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WOMEN ARCHAEOLOGISTS. A LONG FIGHT AGAINST INVISIBILITY: DOROTHY GARROD, GERTRUDE CATON-THOMPSON, VIRGÍNIA RAU

Ana Ávila de Melo¹

Abstract

Gender Studies in Archaeology and other scientific domains have stressed, over the last three decades, that Women, as much as men, have also developed an important role in all scientific subjects, but the awareness of this fact is far from having the same impact and recognition as the achievements of their male colleagues.

This article wants to emphasize the important work of two Women Archaeologists from the United Kingdom – Dorothy Garrod and Gertrude Caton-Thompson – who developed the main part of their work until the first half of the 20th century. The third case study will present a remarkable Portuguese medievalist – Virginia Rau – who wanted to be archaeologist, but couldn't achieve her aim.

In order to understand the scientific work of these three women, the geographical, social and economic context of their backgrounds will be described, to help understanding their exceptional scientific work.

Keywords: Archaeology, Gender Studies, Dorothy Garrod, Gertrude Caton-Thompson, Virginia Rau

1 – INTRODUCTION

Virginia Woolf asked herself almost a century ago, in an essay, “What is a woman?” and wrote that “I do not believe that anybody can know until she has expressed herself in all the arts and professions open to human skill...” (1931, p. 27). Her words resume the aim of this article – to show how women scientists, and particularly archaeologists had to fight against invisibility and how the increase of Gender and Feminist studies have “rescued” their work from oblivion.

In the last decades, Gender and Women Studies integrate the European and North American universities' curricula, and raised the theoretical debate around the methodologies of feminist historiography. The idea that Women have a different genealogy from that of men has a long tradition in feminist studies. Meanwhile, it is common sense in the domain of Women's History in its initial phase of establishment as an academic discipline. The use of memories and family stories, told by mothers and grandmothers, emerged as a methodology for the Studies of Women in the academic world. According to Andrea Petö and Berteke Waaldijk (2006, p. 17) the idea that the History of Women can be documented through private memories and stories contributed to a reflection on the distinction and hierarchy between the private and the public domains. For the first histo-

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rians, at the turn of the century XX, as the American Mary Beard or the Dutch Johanna Naber (*apud* PETÖ & WAALDIJK 2006, p. 17), the main argument has been that the History of Women was kept invisible because official history described but the public sphere and the History of Women took place, at least most of it, in the private sphere.

Today we can argue, based on facts and documents, that even when Women become social agents and intellectual actors in public domains, their achievements are still overshadowed by the dominant male ideology, and in the majority of cases subject to complete scientific oblivion.

This reality affected all Women who were pioneers in all areas of scientific research. Women Archaeologists, as scientist Women in other domains, were deeply engaged with archaeological research and fieldwork, since the beginning, but they had to fight for the role they played, as their opportunities were not the same as the ones of male archaeologists. Women Archaeologists had to fight for the academic acceptance and the possibility to obtain a University degree.

Since the end of the last century, many articles and books have been published about Women pioneers in Archaeology, the role they played on the development of this science and their forgotten works and personal history. These publications defined new trends on the field of the History of Archaeology, stressing the importance of recovering the biographies and work of all Pioneer Women Archaeologists as means for raising the self-consciousness for all Women Archaeologists in the present “post-modern” society. This was in fact a huge first step.

In this article we will present three case studies of outstanding Women Archaeologists from the United Kingdom – Dorothy Garrod and Gertrude Caton-Thompson – and a Portuguese Medieval Historian – Virginia Rau – who wanted to be an Archaeologist and published several articles on Paleolithic at the beginning of her academic career. Why the choice of these three researchers and not others? The first reason is that all three were interested in Prehistory, both Garrod and Rau knew, in different contexts, the most renowned French Prehistorian Abbé Breuil and Caton-Thompson began her fieldwork in Egypt with Flinders Petrie and Margaret Murray. The fact that all these Women had an academic career, with special emphasis on D. Garrod and V. Rau, was another motive, and the fact that all these three researchers were wealthy, and therefore could continue the research they wanted, in the case of both English Archaeologists. V. Rau, as we shall see, had to change her main research area to Medieval History where she reached an outstanding career, due to the Portuguese Academic context at that time – Archaeology was definitely a male research domain, and even more the Palaeolithic, her main interest.

To understand the contribution of Women in Archaeology it is essential to study their lives, the work they developed, the bibliography about their work and to study the documents in the archives, whenever it is possible, which we did. The contributions of other Women Archaeologists could have been studied, but as we have pointed above, the similarities of the social status and economic contexts of all of these three Women and their main interest in Prehistory was the “link” that lead us to analyse and study these three case studies.

2 – DOROTHY GARROD: A WOMAN BETWEEN MEN IN PALEOLITHIC RESEARCH

For decades, the biography of Dorothy Garrod (1892-1968) was poorly known, and in the academic “milieu” the idea that all her archive was lost was almost a certainty, as no letters, fieldwork notes, paper drafts or photos were known.

In the last decade of the 20th century, while researching the S. de Saint-Mathurin archives at MAN (Musée Archéologique National, Saint-Germain en Laye, France) for her PhD, Pamela Jane Smith found, mixed with the documents of the French Archaeologist, Dorothy Garrod's archive. This was a huge discovery, which led in 1997 to the publication of an article relating this discovery and showing some documents and photos (SMITH *et al.*, 1997). The mixing of these two archives wasn't easy to explain, but two facts were known – both women had excavated together in France, and Dorothy Garrod had many connections with this country (Fig. 1).

Dorothy Garrod was born in Oxford and came from a wealthy family; her father was Regius Professor of Medicine at Oxford University. Both her maternal and paternal grandfather and her uncle were physicians, and her brothers were expected to follow her father and grandfather's career and received a formal education, while Dorothy Garrod, as a girl, wasn't supposed to have a career – by then “even in the most enlightened families, education for daughters was viewed differently from that of sons” (BAR-YOSEF & CALLENDER, 2009, p. 381). Dorothy Garrod went to Newnham College, Cambridge and there she obtained a Second Class degree in History in 1916. After leaving Cambridge, during World War I, she served in the Ministry of Munitions and followed her brothers to France with the Catholic Women's League. She was demobilized in 1919 in Germany and joined her parents in Malta, where her father was the head of war hospitals. There she visited the island's spectacular prehistoric antiquities and in 1921 the family moved to Oxford because Dorothy Garrod's father was appointed Regius Professor of Medicine at Oxford. In Oxford Dorothy Garrod registered for the university diploma course in Anthropology, under the direction of Robert Ranulph Marret. According to her student Mary Kitson Clark, “the determination to be a prehistorian, and particularly in the Stone Age, came over her in one second, like a conversion...” (BAR-YOSEF & CALLENDER, 2009, p. 382).

In 1921, after obtaining her diploma with distinction, Dorothy Garrod got a “Travelling Scholarship” from the Newnham College, Cambridge, and went to France where she met Abbé Breuil, who agreed to take her as a pupil for two years at the Institut de Paléontologie Humaine in Paris. According to Bar-Yosef and Callender “During her two years with the Abbé Breuil, Garrod showed herself capable of sustained intensive work. In this formative age of French prehistory, no chance could be lost to work with the great men who inspired her as they had inspired her tutor. The French prehistorians were a powerful network and Breuil's patronage inestimable. It is a testament to her abilities and the potential they observed in her that they welcomed this still comparatively young Englishwoman in the field” (BAR-YOSEF & CALLENDER, 2009, p. 384). By the end of her stay in France, she had already excavated at Les Eyzies with Denis Peyrony and at La Quina with Henri-Martin, with whose daughter, Germaine Henri-Martin, she became a lifetime friend.



Fig. 1 – Dorothy Garrod at Mount Carmel, Palestine, in 1931. On the left Theodore D. McCown, on the right Francis Turville-Petre. Pitt Rivers Museum Archives, Oxford University (MELO, 2015).

In 1926 the Oxford University Press published Dorothy Garrod's first book *The Upper Paleolithic Age in Britain*, with a preface by Abbé Breuil, who praised Garrod's work (GARROD, 1926a). Dorothy Garrod's first book established her "as a significant figure in British prehistory, and she was ready to begin her own field project. Breuil gave her the opportunity. During a mission to Gibraltar delivering dispatches for his embassy, he had spent a spare hour exploring a Mousterian rock shelter he had found at the foot of the northern front of the Rock, the nearby ruined and picturesquely named "The Devil's Tower." The discovery gave Breuil the right to excavate, but his interests at this time lay more in northern France and England. He therefore suggested that Garrod should take his place" (BAR-YOSEF & CALLENDER, 2009, p. 386).

In November 1925, Dorothy Garrod began the first of three excavation seasons at the Devil's Tower (GARROD, 1926b). In her first season she identified seven layers of archaeological material containing Mousterian artifacts resembling those she had seen at La Quina, in France, when she excavated with Henri-Martin. While she worked there, 27 Neanderthal individuals were recovered during the excavations, and particularly important fragments of a juvenile cranium were also recovered. According to Bar-Yosef and Callender "She resumed digging at Devil's Tower in April 1926. On June 11, a controlled explosion to remove a large rock extending into Layer 4 revealed the frontal bone and left parietal of a human skull in the surrounding travertine. During the final season, in October, Layer 4 yielded a mandible, right maxilla, and right temporal 5.50 meters from the location of the first fragments. Despite the distance, Garrod concluded they all belonged to the same, very young individual, whose skull had been removed and preserved "either as a trophy or in fulfilment of a pious rite." Some features were identical to the juvenile from La Quina, and she concluded that these were the remains of a male Neanderthal child aged about five years. This discovery, on her first major excavation, at once established Garrod in her chosen field of Paleolithic study" (BAR-YOSEF & CALLENDER, 2009, p. 387). In 1928 her work *Excavation of a Mousterian Rock-Shelter at Devil's Tower, Gibraltar* was published by the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland (GARROD et al., 1928) (Fig. 2).

In this same year she went to Palestine to visit Zuttiyeh cave where her former colleague at Oxford, Francis Turville-Petre, had found a human skull, supposedly Neanderthal in 1925. While in Palestine she visited the Shukbah cave in the Wadi-en-Natuf, where four years earlier the Jesuit Père Alexis Mallon had "collected flint artifacts nearby and noticed more embedded with many bones in a mass of breccia inside the cave. Père Mallon waived his own right to the excavation in favour of Garrod (BAR-YOSEF & CALLENDER, 2009, p. 390). The archaeological excavations in Shukbah cave took place from April to mid-June 1928, and Dorothy Garrod had the collaboration of George and Edna Woodbury; they focused on the main chamber, the largest of the cave's three chambers (GARROD, 1928). "Garrod's preliminary observations were published almost imme-

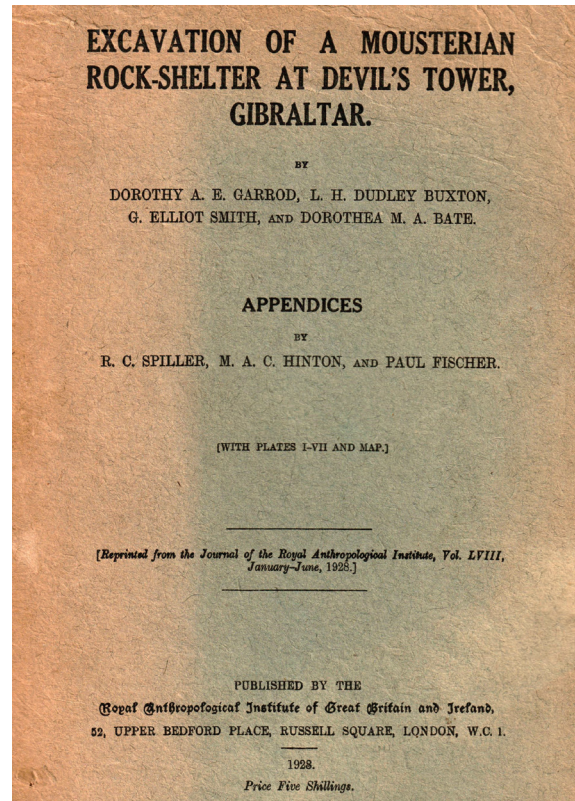


Fig. 2 – Dorothy Garrod's publication of the excavation results at Devil's Tower rock shelter, Gibraltar. Author's Library.

diately after closing the dig, and a fuller description of the burials is given in her later report. The microlithic industry of layer B had been noticed already in Palestine surface deposits, but this was the first time it had been found in stratified deposits. At first Garrod classified it, cautiously, “as a Mesolithic industry of Capsian affinities,” but she later recognized the originality of the composition of this industry, which included sickle blades, lunates and perforators, always accompanied by a rich bone industry. She therefore named it Natufian, after the wadi in which the cave was located” (BAR-YOSEF & CALLENDER, 2009, p. 393-392).

Dorothy Garrod returned home on September 1928 and she was unanimously elected president of the Prehistoric Society of East Anglia for this year and, giving her presidential address in London, in the Society of Antiquaries. This was a crucial year in her career, with the publication of Gibraltar’s excavations and the beginning of her archaeological research in Palestine where she identified the Natufian culture (GARROD, 1932, 1957).

Ernest T. Richmond, Director of Antiquities for Palestine asked Dorothy Garrod to direct and begin excavating at Mount Carmel, which she did, starting in spring 1929. The excavations at Mount Carmel had lasted seven years. Mary Kitson Clark, a young graduate from Girton College, Cambridge that was part of the team since the first season and Jacquetta Hopkins (later Hawkes) give a powerful testimony of the ambiance they lived during the excavations under Dorothy Garrod’s direction. They both recall that, during leisure times, her natural shyness disappeared and she showed her strong sense of humour and gladly discussed music, art and literature. Dorothy Garrod’s final season in Mount Carmel was in 1934, and then she began preparing the huge amount of data for publication.

Dorothy Garrod’s work in Palestine undoubtedly laid the foundations for the study of the Palaeolithic in the Middle East and particularly in Palestine, but she also worked in Kurdistan and she visited the Jisr Banat Yaqub in northern Jordan valley with the geologist Elinor Gardiner, where they found Acheulean bifaces and “the typology and associated fauna convinced Garrod that these were older, probably much older, than anything found in the caves” (BAR-YOSEF & CALLENDER, 2009, p. 401). She identified the famous site Gesher Benot Ya’aqov that has been excavated for the last decades under the direction of the Israeli archaeologist Naama Goren-Inbar.

During her working seasons in Palestine she had the collaboration of the pioneer archaeozoologist Dorothea Bate, who has worked with other pioneer Women Archaeologists, like Margaret Murray or Gertrude Caton-Thompson. Dorothea Bate joined her in Mount Carmel last excavation season in 1934. In 1937 she published the first volume of *The Stone Age of Mount Carmel* (GARROD & BATE, 1937), that “marked a formidable achievement in the prehistory of the Levant ... Hence Garrod’s volume established a new standard for its time. Oxford University recognized this achievement by awarding her a B.S. degree. Even today, the volume is a useful source of information...” (BAR-YOSEF & CALLENDER, 2009, p. 402).

She returned to Cambridge and in May 1939, the accomplished Palaeolithic archaeologist, Dorothy Garrod was elected Cambridge’s Professor of Archaeology – The Disney Chair -, becoming the first woman to hold a Chair at either Cambridge or Oxford. Let us add that the Disney Professorship of Archaeology was created in 1851 and until today, Dorothy Garrod was the first and the only female archaeologist to hold this Chair.

In 1952 Dorothy Garrod, like Gertrude Caton-Thompson before, was elected Fellow of the British Academy, and again like Gertrude Caton-Thompson before her, she presented in 1962 the Huxley Lecture entitled *The Middle Paleolithic of the Near East and the Problem of Mount Carmel Man*. The Huxley Lecture was instituted in 1900 in memory of Thomas Henry Huxley and is the highest honour at the disposal of the Royal Anthropological Institute. It is awarded annually, by ballot of the Council, to a scientist, British or foreign, distinguished in any field of anthropological research in the widest sense. The lecture is normally given at a

special meeting of the Institute in November and is followed by the presentation of the medal, and published by the Royal Anthropological Institute. In 1965 she received the “Order of the British Empire (OBE)” and in 1968 the Society of Antiquaries assigned her the Gold Medal, again becoming the first woman to receive it in two hundred years.

William Davies and Ruth Charles edited a book in her honour in 1999, to celebrate 60 years of her appointment to the Disney Chair. Colin Renfrew, then the holder of the Chair, wrote in the Preface “Dorothy Garrod’s work has a continuing relevance today, which outlives that of many of her contemporaries. It is remarkable, thirty years after her death (and well beyond a century after her birth), that a volume of studies should be dedicated to her memory and to the issues in prehistory which she raised. On reflection it is even more remarkable that her contributions have not been more widely recognised, and that is the first such volume to be published... and so far there are no published biographies devoted to her life and work (where Childe has been subject of at least three)... She illuminated, indeed in some cases she initiated, avenues of research which seem even more clearly today than thirty years ago to address some of the central issues of prehistoric archaeology.” (1999, p. IX).

3 – GERTRUDE CATON-THOMPSON: BETWEEN EGYPT AND ZIMBABWE

Gertrude Caton-Thompson (1888-1985) was born into a well-to-do family, was privately educated and had sufficient means to lead a comfortable life of leisure. But in 1910 she moved with her mother to London and engaged herself as suffragette to fight for British Women voting rights and become joint secretary of the London branch of the association. In 1911 she helped organizing a meeting at the Albert Hall that raised four thousand pounds. She could – and did for a while – enjoy a pleasant life as a wealthy woman, but after working as Arthur Salter’s private secretary in 1919 in the Peace Conference in Paris after the I World War she decided that she wanted to be an archaeologist (DROWER, 2009, p. 351) (Fig. 3).

She had by then decided to train for a career in archaeology, and in the summer of 1921 enrolled in Egyptology classes at University College London with Flinders Petrie and Margaret Murray. She also studied Palaeontology with Dorothea Bate at the Natural History Museum. Gertrude Caton-Thompson’s career as archaeologist began in October 1921 when she joined Petrie’s excavation team at Abydos, Egypt. At that time Egypt’s prehistory was scarcely known, and even the director of the Egypt’s Geological Survey, Dr. Hume, stated “that the Paleolithic did not exist in Egypt” (DROWER, 2009, p. 355), but she found quantities of flint implements of Mousterian date on her way back to Cairo, before she returned to England.

These two first major archaeological excavations paved the path for Gertrude Caton-Thompson’s futures expertise as a major fieldwork archaeologist and a keen archaeological researcher. After she returned to England she went to Cambridge, where she developed her knowledge in areas such as Geology, Palaeontology or Anthropology, which she deemed important to conduct archaeological research in Prehistory.

She returned to Egypt after her three-term stay in Cambridge, and one might say that she had innumerable important achievements during her remarkable archaeological excavations at Badari. She first excavated the tombs with Petrie’s assistants, Guy and Winifred Brunton, but then she decided to look, on her own initiative, for a settlement, which she did at Hammamiya. In 1928 the British School of Archaeology in Egypt published Gertrud Caton-Thompson and Guy Brunton’s *The Badarian civilisation and predynastic remains near Badari* that presented the results of their work in the Badari region (BRUNTON & CATON-THOMPSON, 1928) (Fig. 4).



Fig. 3 – Gertrude Caton-Thompson, Cambridge, 1938. The Royal Anthropological Institute (MELO, 2015).

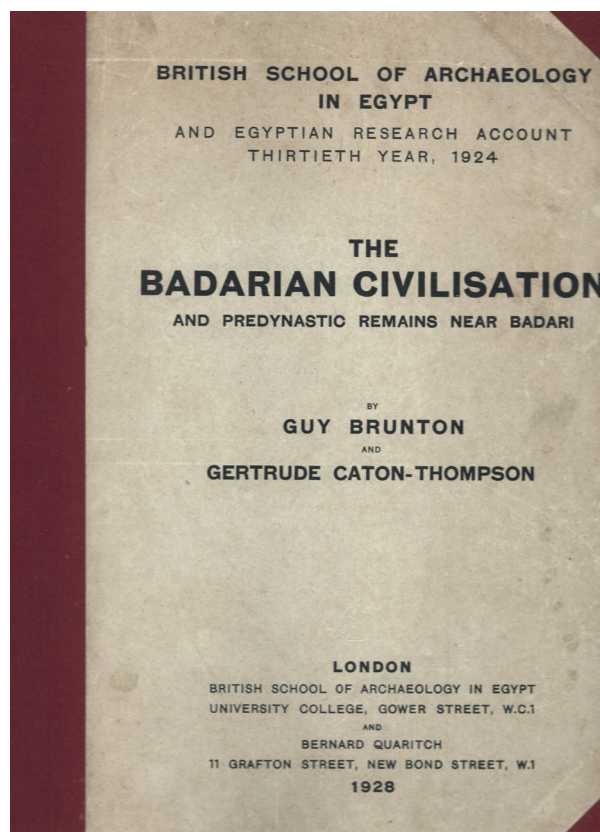


Fig. 4 – G. Brunton and Gertrude Caton-Thompson, *The Badarian Civilization and the Predinastyc Remains near Badari*, 1928. J.L. Cardoso's Library.

In the late 1920s Gertrude Caton-Thompson and the geologist Elinor Gardiner, a Cambridge graduate, started the survey of the Fayum desert with the financial support of the Royal Anthropological Institute. The first results were published under the title *Explorations in the Northern Fayum* in *Antiquity's* first volume in 1927, and in 1934 the Royal Anthropological Institute published in two volumes *The Desert Fayum* by Gertrude Caton-Thompson and Elinor Gardiner (CATON-THOMPSON & GARDINER, 1934).

In 1928 she was invited to conduct archaeological excavations in the stone-built ruins of Great Zimbabwe, in order to shed light on its origins and the true identity of its builders. Again she chose two young women to help her on this huge task: D. Norie, an architectural student that did all the drawings, including those for the final publication, and a young archaeologist, recently graduated from Oxford, Kathleen Kenyon who also became famous for her new excavation method and the archaeological work she conducted in the Middle East. This is very interesting because it shows that these Women Archaeologists were not isolated cases and were able to establish a sort of network with other younger Women Archaeologists, e.g. the case of Margaret Murray with Caton-Thompson, and of Caton-Thompson with Kathleen Kenyon. In fact, Gertrude Caton-Thompson did most of her fieldwork and archaeological research with other women. Again she published the first results of Zimbabwe's expedition in *Antiquity's* volume 3, in 1929 but in 1931 Oxford Clarendon Press published her work entitled *The Zimbabwe Culture: Ruins and Reactions* (CATON-THOMPSON, 1931) (Fig. 5).

(a)
↓

PLATE XV



← (b)

← (c)

I

↑
(d)



2

ZIMBABWE: MAUND RUINS

1. Platform 10, with abutting Daga Mound IV (a). (b) Entrance 10-11 with door-jamb. (c) Cement floor, overlying flagged pattern (d)
2. Platform 26. (2) Hill-wash. (3) Granite cement floor. (4) Daga Mound VII which blocked Entrance 27-28

Fig. 5 - G. Caton-Thompson, *The Zimbabwe Culture. Ruins and Reactions*, 1931.
Photos of the excavations directed by the author. J.L. Cardoso's Library.

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THE PREHISTORIC GEOGRAPHY OF KHARGA OASIS:
A paper, read at the Evening Meeting of the Society on 9 May 1932, by

G. CATON-THOMPSON AND E. W. GARDNER

IT is gratifying to address a Geographical Society on prehistoric archaeology. For prehistory, that strange compound of archaeology and geology, is still too often thought to be an alarming subject, comprehensible only to its own specialized disciples; and to lie in an exclusive territory of its own, out of reach from the more popular adjacent countries governed by the geographical sciences on the one side, and archaeology on the other. The time has come when those old restrictive frontiers must be revised in the interests of mutual progress; and this Society, each time it opens its doors to the discussion of a subject from over the old boundary, such as "The Prehistoric Geography of Kharga Oasis," is helping on this needed revision. It is clear that any regional geographic study would be considered incomplete if it ignored the historic past. We wish to show that it would be equally defective if it ignored the prehistoric past. Yet that is a study which receives little attention from geographers.

The work in the Kharga depression during the past two seasons, still unfinished, has been a prehistoric survey of a defined area unexplored from that point of view. It has striven to trace human history in that region from the time of man's first appearance in it; to examine the climatic conditions under which, at succeeding stages, he lived; and to synthesize both with the physiological development of the depression. Whilst therefore the intentions of this research are ultimately archaeological and will be dealt with as such in final publication, the lines of approach have been largely geological and physiological. Geography, geology, and archaeology, both historic and prehistoric, have been laid under contribution about equally. This paper brings into prominence the more purely geographical aspects of the results, leaving discussion of the geological and archaeological data to their own specialist publications.¹ Since however the geographical time-scale here established owes its

¹Those already published are: E. W. Gardner, "Problems of the Pleistocene Hydrography of Kharga Oasis," *Geol. Mag.*, September 1932; G. Caton-Thompson, "Prehistoric Research Expedition Reports," *Man*, May 1931 and June 1932; "Kharga Oasis," *Antiquity*, June 1931.

Fig. 6 – First page of *The Geographical Journal*, from November 1932, whose first article corresponds to the preliminary study dedicated to the Kharga Oasis (CATON-THOMPSON & GARDNER, 1932). J. L. Cardoso's Library.

Gertrude Caton-Thompson reached Zimbabwe by land, and shared the journey with an American friend, Mrs Stout, camping in Fayum from where they continued the trip by train and reached Kharga, where she engaged in prospections for a week. What she saw impressed her so much that she wrote to Elinor Gardiner about her findings and obtained the financial support of the Royal Anthropological Institute of London. She published several reports of her expeditions to the Kharga Oasis in 1931 in several journals such as *The Geographical Journal* of the Royal Geographical Society (CATON-THOMPSON & GARDNER, 1932) (Fig. 6) but the complete work *Kharga Oasis in Prehistory* was only published in 1952 by the University of London and thanks to the influence of V. Gordon Childe (CATON-THOMPSON, 1952).

In August 1932, she went to Malta with Margaret Murray and Dr. Edith Guest, Margaret Murray's friend, and there she excavated the Ghar Dahlam cave that revealed some Neolithic pottery and an underlying large amount of animal bones. It is interesting to notice that an article about Dr. Edith Guest's stay in Portugal was also published recently by the author and J. L. Cardoso (MELO & CARDOSO, 2019). The purpose of this expedition was to investigate the megalithic temple of Borg en Nadur. While Murray and Guest were excavating the temple, Caton-Thompson excavated the cave, near the temple where in 1890s several human teeth were found. It was important to confirm whether Neanderthals inhabited the cave, and Caton-Thompson's excavation proved that there was no evidence of Neanderthal occupation of this cave.

The recognition came and in 1932, as she received the Peake Award of the Royal Geographic Society and in 1934 the Rivers Medal of the Royal Anthropological Institute. She was the first woman to be President of the Prehistoric Society, from 1940 to 1946, and the second woman to be accepted as Fellow of the British Academy in 1944. In 1946 Gertrude Caton-Thompson was invited to give the Huxley Lecture entitled *The Aterian Industry: Its Place and Significance in the Paleolithic World*.

The question is, if she did such an important work and was recognised in her lifetime, why is she scarcely mentioned in the majority books on the History of Archaeology?

4 – VIRGÍNIA RAU AND PREHISTORY

In this article I focused on the professional career of Virginia Rau (1907-1973), who wasn't an archaeologist. Given that Virginia Rau was an outstanding Portuguese Medieval Historian, what is the reason for choosing her when debating Women and Archaeology? Precisely because she wanted to be an archaeologist, and just like Garrod and Caton-Thompson she desired to study Prehistory, and also like these two British archaeologists she was a wealthy woman who could afford to pay her education, and didn't depend only of the University's salary to survive. What happened then, that prevented this outstanding medieval historian to become an archaeologist, as she wished to be? (Fig. 7).

Let's go back to 1939, when Dorothy Garrod was appointed to the Disney chair, the II World War begun and Virginia Rau, who had been living abroad for the past ten years, returned to Portugal and enrolled at the University of Lisbon. She wrote on her resume that she finished the High School in 1926 and in 1927 she was admitted in the Faculty of Letters of the University of Lisbon to study Geography, but in 1928 she interrupted the Geography course and went abroad and there she lived for ten years. We don't know the reason why she went abroad, and the little information we have about these years is provided by her resume in which she mentions living in France and Germany, where she attended holiday courses for foreigners and began to do historical research in foreign libraries and archives (MELO & CARDOSO, 2014, p. 514). In the summer of 1939 she worked at the National Library of Paris to conclude her research on Dona Catarina de Bragança, daughter

of the Portuguese king João IV, who became queen of England when she married King Charles II. In spite of the declaration of war in the summer of 1939, she concluded the research and published the biography of Dona Catarina de Bragança (RAU, 1941).

The war brought Virginia Rau back to Portugal. At that time she was already an experienced researcher with several articles and a book published. When she returned to Lisbon she enrolled again in the Faculty of Letters, but now to study History. By then Manuel Heleno was the Archaeology professor at the Lisbon Faculty of Letters. World War II brought to Portugal the famous prehistorian Abbé Breuil who stayed in our country for 17 months, from June 1941 until November 1942. Since the 1930s, Manuel Heleno had excavated important Paleolithic sites such as Arneiro (Rio Maior, Portugal), as well as numerous megalithic graves. He searched international approval for his archaeological excavations and research among foreign archaeologists, such as Hugo Obermaier and the couple Georg and Vera Leisner, in order to have the financial support of the Portuguese authorities for his research purposes. The presence of Abbé Breuil in Portugal during wartime was an opportunity he couldn't waste and Manuel Heleno invited

Abbé Breuil to teach Prehistory at the University of Lisbon in 1942. At that time, Virginia Rau was a finalist student at the Faculty and because she was fluent in French, Manuel Heleno asked her to take notes of Abbé Breuil's lectures and translate them, what she did (MELO & CARDOSO, 2014, p. 530). Abbé Breuil's lectures increased her interest in Archaeology, and particularly in Prehistory. At that time Abbé Breuil had also connections to the Portuguese Geological Survey, namely with the French geologist and archaeologist Georges Zbyszewski and therefore she made the acquaintance with Georges Zbyszewski. Abbé Breuil left Portugal in November 1942, but by then Virginia Rau and Georges Zbyszewski had become friends and worked together at the Portuguese Geological Survey.

In 1943, after her graduation, she was invited by Manuel Heleno to become his assistant in Archaeology, and the majority of her lectures took place at the facilities of the Portuguese Geological Survey (MELO & CARDOSO, 2014, p. 535, 536-537), where she had Georges Zbyszewski's support. Manuel Heleno entrusted her with all the academic tasks, and spent most of the time excavating. She wanted to accompany him in archaeological excavations, particularly in Rio Maior, where he was excavating Paleolithic sites, but he always avoided her presence. Virginia Rau wrote on her resume that in 1945 she went to Arraiolos in southern Portugal with Manuel Heleno and the couple Georg and Vera Leisner and attended the excavation of the Igrejinha dolmen (MELO & CARDOSO, 2014, p. 536). She never did archaeological excavations with Manuel Heleno and she soon understood that it wouldn't ever happen, so she decided to apply for a PhD in Medieval History.



Fig. 7 – Virginia Rau. Portuguese Academy of History Archive (MELO & CARDOSO, 2014).

Although she had chosen to pursue a career in Medieval History, she published several articles on Prehistory, alone or with Georges Zbyszewski as co-author. In 1945 she published an article entitled *Da originalidade do paleolítico inferior no litoral português* in the Spanish journal “Las Ciencias” (RAU, 1945). Later that year, she published with Georges Zbyszewski, R. Flaes and M. Mendes Leal the article *Dos nuevos yacimientos paleolíticos del litoral português* in the Spanish journal “Ampurias” (RAU & ZBYSZEWSKI, 1946).

Although she had obtained her PhD on Medieval History, *summa cum laude*, on February 4th, 1947, she published three more articles on prehistory and archaeology. In 1948 she published *Les recherches et découvertes préhistoriques au Portugal à partir de 1940* in the Italian journal “Rivista di Scienze Preistoriche” (RAU, 1948) (Fig. 8). In 1949 she participated on the 16th International Congress of Geography that was held in Lisbon (*XVI^e Congrès International de Géographie, Lisbonne, 1949*), and she published in the proceedings *La Toponymie et le Peuplement du Portugal aux Temps Préhistoriques* (RAU, 1949). She also published with Georges Zbyszewski a guidebook for one of the excursions organized for the International Geography Congress, entitled *Estremadura et Ribatejo. Livret-guide de L'Excursion D* (RAU & ZBYSZEWSKI, 1949) (Fig. 9).

Her work in Prehistory ended with these publications of the International Geography Congress in 1949, even though she maintained several memberships with scientific associations related to Archaeology, such as *Associação dos Arqueólogos Portugueses* (Portuguese Archaeologist Association), *Instituto de Arqueologia, História e Etnografia* (Institute of Archaeology, History and Ethnography), *Sociedade de Geografia de Lisboa* (Lisbon Geography Society) *Société Préhistorique Française* (French Prehistoric Society) and *The Society of*

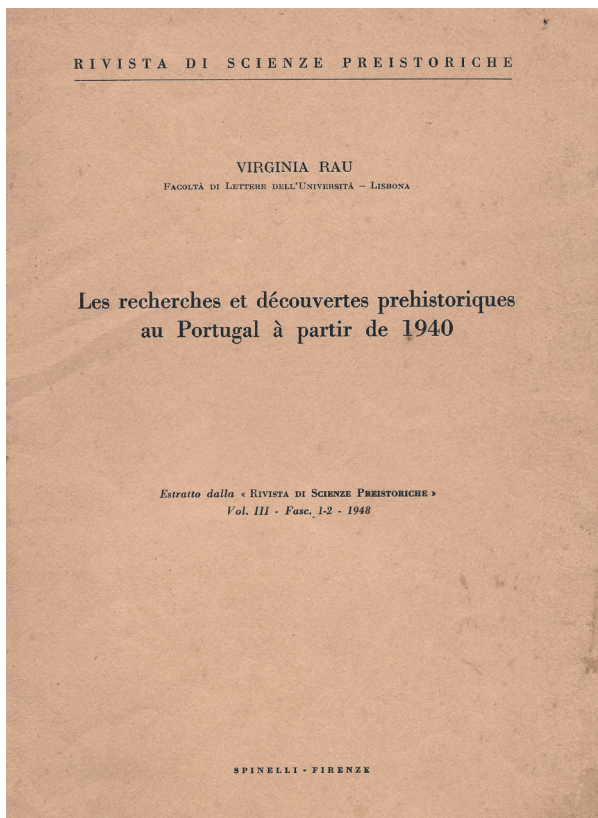


Fig. 8 – Virginia Rau “Les recherches et découvertes préhistoriques au Portugal à partir de 1940”. *Rivista di Scienze Preistoriche*, 1948. J.L. Cardoso’s Library.

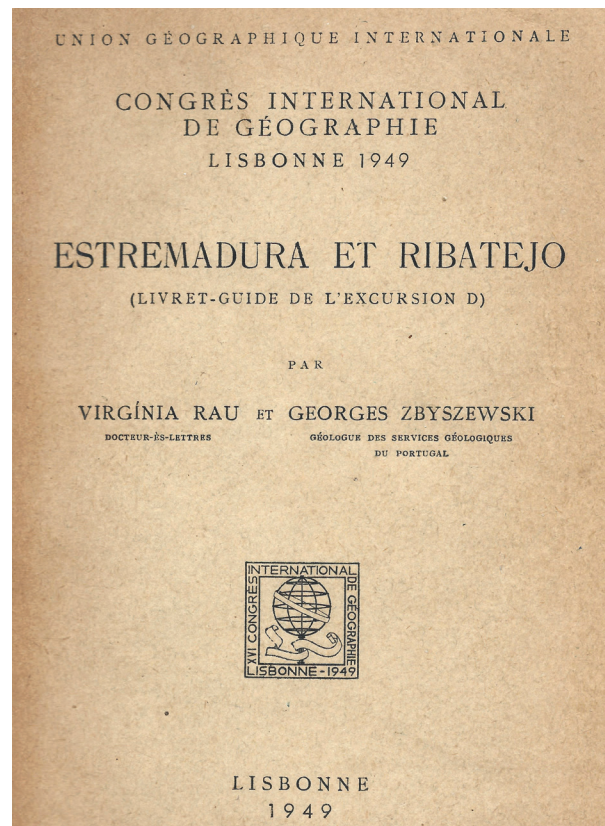


Fig. 9 – V. Rau & G. Zbyszewski *Estremadura et Ribatejo (livret-guide)*, 1949. J.L. Cardoso’s Library.

Woman Geographers through all her academic life. She gave up Prehistory and Archaeology, but her friendship with Georges Zbyszewski remained until her death.

In 1950 she left for the USA, to teach at Berkeley University, being the first Portuguese citizen to teach there. During her first stay in the USA she was invited to be consultant in Portuguese Studies by the Library of Congress in Washington. Her outstanding international career took her later on to other famous universities, such as Columbia, Harvard, Yale, Oxford, Cambridge, University of London and Sorbonne, where she was invited to give lectures and to teach. She had the recognition of European historians, such as Pierre Chaunu, M. Mollat, F. Mauro, F. Braudel, M.M Postan, Ch. Verlinden, Trevor-Roper or Charles Boxer among others. She was awarded the commander degree of the “Al Merito della Repubblica Italiana” Order by the Italian Republic in 1961 and in 1966 she was awarded the “L’Ordre des Palmes Académiques” by the French Republic (MELO & CARDOSO 2014, p. 522, 526). Her last contribution was published in the volume in honour of Fernand Braudel, *Mélanges en l’Honneur de Fernand Braudel*. She died on the November 2nd, 1973 and her international prominence and recognition was ignored and forgotten, even at the Faculty of Letters of Lisbon, where she taught for decades, held a chair on Medieval History and had been the Faculty dean from 1964 to 1969.

5 – AND NOW, CAN WE SPEAK WITH OUR OWN VOICES?

All these three women, Gertrude Caton-Thompson, Dorothy Garrod and Virginia Rau hid themselves behind their scientific work and it was rather difficult for me to “hear their voices.” Only Gertrude Caton-Thompson wrote, at the end of her long life, her *Mixed Memoirs* at the demand of her friends (CATON-THOMPSON, 1983). In this almost unreachable book one has a glimpse of a woman with commitment to women’s rights, archaeological research, a fine sense of humour and with a profound love for music. One of the most moving passages of this book is precisely what she said about Dorothy Garrod’s death in 1968. She wrote “with Dorothy Garrod’s death in December 1968 ended my last direct link with pioneer field-work in the Near East, and a friendship of 46 years. She had set her stamp on Palaeolithic Prehistory, particularly in Lebanon, which will endure for generations” (CATON-THOMPSON, 1983, p. 332) (Fig. 10).

Dorothy Garrod remained more mysterious for decades, and many stories have been told about how she had burned her personal records, until Pamela Jane Smith found her archive, by a lucky hazard, in France, in the late 1990s (SMITH et al. 1997, SMITH, 2000). In some letters Garrod wrote her fine sense of humour appears again. Virginia Rau wrote about herself on her resume just this sentence “Born in Lisbon on the 4th December 1907” but the offprints of her articles she offered Georges Zbyszewski have dedications that show a woman full of joy as well as a scientist with a strong sense of humour. It has been often argued that Women have kept their life stories, feelings and opinions to themselves so they could “protect” their scientific work and be able to obtain at least some recognition of their contemporary fellow archaeologists (MELO, 2015, p. 71).

Colin Renfrew and Paul Bahn wrote one of the most popular Archaeology books, *Archaeology: Theories, Methods, and Practice*, with an important chapter on the History of Archaeology, but only two pages are dedicated to Women pioneers in Archaeology; this scarcely bears witness to the role and the importance of Women pioneer archaeologists on the development of Archaeology and in paving the way for new trends in archaeological research. In this book, Dorothy Garrod has a small entry among male archaeologists where it is written “In 1937 Dorothy Garrod became the first woman professor in any subject at Cambridge, and probably the first woman prehistorian to achieve professorial status anywhere in the world. Her excavations at Zarzi in Iraq and Mount Carmel in Palestine provided the key to a large section of the Near East, from the Middle

Paleolithic to the Mesolithic, and found fossil human remains crucial to our knowledge of the relationship between Neanderthals and Homo sapiens. With her discovery of the Natufian culture, the predecessor of the world's first farming societies, she posed a series of new problems still not fully resolved today" (RENFREW & BAHN, 2016, p. 34)." Gertrude Caton-Thompson instead has a small entry on the two pages dedicated to Women Pioneers of Archaeology.

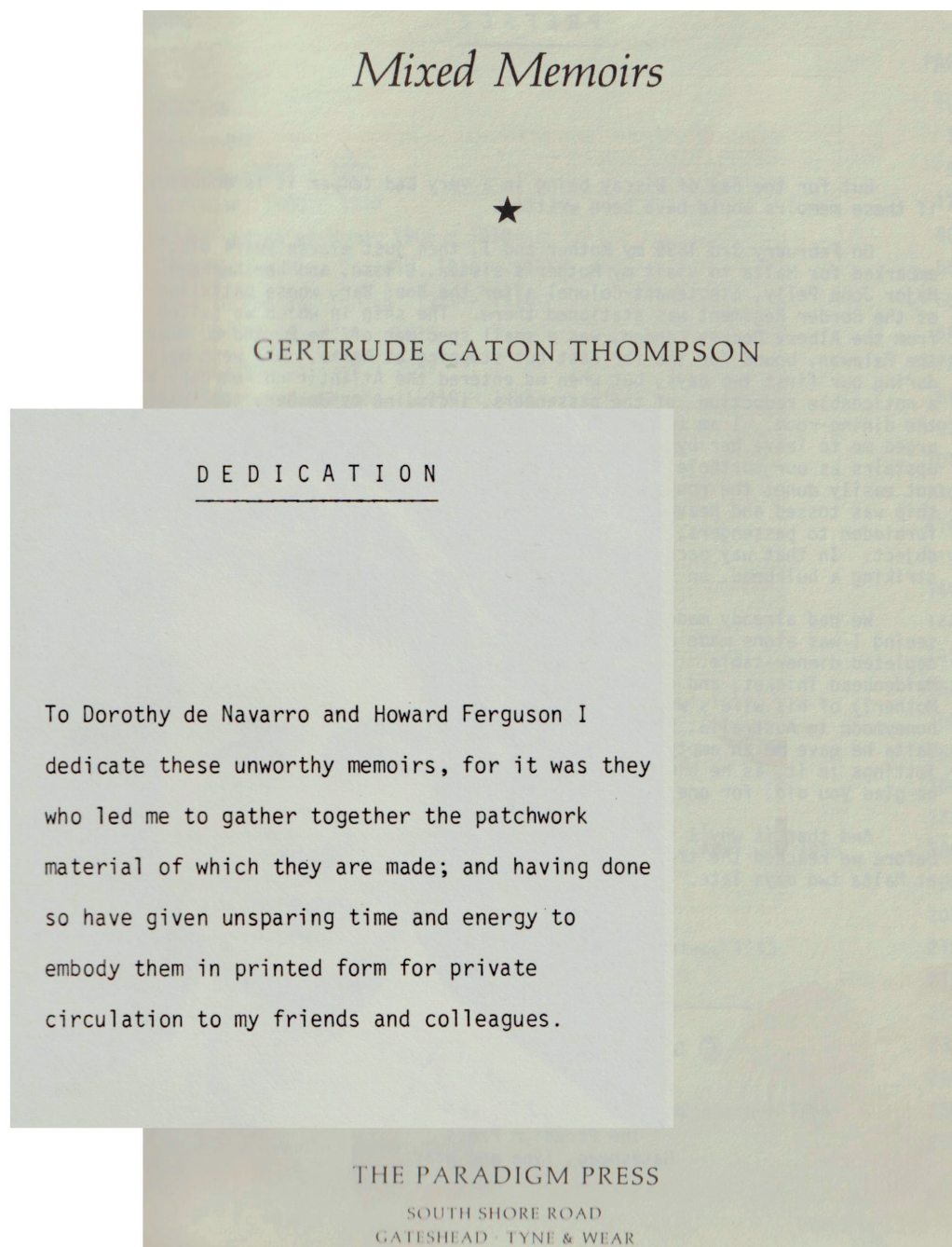


Fig. 10 – Gertrude Caton-Thompson, *Mixed Memoirs*, 1983. Author's Library.

Margaret C. Root comments that “Carolyn Heilbrun notes with great analytical astuteness that autobiographies by women such as our first-generation pioneers, born in the mid-nineteenth century, have a narrative flatness that belies their exciting lives: Above all, in the lives of Victorian and post-Victorian women, the public and private life cannot be linked to the male narrative. These women are able to write exemplary lives; they do not have to offer themselves the models, but only the exceptions chosen by destiny and chance. “(2009, p. 26-27).

According to Margaret C. Root “Any woman of this age who ventured into the archaeological field was clearly a radical nonconformist. The personal histories and motivating forces leading to such nonconformities were, however, highly individual. Some of the pioneer women were feminists or at least had connections to feminists and to the “suffrage movement” (2009, p. 19). This was undoubtedly the case of Gertrude Caton-Thompson, as well as her teacher and Flinders Petrie’s collaborator Margaret Murray. Others, such as Dorothy Garrod or Virginia Rau took their destiny in their own hands and lived the lives they had chosen. As Dorothy Garrod explained “*pas de la chance, c’est courage et persévérance*”, contradicting her student Lorraine Copeland’s remark that she had been lucky (BAR-YOSEF & CALLENDER 2009, p. 414).

Nowadays many Women Archaeologists write and publish about the lives and achievements of these Women pioneers demonstrating that, contrary to what can be deduced from the written official history of the early days of Archaeology, as a scientific discipline, many Women archaeologists were working ever since the beginning of this discipline and developed their research in all possible archaeological domains. Their role in the development of the discipline was fundamental but over time their voices have been silenced and their works strategically forgotten by their fellow male and women colleagues. Why? For Ruth Behar “Women writing self-reflexively are condemned to emotional and pejoratively female; It is considered to be good exposition because it conforms to the established hegemonic code of authorial voicing and pseudo-objectivity. This gendered hierarchy in scholarly writing also operates in archaeological circles - even today. “(*apud* ROOT, 2009, p. 27).

One important issue is to enhance a fact that has always been omitted - these pioneering Women archaeologists have never been alone; they maintained scientific cooperation and interpersonal relationships, and in some cases were linked by bonds of deep friendship with other Women.

Invisibility and silence guided the past and the present of Women pioneers of Archaeology and Prehistory, so now the time has come to rescue their works and their voices. It is therefore necessary to rescue not only the voices but the choir of our predecessors (MELO, 2015, p. 75).

6 – CONCLUSION

This article’s main purpose is to show and stress all the main issues regarding Women invisibilities, particularly in Archaeology, until today, using three case studies and comparing the lives and achievements of the British Women Archaeologists Gertrude Caton-Thompson and Dorothy Garrod, as well as the Portuguese medieval historian Virginia Rau, in order to understand “the path to invisibility”. One may argue that the life and career circumstances of the British Women Archaeologists and the Portuguese Medieval Historian are rather different – that is a fact – but the work and achievements of all these Women have been forgotten and made invisible to the majority of scholars until recent days.

This is an important step, but the question now is “can we speak with our own voices”? Are we aware of our own realities as Women and can we finally answer Virginia Woolf’s question “What is a woman?” Besides being

archaeologists, are we self-identified Women researchers that can acknowledge and value the work of our predecessors Pioneer Women archaeologists? Have we the commitment to rescue them from the shadows of oblivion and bring them to the front stage, to the place they deserve by their own right? The reality is changing and in the last decades many publications about Women Archaeologists bear witness to this turning point. (CONKEY & GERO, 1991; DÍAZ-ANDREU & SORESENSEN, 1998; COHEN – JOUKOWSKY, 2009 just to cite a few pioneer studies on this subject).

Gender studies clearly helped to identify the issue of Women invisibilities during the last decades of the past century. Now, in the 21st century, *we cannot forget and*, for the sake of a clear understanding of different scientific pathways, *should* definitely take into account Feminist theories while approaching Women in Archaeology and science. Having tried to answer Virginia Woolf's question "What is a Woman?" shall we now be able to change Alice Miller's cultural statement *Du sollst nicht merken* and be sufficiently self-identified Women scientists so that, as Women, we can enhance and value the fact that we have a different epistemological subjectivity and performativity? Can we go yet another step further and "be aware", in our scientific and daily lives, of the complexity of the different subjectivities that each one of us represent, thereafter paying respect to the diversity of the *Weltanschauungen* we embody as scientific thinkers? Women are not a minority! In fact there are more women than men in the world. The reality is that we were kicked out of History in all possible domains. If we don't have a commitment and a daily practice of this kind of awareness of our different subjectivities that allows us to *speak with our own voices* (IRIGARAY, 1977), and fight for the respect that it is due to our scientific efforts and contributions, Women will go on being erased from History and our scientific achievements will be strategically silenced, will be "forgotten", although plagiarized and maintained in darkness for centuries to come.

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