overlook the outcome of the discussions on the acquisition of the various arts since the Greek classical age, according to which excellence in any art consists in three things: natural talent (*natura*, *physis*), theoretical study (*ratio*, *logos*), and practice (*exercitatio*) (Plutarch *The Education of Children* 4a).

1.11 Schools of grammar and rhetoric in Rome

The art of grammar was beginning to establish itself as a discipline distinct from rhetoric, philology and philosophy in the first century BCE. From the late second century BCE on, grammarians began opening their schools in Rome (Kaster 1988: 51–3). Suetonius' treatise *Grammarians and Rhetoricians* gives us an idea of the linguistic topics that the early Latin grammarians taught. They are very similar to those characterizing Alexandrian philology: study of poetry, commentaries, etymological analyses, and interpretation of hymns, legal tracts, and other texts.

From the first century BCE on, girls sometimes took part in elementary and secondary education with boys outside the household. Most upper-class families hired private tutors to teach their children at home, and at least occasionally girls participated in this instruction. For instance, the only daughter of Cicero's friend Atticus received elementary education from a slave tutor; the famous Quintus Caecilius Epirota, a freedman *grammaticus*, taught her grammar and literature (Hemelrijk 1999: 20–2). The two highly learned granddaughters of Augustus received their instruction in letters from the famous grammarian Verrius Flaccus, whom Augustus had hired as their teacher. Augustus insisted that Julia receive traditional education, which included spinning and weaving, but she shared Livia's interest in learning and became known for 'her love of letters and excellent erudition' (Macrobius *Saturnalia* 2, 5, 2; Himeljrik 1999: 22–3). Upper-class girls usually married in their early or mid-teens. This means that their education was completed by that time. Adult married women sometimes received further education (i.e. rhetoric and philosophy) from their husbands, and some women hired Greek scholars in order to be educated or to display erudition. Women regularly accompanied their husbands to dinner parties, theatres, and amphitheatres (Hemelrijk 2015: 10–11), and it is generally thought that upper-class women had achieved the level of education necessary to participate in the intellectual and social life of their husbands.

Because women did not normally take part in higher education in the school of the rhetorician, they were excluded from political life and jurisdiction; in fact, women were prevented from holding public office by Roman law (Hemelrijk 2015: 10). However, in exceptional cases, it was acceptable for them to enter the forum, when they had to defend their interests or those of their relatives in the law courts. If they appeared to have self-interested aims for appearing as public speakers, they would be harshly criticized and could even run the risk of being labelled public women (Hemelrijk 2015: 10–11). Our sources report on five Roman women who used their rhetorical skills in public by giving speeches or composing letters. The most famous examples are Cornelia, mother of the Gracchi, and Hortensia, daughter of a famous orator. The latter had delivered a speech in the Roman Forum in 42 BCE on behalf of Roman aristocratic women protesting against a war tax levied on them during the civil war. Her speech was still preserved and studied in the first century CE (Hemelrijk 1999: 91). Even though women rarely gave speeches in public, they could play a part in public life by giving private advice to a male relative or by exploiting her influence with family connections; this is true of Cornelia as well (Plutarch *Gaius Gracchus* 4, 2; see Barrett 2002: 186–7).

Less well known are the two women mentioned by Valerius Maximus who exhibited rhetorical skills pleading their cases as defendants. He depicts one of them, Maesia of Sentinum, as 'going through all the forms and stages of a defence not only thoroughly but boldly' (*Facta et dicta memorabilia* Book 8, 3, 1). She was acquitted at the first hearing by an almost unanimous vote; because she 'bore a man's spirit under the form of a woman', she was called Androgyne. The other example seems to conform to the negative image of female rhetoric, which combined self-interest and ostentation in the performance. Carfania, wife of the senator Licinius Buccio, wanted to speak on her own behalf, not because she could not find advocates but because she had 'impudence to spare' (*Facta et dicta memorabilia* Book 8, 3, 2). Her litigious manner is said to be a typically female vice. Thus, by 'constantly plaguing the tribunals with barking with which the Forum was unaccustomed she became a notorious example of female litigiousness, so much so that women of shameless habit are taunted with the name "Carfania" by way of reproach' (*Facta et dicta memorabilia* Book 8, 3, 2). Another female rhetorician, Julia Domna, will be discussed below.

Women who received higher education were usually wives or daughters of leading upper-class families. As we saw earlier, Cornelia, the mother of the Gracchi was the daughter of Scipio Africanus, renowned for his philhellenism; she patronized Greek scholars in her villa. Pompey the Great's daughter, Pompeia, was well versed in literature, and it was she who welcomed Pompey by reading aloud a passage of Homer when he returned from the eastern campaign in 61 BCE (Cicero *De officiis* Book 1, 34, 122–3). This means that she was bilingual at the age of 8 or 9 (Hemelrijk 1999: 22). Pompey's fifth wife, Cornelia, is also depicted as a highly learned woman. She was a young girl at that time, and a consul's daughter, who, according to Plutarch, was attractive because of her wide learning. She was knowledgeable about literature and geometry, she played the lyre skillfully, and was accustomed to listen with profit to philosophical discourses (Plutarch *Life of Pompeius* 55). When exhibiting male intellectual virtues, women were often complimented for resembling their father, reproducing their talent or, as in the case of Hortensia, for 'causing her father to live again' (Valerius Maximus *Dicta et facta memorabilia* Book 8, 3, 3). According to Quintilian, Laelia similarly 'reproduced the elegance of her father's language in her own speech' (*Institutio oratoria* Book 1, 1, 6).

One letter has been attributed to Cornelia, mother of the Gracchi (Cornelius Nepos fr. 2), an attribution now regarded as certain (Hallett 2004: 32–4). The style of this letter does not essentially differ from those composed by men of her time. The skill of letter-writing demanded rhetorical proficiency, and the same standards appear to have been used irrespective of the gender of the writer (Hemelrijk 1999: 194–7). Cornelia lived at a time when formal rhetorical training was not yet established in Rome. She may have gained her competence in letter-writing by listening to the teachers she had hired for the education of her sons, or she may have acquired her skills practically through imitating good orators.

Upper-class women were in the habit of writing letters to the male members of the family or more distant relatives on a variety of topics, including politics, finance, the management of property, and family affairs, whereas their letters addressed to female friends and relatives frequently dealt with the everyday life of women. Four such letters between female correspondents have been preserved in the tablets found at Vindolanda at Hadrian's Wall in northern Britain (Hemelrijk 1999: 191). Women and men alike could display their erudition by writing eloquent letters both in Greek and Latin. One such example of upper-class bilingualism was Marcus Aurelius's mother, Domitia Lucilla. When men corresponded with women, they apparently did not keep copies of the women's letters.

1.12 Women's virtues

The traditional female virtues were chastity, modesty, austerity, domesticity, and devotion to husband and children, and the occupations traditionally suitable for women were spinning and housekeeping (Hemelrijk 1999: 60–3; Swain 2013: 339). This view was shared even by Gaius Musonius Rufus (30—*c.*95 CE), a Stoic philosopher, who maintained that women are intellectually equal to men. In one of his *Discourses* he addressed the question 'Should daughters be educated in the same way as sons?', adopting the standard Stoic view that women and men should receive the same education, because they have an equal capacity for virtue. As intellectually equal, they have the ability to use their minds in the same way and, as morally equal, they can exercise self-control and share the qualities of courage and justice (Musonius Rufus *Discourse* IV, 4–5). As regards rhetorical skills, women are supposed to argue differently from men: 'I do not mean that women should possess technical skill and acuteness in argument, which would be rather superfluous, since they will philosophize as women' (Musonius Rufus *Discourse* IV, 94–7; Lutz 1947: 49).

Many essential features of Greco-Roman society were integrated into Christian culture, and married Christian women's lives ideally displayed the same virtues, as had been characteristic of the Roman *matrona*, including modesty, wisdom, piety, moderation, hospitality, and the skill to run a household. However, Christian women could refuse marriage and follow an ascetic life, which brought about new opportunities for them as teachers and deaconesses, for instance. Some exceptional married women transgressed the traditional gender roles by using their intellectual abilities as teachers and leaders of ascetic communities. Such was (Saint) Melania the Younger (*c.*383–439 CE), who lived platonically with her husband Pinianus and established women's and men's monasteries on the Mount of Olives in Jerusalem (Gerontius *Life of Melania* 42–8). Elderly widows were allowed to give some instruction to other women about ethics, faith, and the refutation of idols.

1.13 Standard prejudices towards learned women

The erudition of Hortensia and the two Cornelias conferred social prestige on them, according to contemporary sources. However, Sallust's account of Sempronia, wife of a consul, reveals that this was not always the case. It involves one of the standard prejudices against educated women, namely sexual licentiousness. Sempronia was well versed in both Greek and Latin literature and was also able to compose poetry. These qualities were judged by Sallust as masculine and improper for a respectable matron. Sempronia did not bother about female virtues, modesty, and chastity, and had committed many crimes of masculine daring. Her skills in playing the lyre and dancing were more than was necessary for a decent woman. She was sexually promiscuous, seeking men more often than she was sought by them. Nevertheless, Sallust has to admit that she was 'a woman of no mean endowments; she could write verses, bandy jests, and use language which was modest, or tender, or wanton; *in fine*, she possessed a high degree of wit and of charm' (Sallust *The War with Catiline* 25).

For upper-class men, education provided a platform for competition and an instrument of class differentiation, but not for women, as emerges from Juvenal's sixth satire which presents a caricature of a learned woman conforming to the standard misogynist prejudices. It is addressed to a friend for the purpose of dissuading him from marriage. It is also a satire of Rome's decaying social and moral standards, whereby men allow women to challenge their supremacy. In this work, one of the examples of an undesirable type of wife is a learned woman who penetrates into man's world, the world of knowledge. This fictive woman has an exhaustive knowledge of literature, grammar, and history, and could silence a lawyer or an auctioneer—or even another woman—by giving long monologues on the value of poetry. She is a capable rhetorician, observing all the rules and laws of language and correcting the minor slips of speech of her less-learned friends. This caricature is keen to show off her erudition and to get recognition of her skills (*Satire* 6, 434–56).

1.14 Women philosophers in late antiquity

Interest in philosophy increased during the first Christian centuries, and opportunities for education improved even for women. As a result, at least three women gained prominent positions as heads of philosophical schools and patronesses of philosophy. One such was Julia Domna (b. 170 CE), Roman empress and wife of Lucius Septimius Severus. She devoted herself to the study of philosophy and sponsored a philosophical circle consisting of mathematicians, sophists, lawyers, physicians, historians, and other academicians. Julia was a devoted admirer of all rhetorical exercises (*Philostratus* 127). She promoted the condition of women by restoring a meeting hall for them in the Forum of Trajan and by rebuilding the Temple of Vesta. Julia is said to have chosen suicide by starving herself to death and was deified (Zedler 1987: 117–38).

From the time of Iamblichus (250–325 CE) on, Neoplatonism exhibited a typical combination of religion and theurgic wisdom. Theurgia involves ritual practices intended to invoke the presence or action of the god(s) for the purpose of uniting with the divine. This orientation is also present in the philosophy of the Athenian Asclepigenia, who succeeded her father as head of the Neoplatonic Academy in Athens in 430 CE. Her philosophy was highly syncretic, unifying Platonic and Aristotelian doctrines. Hypatia, mentioned earlier, became the head of the most important scientific institution in the Western world in Alexandria at a time of great political and religious upheaval. She taught geometry and mathematics, astronomy, mechanics, and philosophy. Like Asclepigenia, she combined the study of the works of Plato and Aristotle with Neoplatonist mysteries in her teaching of philosophy. She had the exceptional honour of holding a public appointment funded by the government. This was all the more remarkable because the government of Alexandria was Christian and Hypatia was a pagan. She lived in a time of great social upheaval, and met an early, tragic death: she was stoned to death by a Christian mob. Her excellent mathematical and astronomical works have survived.

Neoplatonist philosophy in late antiquity had integrated some linguistic and logical texts into its framework, so that the starting point of the philosophical curriculum was logic, followed by ethics, physics, mathematics, and theology. Plato's *Cratylus* was included in the texts of logic, attesting to the importance of linguistic topics in late antique philosophy. Although contemporary sources do not report on the linguistic interests of late antique women philosophers, these women necessarily knew the fundamental texts of the ancient philosophy of language composed by Plato and Aristotle and, probably, commentaries on them. It is noteworthy that Proclus, the most famous pupil of Asclepigenia, who was essentially a dialectician, wrote the only commentary on Plato's *Cratylus* (see Berg 2008) that has been preserved to us from antiquity.

The earliest extant complete textbooks on grammar, dating from the late third century BCE, show that several items of logical semantics, borrowed from the philosophical tradition, had been incorporated into their framework. Therefore, at the secondary level of education, pupils learnt not only how to produce correct meaning, the professed aim of grammar as stated in the first part of its definition—'grammar is the art of correct speech' (*ars recte loquendi*, Quintilian *Institutio oratoria* Book 1, 4, 2)—but also how to analyse meaning. In other words, they learnt to identify and analyse ambiguities and implications present in the vocabulary of their mother tongue, such as homonyms, synonyms, and relational nouns. The grammatical manuals were highly methodical, proceeding by definitions and divisions, in accordance with the method taught in dialectic. By rote learning grammatical definitions and by analysing the method used in them, pupils became aware of the basic tools of intellectual inquiry, such as genera and species. Thus, any pupil attending the school of the grammarian would learn a certain number of concepts and distinctions that were relevant for further study in rhetoric and dialectic and careers in public life, for which public speaking and logical reasoning were crucial. The second, 'historical' part of grammar consisted in the exposition of literary texts (*poetarum enarratio*), and some of the textbooks include a section on tropes and figures (for Donatus' two popular manuals on grammar, see Holtz 1981).

1.15 Conclusion

All ancient philosophical schools except the Peripatetic included women members in antiquity, but it was the Pythagorean school that involved most female members. Fragments of prose texts have been preserved to us from archaic Greece, in which the Pythagorean women reflect upon women's virtues and social roles in family and community. This is remarkable, because no other Greek prose texts by women have been preserved before late antiquity. Women even held leadership roles in the Cynic, Cyrenaic, and Platonist schools, but only one of these women, Hypatia, has works to her name preserved to us. The fact that there were no women members in the Peripatetic school (Pomeroy 2013: 42) may have something to do with Aristotle's disdain for women's intellectual capacity, but it is possible that the doctrine of the school itself had less appeal to women than that of the philosophical schools which resembled religious societies. The Pythagoreans and the Neoplatonists had incorporated mystical and religious elements into their doctrine, and religious rituals and mysteries were close to the world of ancient women.

The scientific exposition of the philosophical schools other than the Peripatetic made use of alternative methods of exegesis. The allegorical interpretation of literature and mythology was favoured by Stoics and Neoplatonists alike; Neoplatonists and Pythagoreans assigned major importance to numbers in exploring the ultimate nature of things. All these schools moreover regarded etymologies as a valid tool for exploring reality. Dialectic played an important role in Platonist philosophy, but Plato also favoured the introspective method, which left more room for intuition and self-reflection, which probably appealed to women. It was indeed unusual for women to occupy themselves with purely rational philosophy, that is, dialectic and logic, in antiquity; issues pertaining to moral and natural philosophy were closer to their interests. However, it appears that at least the female dialecticians of the Megarian school were involved in the pursuit of dialectic and, as heads of the Neoplatonist school, Asclepigenia and Hypatia must have been knowledgeable of the most advanced language theories of their time.

We know the titles of some philological works written by women in Alexandria, and the closest we come to a linguistic treatise is the one on dialects composed by Myro. None of these treatises have survived. When independent works on grammar began to be composed from the first century BCE onwards, women's names disappear altogether. Indeed, no grammatical doctrine is attributed to a female scholar in the grammatical works surviving from antiquity. This may be due to the fact that their achievements were not recorded, but several other explanations are possible, such as the cumulative nature of grammatical doctrine. Grammar teachers compiled their teaching materials from the stock of common inheritance, and much of the doctrine remains anonymous. There is also a large number of male grammarians to whom no specific doctrine has been attributed in our sources, and even the most famous ancient grammarian, Donatus, cannot claim that his manual was original. In his treatise on the grammarians, Suetonius fails to mention any doctrine that the Roman grammarians either introduced or followed in their teaching. It is the moral qualities of the teachers that draw the author's attention. However, as regards women grammarians, we do not even have names.

The absence of women may be associated with the development of educational institutions, whereby grammarians became teachers at a secondary level of education. This public profession, originally of low social status, was hardly suitable for a respectable, learned woman. By contrast, the philological treatises were scholarly works composed by upper-class women at a time when grammar was not yet an independent discipline. These women were born into scholarly families, and compiling a philological treatise did not necessarily involve publicity. Thus, it is possible that the absence of women grammarians has to do with the limited roles that free, respectable women had in public spaces, such as the Roman Forum. Since, however, there is some evidence of female grammar teachers from Roman Egypt, it is probable that we would learn more about female teachers in other geographical areas, if comparable source material were available.

Few prose texts were composed by women in antiquity, but we have the names of several female poets who gained renown, and fragments of some of their work have survived. In their poetry, women pursued themes and genres which were closely related to the sphere of their lives, the household and family, or to public speech genres like prayers and hymns to goddesses, laments, wedding songs, and lullabies. Since many of the religious festivals were practised in secrecy, little is known about the content of women's speech on these occasions. The fact that women often wrote love poetry in which they expressed strong emotions reinforced the image of women as highly emotional, giving rise to such myths as Sappho's suicide caused by her passion for Phaon. If women poets entered the male sphere of public performance, they risked being regarded as courtesans or public women.

Women did not receive formal education in rhetoric schools, and we know of only few ancient women who displayed their rhetorical skills in public places. However, when the occasion demanded, they were allowed to defend their family or relatives in court. Therefore, there must have been alternative ways for women to gain adequate rhetorical skills. They could, for instance, have learnt their skills by imitating a male member of a family. Alternatively, women could have studied the basics of rhetoric from the rhetorical textbooks on their own. From the fourth century BCE onwards, such textbooks were available in Greece and, from the first century BCE, in Rome. Many upper-class families hired private teachers to instruct their children in grammar and rhetoric, and not only girls but even grown-up women could profit from their teaching. Furthermore, girls who attended secondary education were familiar with some rhetorical exercises taught in the grammarian's schools. In their grammar teaching they would also have acquired some basic tools for analytical thinking, which had been incorporated into grammars from dialectic.

When speaking in public, women were not supposed to use the ornate style of speech taught in the rhetoric schools and favoured, for instance, by Cicero. Indeed, they were supposed to speak and argue differently from men, not as acutely and without using as many tropes and figures. We may infer from some of our sources that the kind of rhetoric that was suitable for women was limited to 'correctness of speech', that is, to what was taught in the grammar schools in secondary education. The rhetorical ornaments, which were often viewed critically as signs of affectedness and ostentation even in men, were especially unsuitable for women's speech, which was supposed to be natural and plain. It was not acceptable for women to use the skills of persuasion and induce feelings in the audience because of the persistent notion of their cunning and deceptive speech. Thus, women's speech ideally resembled that spoken in the Golden Age which corresponded to the old Roman values, before Rome had become a cosmopolitan centre of learning, and the Latin language had come under foreign influences. It is noteworthy that even many prominent public figures, such as Caesar and Augustus, preferred simple style with scant ornamentation. Thus, the absence of formal rhetorical education was hardly an obstacle for a woman who wanted to gain the skills of public speaking. It was rather the limitations of a woman's social roles that prevented her from appearing in public spaces, and when she did so, it was of crucial importance that she should stick to modesty, women's primary virtue; otherwise, she would be criticized or ridiculed.

Many factors have contributed to the fact that women's achievements have generally not been recorded. It was not appropriate for respectable women to express their own ideas; they should rather leave them to be expressed by men. When women corresponded with men, men usually kept copies of their own letters but not those by female correspondents. Treatises composed by women may not have been widely circulated, which is why they have been lost. Our sources may also intentionally ignore women's intellectual pursuits. For instance, many sources report on the learned women in the household of the Emperor Augustus, such as Livia, Julia, and Agrippina, but in his biography of Augustus, the historian Tacitus gives a very traditional picture of the education of his daughters: they were taught to spin and weave. By ignoring the fact that Augustus had invited the best possible teachers to instruct his children, Tacitus may have wanted to support the traditional family values promoted by Augustus.

It is indeed often indirectly that we learn about the exceptional culture of some individual women. We know of the Pythagorean women's knowledge of dialectic and geometry because they are ridiculed for their learning in a comedy. In one of his satires, Juvenal gives us a description of a fictional Roman woman whose rhetorical skills were exceptional, which seems to imply that such women existed. Our knowledge is obscured by the limitations of our sources, many of which probably shared Pericles' view that the best women are those who neither speak nor are spoken of in public. There is also an upper-class bias: the women who are credited for their learning in our sources, such as the two Cornelias, Hortensia, Julia, and Agrippina, came from famous families, and their fathers or husbands were prominent statesmen. There were probably also outstanding women in less privileged circumstances who remain invisible to us. Given that our sources typically fail to report women's achievements, this chapter has focused on the general conditions of women scholars and teachers rather than their individual contributions to scholarship.