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**MODERN MISTRESSES ON THE OLD MASTERS:
WOMEN AND THE WRITING OF ART HISTORY,
1860–1915**

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A thesis submitted for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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July 2020

AUTHOR'S DECLARATION

I declare that all research and writing contained within this thesis is my own, except where stated in the text. No portion of this work has been submitted in application for another degree or qualification at this or any other university.

ABSTRACT

This thesis examines the role and contribution of women to the writing of art history in Britain between 1860 and 1915. To date, mainstream historiography of the discipline bears little witness to women's vital and wide-ranging critical, historical, and connoisseurial contributions. Feminist scholarship, particularly over the last twenty years, has highlighted this neglect, establishing the irrefutable presence of women as interpreters, critics, historians and taste-makers, especially in relation to early nineteenth-century writers and the Italian Primitives. It is in this currently evolving field of scholarship that my own work is positioned. Beginning in 1860, with the death of the 'first professional English art historian' Anna Jameson, this thesis charts the subsequent generations of women, examining their contribution, influence, and networks.

The focus of my research is on women still relatively unexplored to date, such as Julia Cartwright; presents fresh insight into figures attracting recent scholarly attention like Maud Cruttwell; and makes the case for several writers — among them Ethel Halsey, Edith Coulson James, and Jean Carlyle Graham Speakman — examined here for the first time. Pursuing an interdisciplinary approach, this thesis approaches the work of these women through attention to genre and geography. Each chapter focuses on a particular form of publication or means of disseminating art historical knowledge — periodical articles, monographs, guidebooks, public lectures — contextualised through the place where it was written and the particular moment of development for the discipline. Drawing on a wealth of previously untapped archival material in the UK and Italy, this thesis traces the experiences of women as they positioned themselves as authoritative voices in the field, illuminating the processes of professionalisation that both enabled, and excluded, their contributions.

Acknowledging the social and gendered restrictions women faced, this thesis seeks to complicate a binary reading of them as disadvantaged interlopers into a male-dominated field. Women writers actively participated in the development of knowledge regarding western European art history during the period 1860 to 1915, broadening the canon through the attention they gave to artists who were seen to fall outside the category of the 'great' master. The value and impact of women's work both in their own time and for our present-day practice is explored through their innovative contributions to the way such art was thought about and discussed. At a moment of unprecedented interest in and visibility of Italian old master art, women were crucial figures for the disciplinary development of art history during its formative years.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ACF	Archivio Corsini Firenze, Ville Le Corti, San Casciano, Val di Pesa
AVCA	Fondo Adolfo Venturi, Centro Archivistico, Scuola Normale Superiore, Pisa
BBVIT	Biblioteca Berenson Special Collections, Villa I Tatti, Florence
BCABo	Biblioteca Comunale dell'Archiginnasio, Bologna
BIF	British Institute, Florence
BNF	Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, Florence
CENA	Cartwright Edgcote Collection, Northamptonshire County Archives, Northampton
CRBC	Fondo Corrado Ricci, Biblioteca Classense, Ravenna
NA	National Archives, Kew
NAL	National Art Library Archive, Victoria and Albert Museum, London
NGA	National Gallery Archive, London

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I owe the opportunity of writing this thesis to Susanna Avery-Quash and Hilary Fraser, whose own passion, hard work, and collaboration came together to form the Arts and Humanities Research Council Collaborative Doctoral Project, which I have had the privilege to research and write. I could not have asked for two more kind, supportive, encouraging, and generous mentors and role models to guide me in this process.

I am grateful to the AHRC for funding this doctorate and to the National Gallery for supporting my research. A heartfelt thanks to Alan Crookham and all the staff at the National Gallery Research Centre for their help and support. Being a CDP student at the Gallery brought me into contact with a group of wonderful fellow students, and I cannot imagine having done this without their camaraderie, advice, support, and stimulating conversation. To Alison Clarke, Elena Greer, Amanda Hilliam and Imogen Tedbury, thank you. I also owe Amanda, Helena Anderson, and Amy Plewis a huge thank you for being such attentive and encouraging proof readers of my work during the final stages of writing up.

A very special thank you to Anthony Shepherd at Birkbeck for all his support throughout my PhD. Caroline Campbell and Lynda Nead gave me invaluable feedback and advice as my upgrade examiners and I am grateful for their input at the early stages of developing this thesis. I am grateful to the team at Birkbeck's *I9* journal for all their hard work on the special issue 'Old Masters, Modern Women'. Parts of Chapter One have previously been published in my article in that issue: "Such a pleasant little sketch [...] of this irritable artist": Julia Cartwright and the reception of Andrea Mantegna in late-nineteenth century Britain'.

I am very grateful to Andy North and the staff at Northamptonshire Archives for helping me to navigate the mass of material in Julia Cartwright's archive. A special thanks to Eileen and little Mac, who were the kindest (former) and fluffiest (latter) hosts during my stays in Northampton. Finding archival material in Italy related to the women on which this thesis focuses was one of the most exciting aspects of my research, both for the material itself and the wonderful archives and libraries in which I conducted my work. In this regard, I am deeply grateful to Ilaria Della Monica and the staff at I Tatti for all their help and useful discussions during my time at the Biblioteca Berenson. Alyson Price at the British Institute of Florence was incredibly generous with her time and support navigating the Waterfield Collection and providing me with introductions to other archives. I am very thankful to Nadia Bacic at the Archivio Principi Corsini and to the Corsini family for allowing me access to their archives at their beautiful residence in San Casciano Val di Pesa. My visits to Florence would have been far less rich without the *cicerone* expertise of Michael Gorman, to whom I owe many happy memories of Berensonian walks around Florence and Fiesole. A special thanks also to Tiffany Johnston, with whom I had the pleasure of researching in Florence. I am also grateful to Maddalena Taglioli at the Centro Archivistico, Scuola Normale Superiore Pisa, Daniela Poggiali at the Biblioteca Classense, Ravenna and Maria Grazia Bollini and Patrizia Busi at the Biblioteca Archiginnasio, Bologna, for all their help during my visits.

Eve Kahn was incredibly generous in approaching me after my paper at CAA and offering me her research on Jean Carlyle Graham Speakman, whose inclusion in this thesis is indebted to her. I am grateful to John Barnard and Rosie Plummer for generously sharing with me information as to

their family history and great aunt Edith Coulson James. John Law provided me with invaluable materials and encouragement in my research on Coulson James.

The friendship, kindness and encouragement of many who I came to know over the past three years outside of academia has been invaluable. Thank you to Raj and Sarah for creating a space in which to breathe and for reminding me that the most important direction is not forwards, but inwards. To Pinar, for always listening. To Myles, for the great music, comedy, and keeping me balanced.

A heartfelt thanks to my friends and family for their love and support over the course of this PhD. To Spookie, for always giving me reasons to smile even in difficult moments, especially over her deep appreciation for the British Library's plastic carry bags and keeping me company with her purring during many late nights. To my brother Andreas, for his infinite good spirits. To my yiayia, my first role model of a young woman choosing independence, travelling, and following curiosity out into the world. To Nathan, for his never-ending support, love, and belief in me. My deepest love and gratitude goes to my parents. To my father, for showing me the importance of a strong work ethic, the enjoyment of both challenges and success, and for always making me laugh. To my mother, the most selfless and hard-working woman I know, for always championing my intellectual pursuits and being a role model of independent womanhood. This thesis is dedicated to them.

INTRODUCTION

A ‘MOTHERLESS DISCIPLINE’?

‘I am sure no one reads a woman’s writing on art, history or aesthetics with anything but unmitigated contempt’, observed the young Vernon Lee (Violet Paget, 1856–1935) in 1878.¹ Her remark was prescient. For much of the twentieth century, the cultural work of Lee and her female contemporaries, if not viewed with contempt, was quietly ignored. It is only in the last few decades that these women have begun to receive the critical attention they deserve.

Before the advent of second-wave feminism, a few modern historians of taste and collecting in Britain had noted the influential role played by Maria, Lady Callcott (1785–1842), Anna Jameson (1794–1860) and Elizabeth, Lady Eastlake (1809–93), especially in relation to the reception of early Italian art.² Yet it was not until Claire Richter Sherman and Adele Holcomb’s volume *Women as Interpreters of the Visual Arts, 1820–1979* (1981) that women’s contributions to public discourse on art in both Britain and America became a focus of attention, inaugurating a new field of scholarship.³ Forty years on, many books and articles have enriched and broadened that nascent field; recent conferences and special journal issues have been wholly dedicated to the recuperation and analysis of art historical writing by women, that Lee feared was held in such contempt.⁴ My thesis on women

¹ Vernon Lee to Henrietta Jenkin, 18 September 1878, in *Selected Letters of Vernon Lee, 1856–1935*, ed. by Amanda Gagel and Sophie Geoffroy, 3 vols (London; New York: Routledge, 2017), vol. 1 (1865–1884), p. 244.

² John Steegman, *Victorian Taste: A Study of the Arts and Architecture from 1830 to 1870* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: M. I. T. Press, 1970); Francis Haskell, *Rediscoveries in Art: Some Aspects of Taste, Fashion and Collecting in England and France* (Oxford: Phaidon, 1980).

³ Claire Richter Sherman and Adele M. Holcomb, eds, *Women as Interpreters of the Visual Arts, 1820–1979* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1981).

⁴ See, for example, the special issues of journals developed from conferences at the University of Sussex and the National Gallery, London, respectively: Meaghan Clarke and Francesco Ventrella, eds, ‘Women’s Expertise and the Culture of Connoisseurship’, *Visual Resources*, 33:1–2 (2017) and Maria Alambritis, Susanna Avery-Quash and Hilary Fraser, eds, ‘Old Masters, Modern Women’, *19: Interdisciplinary Studies in the Long Nineteenth Century*, 28 (2019) <<https://19.bbk.ac.uk/issue/116/info/>>. An earlier associated event of the National Gallery conference took place at Chawton House Library, Hampshire on 25 February 2017: ‘Women Writing Art: Women Writers as Art Critics in the Long Eighteenth Century’

writing art history in late nineteenth-century Britain builds on and engages with this scholarship. It is informed by recent work that draws attention to the nexus point of gender, authority and connoisseurship in the disciplinary formation of art history at the turn of the twentieth century. It scrutinises, in particular, the question Lee raises about how one reads a nineteenth-century woman's writing on art, history or aesthetics; how one reads it now, and how one read it then. Crucially, it asks how significant was the contribution of these women to the evolving discipline, both in its own day and into the present.

Despite her misgivings, Lee did not shy away from placing her own voice in the developing professional field of art history. She pursued these topics with confidence and ambition, and commanded respect in her day. While acknowledging the social and gendered restrictions nineteenth-century women writers such as Lee faced, this thesis presents a more nuanced picture of their role in the development of art history as a discipline in late nineteenth-century Britain than the one hitherto established. Rather than cautious interlopers, women writers actively participated in the development of knowledge regarding western European art history during the period 1860–1915, one of unprecedented interest in, and visibility of, old master art. Focusing on the contemporary reception of the art of late fifteenth- and early sixteenth-century Italy, I will argue that the women discussed here made foundational contributions to this field, as the discipline coalesced.

Compared to earlier writers like Callcott, Eastlake and Jameson, women working in this period enjoyed the advantages of a boom in the market for art publications and more relaxed societal attitudes towards feminine comportment and independent endeavour. As will be explored, both of these factors had important implications for the establishment of these women as authoritative voices

<<https://chawtonhouse.org/whats-on/conference-writing-art-women-writers-as-art-critics-in-the-long-eighteenth-century/>>. Additionally, two separate conference panels were held during the course of my PhD, to which I contributed: 'Daughters of Hypatia: Women as Art Critics, Historians, Teachers and Theorists', *Christie's Education Conference 2018: Celebrating Female Agency in the Arts*, Christie's New York, 26–27 June 2018 and 'Writing about Art: Women Authors and Art Critics in the Late Nineteenth-Century', *CAA 2019*, New York, 13–16 February 2019.

in the field. However, working at the cusp of art history's formative moment of institutionalisation brought with it different challenges to those encountered by their earlier counterparts. It is the confluence of these developments at this historical moment — women's pursuit of professionalism as art historians and the impact that the professionalisation of art history itself had on the reception of their work and reputation — that will be elucidated here.

Using evidence drawn from much previously untapped archival material in the UK and Italy, this thesis brings new light to bear on writers who have been the subject of recent rehabilitation, such as the aforementioned Vernon Lee, Julia Cartwright (1851–1924) and Maud Cruttwell (1860–1939); it incorporates figures familiar to the history of the nineteenth-century Anglo-Italian community, but whose art historical contributions have yet to be attended to in depth, such as Lucy Baxter (1837–1902), Helen Zimmern (1846–1934) and Lina Duff-Gordon (1874–1964); and it introduces several new names — Jean Carlyle Graham Speakman (1846–1925), Edith Coulson James (1860–1936) and Ethel Halsey (1866–1947) — examined here for the first time.

There is considerable scholarship dealing with the social, economic and political challenges facing women writers navigating the nineteenth-century press and book publishing industries.⁵ In addition, a growing body of research has established the significant presence of British women in the fields of art, history and aesthetics in the long nineteenth century. This critical focus on women art writers is part of a broader resurgence of interest in women and the arts. Griselda Pollock and Rozsika Parker's pioneering *Old Mistresses: Women, Art and Ideology* (1981), to which the title of this thesis alludes, led this reassessment with its emphasis on women as practitioners of art. Pollock's

⁵ Among the most pertinent recent studies, see: Barbara Onslow, *Women of the Press in Nineteenth-Century Britain* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2000); Joanne Shattock, ed., *Women and Literature in Britain 1800–1900* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001); Hilary Fraser, Stephanie Green and Judith Johnston, eds, *Gender and the Victorian Periodical* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003); Alexis Easley, *First-Person Anonymous: Women Writers and Victorian Print Media, 1830–70* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004); Linda H. Peterson, *Becoming a Woman of Letters: Myths of Authorship and Facts of the Victorian Market* (Princeton; Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2009); Linda H. Peterson, ed., *The Cambridge Companion to Victorian Women's Writing* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015); Marianne Van Remoortel, *Women, Work and the Victorian Periodical: Living by the Press* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015).

preface to the recent reissue of this foundational text names the ‘moment of modernism’ as ‘the first to erase the cultural memory and refuse the current recording of women as creative participants in culture’.⁶ In relation to the writing of art history, this erasure was constituted through the formulation of a ‘hagiography of male scholars’, giving art history the appearance of being a ‘motherless discipline’.⁷

Yet feminist scholarship also, albeit inadvertently, assisted to some extent in obscuring women’s contributions. Hilary Fraser observes that some second-wave feminist art historians dismissed the work of their predecessors for colluding in the establishment of a male-dominated artistic canon.⁸ However, disregarding historical women’s contributions for failing to display overtly feminist or female-orientated focus ignores the complexity of individual intellectual endeavour. As Talia Schaffer highlights in relation to New Woman criticism and the 1890s female aesthetes, ‘hunting for feminists’ can ‘misrepresen[t] the whole period’, while ‘slippage from inclusive claims to feminist practice’ fails to capture ‘evanescent, complex and contradictory models of gender behaviour’.⁹ In this thesis, it is precisely *how* women writers influenced the establishment of what we now consider ‘canonical’ western European art history, with a focus on Italian painting of the Renaissance period, that will be examined. Importantly, I will draw out *what* was distinctive about their work in this regard, and how it broadened the canon in ways that still resonate with our practice today.

⁶ Rozsika Parker and Griselda Pollock, *Old Mistresses: Women, Art and Ideology* (London; New York: I. B. Tauris, 2013), pp. xxiii–xxiv.

⁷ Amy Von Lintel, “‘Excessive Industry’: Female Art Historians, Popular Publishing and Professional Access”, in *Women, Femininity and Public Space in European Visual Culture, 1789–1914*, ed. by Temma Balducci and Heather Belnap Jensen (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2014), pp. 115–29 (p. 115); Elizabeth Mansfield, ed., *Art History and Its Institutions: Foundations of a Discipline* (London; New York: Routledge, 2002), p. 1.

⁸ Hilary Fraser, *Women Writing Art History in the Nineteenth Century: Looking Like a Woman* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), p. 3.

⁹ Talia Schaffer, *The Forgotten Female Aesthetes: Literary Culture in Late-Victorian England* (Charlottesville; London: University Press of Virginia, 2000), pp. 11–12.

An examination of women's formative role in canonical disciplinary development is not confined to art history; it has garnered recent scholarly attention in fields such as archaeology, mathematics, medicine and the natural sciences.¹⁰ Therefore, my own study forms part of this much wider, cross-disciplinary critical development. The women discussed in my thesis did not work in isolation, but were integral members of art historical communities, forging connections and networks with each other and their male counterparts. While challenging the discipline's continued reliance on a model predicated on the achievements of 'great men', this thesis also connects more broadly to ideas concerning the institutionalisation of an intellectual field and the processes by which its practitioners come to be seen as professionals, both by their peers and the wider public.

Hilary Fraser's expansive view of the contribution of women art writers and her call to explore the 'generic flexibility' of their writing has been especially influential in encouraging me to cast a wide net in selecting the writers and texts on which to focus.¹¹ Elizabeth Prettejohn notes that the pervasive presence of the "great-man paradigm" in secondary scholarship has informed a restrictive view of 'professionalism', limiting the visibility of women's work. This observation has also underscored my own assessment of what professionalisation looked like for a woman art historian in this period and thereby influenced the range of case-studies selected for examination.¹² Such restrictions can be seen even in some of the important work of early feminist scholars, such as Pamela Gerrish Nunn; while arguing for the need to interrogate the patriarchal status of art history in

¹⁰ For example, see most recently: Mary R. S. Creese and Thomas M. Creese, 'British Women Who Contributed to Research in the Geological Sciences in the Nineteenth Century', *British Journal for the History of Science*, 27:1 (March 1994), 23–54; Susan Wells, *Out of the Dead House: Nineteenth-Century Women Physicians and the Writing of Medicine* (Madison, Wisconsin; London: University of Wisconsin Press, 2001); Getzel M. Cohen and Martha Sharp Joukowsky, eds, *Breaking Ground: Pioneering Women Archaeologists* (Ann Arbor, Michigan: University of Michigan Press, 2004); Gabriella Bernardi, *The Unforgotten Sisters: Female Astronomers and Scientists Before Caroline Herschel* (Chichester, UK: Praxis Publishing, 2016); Christopher Hollings, Ursula Martin and Adrian Rice, *Ada Lovelace: The Making of a Computer Scientist* (Oxford: Bodleian Library, 2018).

¹¹ Fraser, *Women Writing Art History*, p. 10.

¹² Elizabeth Prettejohn, 'Aesthetic Value and the Professionalization of Victorian Art Criticism, 1837–78', *Journal of Victorian Culture*, 2:1 (Spring 1997), 71–94.

Britain, Nunn perceived that women did not achieve success as art writers and would not have been recognised as professional art critics during their lifetime.¹³ Focusing on the range of texts women produced, their networks and the specific methodologies and subject matter of their writing, this thesis presents an alternative means of examining women's influence and contribution beyond a conventional framing of 'success' or 'professionalism', factors unavoidably informed by our understanding of such concepts according to the male paradigm that has shaped the field.

The persistence of these narratives today is highlighted by the still-limited acknowledgement of women's influence in broader scholarly consensus, beyond the scope of specific study into women writers on art. It is disheartening to see, for example, that Matthew Potter's recent monograph on Anglo-German cultural exchange in nineteenth-century Britain diminishes the influential work of Eastlake and Jameson in this area, by labelling them as 'amateurs'.¹⁴ Despite discussing the importance of the English translations of key German texts such as Johann David Passavant's (1787–1861) *Tour of a German Artist in England* (1836) and Gustav Friedrich Waagen's (1794–1868) *Treasures of Art in Great Britain* (1854–57) for circulating new art historical methodologies in Britain, there is no acknowledgement or reference to the fact that it was Lady Eastlake who was responsible for this work.

More positively, Lucy Hartley's recent volume on the democratisation of beauty in Britain rightly acknowledges that 'there are obviously women writers who contributed theories of art that could or indeed should be included in the debate about beauty', but eschews an examination of these women in her own study.¹⁵ Arguably, this would have made a fascinating dovetail with her excellent work here on figures like Sir Charles Lock Eastlake (1793–1865) and Walter Pater (1839–94), who,

¹³ Pamela Gerrish Nunn, 'Critically Speaking', in *Women in the Victorian Art World*, ed. by Clarissa Campbell Orr (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1995), pp. 107–24.

¹⁴ Matthew C. Potter, *The Inspirational Genius of Germany: British Art and Germanism, 1850–1939* (Manchester; New York: Manchester University Press, 2012), p. 64.

¹⁵ Lucy Hartley, *Democratising Beauty in Nineteenth-Century Britain: Art and the Politics of Public Life* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), p. 14.

as recently shown by Susanna Avery-Quash for example, directly engaged with and discussed such ideas in mutual collaboration with women in their circle.¹⁶

I do not wish to diminish the valuable work of these scholars, but simply point to how male-dominated narratives continue to be replicated in the wider field. More broadly, my thesis presents a case for the ongoing need to question our long-held assumptions regarding the practices and experiences of our predecessors. By asking different questions of women's work, I can attest to the innovative ways in which they wrote about art. The writers discussed here certainly engaged with debates about attribution and style, factors traditionally associated with connoisseurship. Yet they also explored issues of startling resonance to our practice today, such as provenance, display, public engagement, and re-framing artists deemed antithetical to contemporary taste to offer audiences new ways of approaching them. By illuminating the multifaceted nature of women's work in the history of the discipline, this thesis demonstrates the ongoing relevance of their writing and ultimately calls for greater holistic incorporation of their names and contributions into both academic and museological practice and contexts.

So, who were the women art historians in late nineteenth-century Britain? How did they become influential disseminators of knowledge about old master art? From a large pool of potential subjects, I have selected women who specialised in writing about Italian art produced during the period known as the Renaissance. Conventionally understood to encompass the artistic and cultural developments of the fifteenth to the late sixteenth centuries, the Italian Renaissance became one of the most prevalent subjects for art historical publications in Britain through the nineteenth century. Numerous

¹⁶ Susanna Avery-Quash, "I consider I am now to collect facts not form theories": Mary Merrifield and Empirical Research into Technical Art History during the 1840s: review of *La donna che amava i colori: Mary P. Merrifield: Lettere dall'Italia, 1845–1846*, ed. by Giovanni Mazzaferro (2018)', *Journal of Art Historiography*, 19 (August 2018), 1–18 <<https://arthistoriography.files.wordpress.com/2018/08/avery-quash-rev.pdf>>; Susanna Avery-Quash, 'Illuminating the Old Masters and Enlightening the British Public: Anna Jameson and the Contribution of British Women to Empirical Art History in the 1840s', *19: Interdisciplinary Studies in the Long Nineteenth Century*, 28 (2019), DOI: <<http://doi.org/10.16995/ntn.832>>.

studies have explored the multifarious ways in which the Italian Renaissance emerged as a distinct historical period, articulated across the whole gamut of British artistic, literary and cultural production.¹⁷ Much of the appeal of the Renaissance resided in the ‘tangible materiality’ it had left behind.¹⁸ As the appreciation of fine art became publicised ever more widely to a mass audience, there was a concurrent demand for critical mediation as to *how* such art was to be appreciated and looked at.¹⁹ As such, writing about Italian art was by the mid-century a well-established area of interest, to which women could align themselves without the risk of being perceived as too niche. Most enduringly, it was the influence of the best-known early writer of artists’ lives, Giorgio Vasari (1511–74) and his *Le vite de’ più eccellenti pittori, scultori e architetti* (1550/1568), which furnished the image of the old master as Italian in British minds. Much of the primary material needed for this type of research — archival documentation, contemporary written accounts and the works of art themselves — was readily accessible. A steady stream of archives opened their collections to researchers as the century progressed, and a thriving tradition of research on the continent furnished countless publications. At the National Art Library in the South Kensington Museum, the London Library and the British Museum Reading Rooms, women could easily access these materials. As Ruth Hoberman has discussed, women’s access to these scholarly spaces and their prolific presence as researchers and writers in reading rooms during the late nineteenth century is expressive of a

¹⁷ Among the most important studies in this area, see: Hilary Fraser, *The Victorians and Renaissance Italy* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1992); J. B. Bullen, *The Myth of the Renaissance in Nineteenth-Century Writing* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1994); Yannick Portebois and Nicholas Terpstra, eds, *The Renaissance in the Nineteenth Century* (Toronto: Centre for Reformation and Renaissance Studies, 2003); John E. Law and Lene Østermark-Johansen, eds, *Victorian and Edwardian Responses to the Italian Renaissance* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005); Lynne Walhout Hinojosa, *The Renaissance, English Cultural Nationalism, and Modernism, 1860–1920* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009); Lina Bolzoni and Alina Payne, eds, *The Italian Renaissance in the Nineteenth Century: Revision, Revival and Return*, I Tatti Research Series, 1 (Florence: Harvard University Press; Milan: Officina Libraria, 2018).

¹⁸ Lene Østermark-Johansen, ‘Introduction’, in *Victorian and Edwardian Responses to the Italian Renaissance*, pp. 1–6 (p. 2).

¹⁹ Fraser, *Women Writing Art History*, pp. 15–16.

particular moment of ‘vital female culture’, in which women could actively and visibly pursue their ‘role as producers of public discourse’.²⁰

In the aftermath of the Napoleonic period, the ongoing circulation and sale of works from European aristocratic collections and suppressed ecclesiastical foundations ensured that the London art market remained rich in examples of Italian old masters of the pre-1600 period. Competition from both wealthy American and British collectors and European galleries increased their demand and circulation to the extent that, by the 1900s, the market for old master art at auction was equal to that for contemporary art.²¹ Most notably in London, by the end of the nineteenth century the National Gallery was universally recognised as the major UK repository for old master paintings. Opened in 1824, it had undergone a major reconstitution in 1855 and appointed Charles Eastlake as its first Director, shifting the aim of the Gallery from aspiring to be a collection of already acknowledged ‘masterpieces’, purchased according to the tastes of its earliest aristocratic Trustees, to a didactic and scholarly survey display able to chart the complete development of western European art from its origins in the mid-thirteenth century.

The association of the ‘old masters’ with Italy was reinforced by Eastlake’s acquisition policy, following the directive of the July 1855 Treasury Minute, which formally reconstituted the Gallery. Here, the hitherto overlooked early Italian schools were emphasised as the new priority for purchase, on the basis that they showed the development of the school up to the time of the painter Raphael (1483–1520), whose work was then considered the acme of ideal beauty, as well as providing examples of the much-admired tempera technique.²² Recent German scholarship also

²⁰ Ruth Hoberman, ‘Women in the British Museum Reading Room during the Late-Nineteenth and Early-Twentieth Centuries: From Quasi- to Counterpublic’, *Feminist Studies*, 28:3 (Autumn 2002), 489–512 (p. 491).

²¹ Barbara Pezzini, ‘Making a Market for Art: Agnew’s and the National Gallery’, unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Manchester, 2017, p. 140.

²² Nicholas Penny, ‘Raphael and the Early Victorians’, in *Raphael from Urbino to Rome*, ed. by Hugo Chapman, Tom Henry and Carol Plazzotta, exhibition catalogue (London: National Gallery Company, 2004), pp. 294–303. Early northern European art also formed an emphasis in the National Gallery’s early acquisitions, to provide examples of the development of oil painting. For an important reconsideration of the

encouraged interest in earlier Italian art and, as previously noted, Lady Eastlake and Jameson took an active role in promoting and disseminating continental ideas regarding the interpretation of art to a wider public. This was complemented by the work at the National Gallery, where the approach to acquisition and display was inspired by the example of certain pioneering European museums, especially those in Berlin, Dresden and Frankfurt.²³ There was a deliberate effort to furnish the national collection with examples of Italian painting, and this came to influence the focus of art historical study, contemporary publishing and public awareness. As *The Times* asserted in 1901, ‘by the term “Great Masters” the English public understands the great schools of Italian idealism’.²⁴

The National Gallery collection in London became a major centre for the circulation of Italian old master works and the publishing of art historical material, and this was crucial for women’s engagement with a discipline that was then experiencing a florescence in Britain. While France, Germany and Italy could boast a tradition of art history as a recognised academic pursuit since 1799, the first formalised taught course in Britain was not established until the founding of the Courtauld Institute of Art in 1932.²⁵ As such, the National Gallery functioned as a training ground informing the direction of research, and thereby influencing women’s writing of art history that was drawn from the example of the museum — and from examples *in* the museum — rather than the world of academia. However, as will be explored, women were not restricted by the demands of affiliation. Through their published output, they not only engaged, but also critiqued the displays on

neglected history of the reception of northern Renaissance art in nineteenth-century Britain, see: Nicola Sinclair, ‘Shifting Perspectives on German Renaissance Art’, unpublished doctoral thesis, University of York, 2016.

²³ Susanna Avery-Quash and Alan Crookham, ‘Art Beyond the Nation: A European Vision for the National Gallery’, in *The Museum is Open: Towards a Transnational History of Museums, 1750–1940*, ed. by Andrea Meyer and Benedicte Savoy (Berlin; Boston: De Gruyter, 2014), pp. 165–78.

²⁴ [Anon.], ‘Review of Books’, *The Times*, 21 December 1901, p. 9.

²⁵ For example, Johann Dominik Fiorillo (1748–1821) was the first professor to be appointed to a position in art history, in 1799 at the University of Göttingen, while Institutes of Art History were founded in Bonn, Leipzig and Strasbourg in 1873, Berlin in 1875 and Tübingen in 1894. Britain did not see its first correlating appointment until 1880 when Gerard Baldwin Brown (1849–1932) was named Watson Gordon Chair of Fine Art at the University of Edinburgh.

the walls at Trafalgar Square and therefore the narrative of art history that was being communicated to the public at large.

The women discussed in this study shared a British nationality. Those who emigrated to Italy continued to publish through their editorial and press networks in London, although in some cases they found it more advantageous to work with Italian publishing houses. In comparison to continental Europe, art historical publications by British women far outnumbered those produced by their foreign counterparts.²⁶ As noted above, the discipline in other European countries was predominantly shaped by the long-standing establishment of academic training in the field, then accessible only to men. This meant that publishers sought authors with academic qualifications to produce their books.²⁷ Art history in Victorian and Edwardian Britain was uniquely open to the contributions of women in ways that its more formalised manifestation on the continent was not. Yet the increasing institutionalisation of the discipline at the turn of the twentieth century would have a lasting impact on the subsequent place of women in its historiography. My focus on British women therefore offers a means to reframe our understanding not only of the formation of art history in Britain, but its relationship to the broader development of the discipline across Europe.

Other women, though important to the British art historical scene, feature less prominently in this thesis, namely the American-born Mary Berenson (1864–1945) and Lucy Olcott (1877–1922). Though key figures in their own right, their upbringing and education in America exposed them to different formative influences; furthermore, the work of these two women now forms the subject of important foundational studies by Tiffany Johnston and Imogen Tedbury.²⁸

²⁶ Amy Von Lintel, 'Surveying the Field: The Popular Origins of Art History in Nineteenth-Century Britain and France', unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Southern California, 2010, pp. 333–34.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 335.

²⁸ See Tiffany Johnston, 'Mary Berenson and the Conception of Connoisseurship', unpublished doctoral thesis, Indiana University, 2001 and Tiffany Johnston *Biography of Mary Berenson* (forthcoming); Imogen Tedbury, 'Collaboration and Correction: Re-examining the Writings of Lucy Olcott Perkins, "a lady resident in Siena"', *19: Interdisciplinary Studies in the Long Nineteenth Century*, 28 (2019), DOI: <<http://doi.org/10.16995/ntn.838>>. This is the first serious consideration of Olcott's contribution to art historical knowledge on early Sieneese painting.

Though focusing on women from Britain, it is necessary to acknowledge the evident London-centric focus of the women explored in this thesis. With London as the primary publishing location of the majority of texts discussed here and the principal site of the galleries, exhibitions and clubs which these writers frequented, this emphasis has been unavoidable. However, I have endeavoured to explore the contingencies for women who lived and worked outside London and the impact on professional reputation for women who did *not* integrate with this metropolitan network. Outside England, this thesis brings in women of other UK regions previously unexamined to date, such as Scottish-born Jean Carlyle Graham Speakman.

It is also important to acknowledge that late nineteenth-century women writers on art did not focus their attentions solely on Italy. It certainly formed the majority of their published output, which has consequently informed the scope of this thesis. Notable exceptions, however, include the significant body of work by Emilia Dilke (1840–1904) and her important revisionist studies of French art of the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries.²⁹ Other examples, such as the first biography in English of the German Renaissance artist Albrecht Dürer (1471–1538) and *Masterpieces of Flemish Art* (1869) by Mary Margaret Heaton (1836–83) or Ellen E. Minor’s (dates untraced) monograph on *Murillo* (1881) point to women’s engagement with continental art beyond Italy, suggesting worthwhile subjects for future study.³⁰

²⁹ On Dilke, see most recently: Hilary Fraser, ‘Writing Cosmopolis: The Cosmopolitan Aesthetics of Emilia Dilke and Vernon Lee’, *19: Interdisciplinary Studies in the Long Nineteenth Century*, 28 (2019), DOI: <<http://doi.org/10.16995/ntn.844>>; Elizabeth Mansfield, ‘Women, Art History, and the Public Sphere: Emilia Dilke’s Eighteenth Century’, in *Women, Femininity and Public Space in European Visual Culture, 1789–1914*, ed. by Temma Balducci and Heather Belnap Jensen (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2014), pp. 189–203.

³⁰ Mary Margaret Heaton, *Masterpieces of Flemish Art* (London: Bell and Daldy, 1869) and *History of the Life of Albrecht Dürer* (London: Macmillan, 1870). On Heaton see ‘Chapter 5: The Mothers of Art History? Women and the Production of Popular Art History’ in Lintel, ‘Surveying the Field’, pp. 317–75. The reception and collecting of Spanish art in Britain has received considerable scholarship: see for example, the chapter ‘The Art of Spain’ in Elizabeth Prettejohn, *Modern Painters, Old Masters: The Art of Imitation from the Pre-Raphaelites to the First World War* (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 2017), pp. 178–209 and Nigel Glendinning and Hilary Macartney, eds, *Spanish Art in Britain and Ireland, 1750–1920: Studies in Reception in Memory of Enriqueta Harris Frankfort* (Woodbridge: Tamesis, 2010).

There are certain other features common to the women discussed in this thesis. All were white, predominantly middle- and upper-class. In some cases, these women came from wealthier families with independent means so that publishing was not their livelihood, while others supported their families through their publishing. As Elizabeth Mansfield discusses in relation to Dilke, gender and social status had a direct influence on these women's decision to pursue a career in art writing.³¹ In some ways being a woman could aid their research, as Mary Philadelphia Merrifield (1804–89) observed regarding the ease with which she, as a 'Lady', obtained access to archival documents, otherwise jealously guarded from her male peers.³² These women received exposure to artistic and literary cultural circles from a young age, either through a senior male family connection, education at home by a tutor or training in artistic practice. The significant number of middle-class Anglophone women achieving visibility through publication as art historians during this period attests to their presence in the field — something which is in stark contrast to the recognition of their names today.³³

In tracing the formative development of these women as writers on art and their personal and professional networks, I have been able to differentiate the art historical camps to which they aligned themselves and the range of approaches pursued in their writing. As Barbara Pezzini has explored, the study of networks among art historians can elucidate the 'collaborative and social contexts of production, circulation, and consumption of works of art and their critique'.³⁴ Searching the archive for evidence of women's intellectual endeavour and influence is often a fragmentary process. The majority of the women examined here do not have their own dedicated archive, and surviving material is often limited in quantity and scattered among archives in a multitude of locations.

³¹ Mansfield, 'Women, Art History, and the Public Sphere', p. 190.

³² Zahira Véliz Bomford, 'The Art of Conservation: Mary Merrifield's Quest: A New Methodology for Technical Art History', *Burlington Magazine*, 159:1371 (June 2017), 465–75 (p. 473).

³³ Mansfield, 'Women, Art History, and the Public Sphere', fn. 4, p. 190.

³⁴ Barbara Pezzini, 'Towards a Network Analysis of Art Writers in Edwardian London: The *Art Journal*, *Connoisseur* and *Burlington Magazine* in 1903', *Art Libraries Journal*, 38:1 (2013), 12–19 (p. 12), DOI: <10.1017/S030747220001782X>.

One notable exception however is Julia Cartwright. Her archive is kept in Northamptonshire Record Office and presents the most cohesive and voluminous collection of extant material of any nineteenth-century female art historian examined to date. Comprising her personal annual diaries, preserved in their entirety from 1868 to 1919, a wealth of correspondence, newspaper cuttings and personal ephemera, it has, notwithstanding its completeness, received surprisingly little first-hand examination.³⁵ This original material deserves fresh investigation, which is something I have provided in this thesis. However, this has not been without its complications. Cartwright was in regular correspondence with connoisseur, writer and collector Bernard Berenson (1865–1959), attested to by a number of letters from Berenson in the material preserved in Northampton. Yet she is not listed as a correspondent in the handlist for the Berenson Archive at Villa I Tatti and her letters *to* Berenson appear not to have been retained in Florence. In other cases, the correspondence the women *received* from their male colleagues is for the most part still untraced and some careful interpretation has been necessary to suggest what may have constituted the missing half of the conversation. As Carole Gerson has discussed, the ‘contingencies of value’ inherent in the institution of the archive often replicates those same attitudes held by academics, which influence the selection of historical events and persons considered worthy of preservation for posterity.³⁶

It is therefore often the brief acknowledgments to established male figures, found in the prefaces to women’s publications, that have directed my research to relevant archives of such men and pockets of previously unexamined material. This approach has enabled me to interweave the history of these women and their work with the existing narrative of more famous practitioners, such

³⁵ Angela Emanuel’s edited collection of Cartwright’s diaries, *A Bright Remembrance: The Diaries of Julia Cartwright, 1851–1924* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1989), remains the main published source of this material and principal source for secondary discussion of Cartwright. While an invaluable primer to Cartwright and offering fascinating insight into the Victorian and Edwardian art scene, it covers a selective range of her diary entries and does not feature any of Cartwright’s correspondence.

³⁶ Carole Gerson, ‘Locating Female Subjects in the Archive’, in *Working in Women’s Archives: Researching Women’s Private Literature and Archival Documents*, ed. by Marlene Kadar (Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2001), pp. 7–22.

as Adolfo Venturi (1856–1941) the founder of the Italian journal *L'Arte* and later professor of medieval and modern art at the University of Rome, and the museum director Corrado Ricci (1858–1934). Elucidating these connections, my thesis throws fresh light on the Anglo-Italian art world of the late nineteenth century and builds upon existing scholarship that has traced the interconnected networks of an earlier generation of women art writers with noted figures such as the art historians Giovanni Battista Cavalcaselle (1819–1897) and John Arthur Crowe (1825–1896), and the aforementioned German authorities Passavant and Waagen.³⁷

It is important to emphasise from the start that the careers of these women defy any easy categorisation or straightforward 'path to professionalism', while the specific foci and approaches found in their writing vary considerably. The methodological approach of this thesis has therefore been directed by the texts they produced, rather than by biographical factors. Previous scholarship has tended to focus on individual biographical studies of the most familiar names, such as Dilke and Jameson.³⁸ During the early stages of research, the sheer number of texts written by women on the Italian old masters highlighted several names that have only briefly been referenced in previous scholarship, if at all. I wanted to incorporate these names, as a means to underscore how women writing art history in the late nineteenth century were far from an exception and to add new knowledge to the existing field of study.

The scarcity of primary material on certain figures made a biographical approach to the structuring of my thesis inadvisable. Predicated on a linear career path with recognisable, institutionally-validated achievements, the biographical approach 'has tended to reproduce

³⁷ See, for example: Neil MacGregor, 'Passavant and Lady Eastlake: Art History, Friendship and Romance', in *Correspondences: Festschrift für Margret Stufmann zum 24 Nov. 1996*, ed. by Hildegard Baureisen and Martin Sonnabend (Mainz: Schmidt, 1996), pp. 166–74.

³⁸ Clara Thomas, *Love and Work Enough: The Life of Anna Jameson* (London: Macdonald, 1967); Adele M. Holcomb, 'Anna Jameson: The First Professional English Art Historian', *Art History*, 6:2 (June 1983), 171–87; Judith Johnston, *Anna Jameson: Victorian, Feminist, Woman of Letters* (Aldershot: Scolar Press, 1997); Kali Israel, *Names and Stories: Emilia Dilke and Victorian Culture* (New York; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999).

essentially masculinist narrative structures’, which proves to be limiting when writing the history of women’s professional lives and scholarly contributions.³⁹ The effect of this can clearly be seen in Sherman and Holcomb’s first attempt at rehabilitating women as art historians, where a lack of biographical material prevented them from including Maud Cruttwell and Belle da Costa Greene (1883–1950) in their book.⁴⁰ The recent resurgence of interest in both these figures, particularly Cruttwell, provided a precedent for my own study, underscoring the necessity of developing a framework which could accommodate new names, even in the absence of a basic biographical foundation.⁴¹ To this end, I have chosen to approach my project through a combination of genre and geography. Each chapter focuses on a particular form of publication or means of disseminating art historical knowledge, contextualised by the place in which it was written, while capturing the particular moment of development for the discipline. While this has proved challenging in terms of marshalling the material into a structure that can accommodate a variety of texts, it has in many ways been a far more fruitful exercise than a more traditional biographical approach. My study brings new understanding to acknowledged figures, while also enabling me to include women about whom nothing has been written before. To complement my introduction of several new names to the field, I have included at the end of this thesis individual bibliographies of each writer, to provide as complete a list as possible of all of their publications which I have identified to date and to act as a resource for future study.⁴²

³⁹ Joan Bellamy, Anne Laurence and Gill Perry, ‘Introduction: Gender and Women’s History’, in *Women, Scholarship and Criticism: Gender and Knowledge c.1790–1900*, ed. by Joan Bellamy, Anne Laurence and Gill Perry (Manchester; New York: Manchester University Press, 2000), pp. 1–14 (p. 4).

⁴⁰ Sherman and Holcomb, *Women as Interpreters*, p. xx.

⁴¹ Tiffany Johnston, ‘Maud Cruttwell and the Berensons: “A preliminary canter to an independent career”’, *19: Interdisciplinary Studies in the Long Nineteenth Century*, 28 (2019), DOI: <<http://doi.org/10.16995/ntn.821>> and Francesco Ventrella, ‘Writing Under Pressure: Maud Cruttwell and the Old Master Monograph’, *ibid.*, DOI: <<https://doi.org/10.16995/ntn.831>>. On Belle da Costa Greene, see Flaminia Gennari-Santori, ‘“This Feminine Scholar”: Belle da Costa Greene and the Shaping of J. P. Morgan’s Legacy’, *Visual Resources*, 33:1–2 (2017), 182–97, DOI: <[10.1080/01973762.2017.1276723](https://doi.org/10.1080/01973762.2017.1276723)>.

⁴² These individual bibliographies can be found within the main bibliography of this thesis, at pp. 333–44.

Furthermore, while there is no strict chronological progression, my chosen framework does illuminate a marked development in terms of women's engagement with innovative modes and approaches to the writing of art history, formats into which their male colleagues did not often venture. My first two chapters focus on genres that remain mainstay formats for the discipline: the journal article and the monograph. The third chapter examines women's travel writing and guidebooks, a genre that enabled them to incorporate a more personal and embodied approach to their discussion of cultural objects and sites, performing their own version of being *cicerone* and speaking to non-specialist British visitors to Italy. Women's engagement with emerging heritage is the focus of my final chapter, an area of their work which was, arguably, their most ephemeral yet radical departure. Through local newspapers, activist campaigns and lectures, they raised awareness regarding the necessity of safeguarding of Italy's heritage, questioning the ethical propriety of removing works of art from Italy, at the same time that influential dealer-connoisseurs such as Bernard Berenson and Stefano Bardini (1836–1922) were financing their own careers through precisely this practice.

In her volume *Critical Voices* (2005), Meaghan Clarke discusses late nineteenth-century women journalists and their contemporary art criticism in the periodical press. Together with her articles detailing the establishment of art criticism as a viable professional occupation for women in the period 1870–90, this has laid the groundwork for my first chapter.⁴³ In Chapter One 'Becoming a 'Lady Art Critic': Writing Art History for the Periodical Press', I examine a selection of women's articles on the old masters that appeared in a range of art periodicals in the second half of the nineteenth century. From the popular mass-produced *Portfolio* (1870–93) and *Magazine of Art*

⁴³ Meaghan Clarke, *Critical Voices: Women and Art Criticism in Britain, 1880–1905* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005); Meaghan Clarke, 'Critical Mediators: Locating the Art Press', *Visual Resources*, 26:3 (2010), 226–41; Meaghan Clarke, 'The Art Press at the Fin de Siècle: Women, Collecting, and Connoisseurship', *Visual Resources*, 31:1–2 (2015), 15–30.

(1878–1904), to scholarly foreign titles such as the Italian *Archivio Storico dell'Arte* (established 1888, renamed *L'Arte* in 1898) and turn-of-the-century specialist magazines such as the *Burlington Magazine* (1903–present), periodicals provided a well-established entry point to a professional career in art writing. I explore the impact that writing for such organs had both on establishing women's authority and in contributing to the circulation of art historical knowledge. The wealth of primary material in Cartwright's archive that supplements her published articles makes her an ideal case study of how an upper-middle-class woman forged a career in writing on art historical matters through the press, establishing herself as a widely published and respected art historian. Cartwright's longest-running contribution was to the esteemed *Portfolio*, and I focus here on a selection of her articles for this periodical, which articulate her interest in issues such as original display, provenance, and unfamiliar old masters.

Lucy Baxter was a prolific, but as yet unexplored writer, who cultivated a similar network of editorial and journalistic connections during her residency in Florence. Publishing her work under a pseudonym — Leader Scott — Baxter too employed a longstanding practice utilised by women writers to negotiate their authorial identities in the literary market, as articulated by Vernon Lee in the opening quotation.⁴⁴ Along with Helen Zimmern, Baxter was one of several British women who were viewed as reputable authorities for the latest Florentine art news. Though located outside of the publishing centre of London, they secured regular appearances in publications such as the *Magazine of Art* and the *Illustrated London News*. Yet despite the success of such homegrown art periodicals, they were often seen to lag behind the scholarly and methodologically rigorous form of art historical investigation found in well-respected continental publications such as *L'Arte*. Many British writers turned to these journals as a means of circulating their research among their scholarly peers. For

⁴⁴ Catherine A. Judd, 'Male Pseudonyms and Female Authority in Victorian England', in John O. Jordan and Robert L. Patten, eds, *Literature in the Marketplace: Nineteenth-Century British Publishing and Reading Practices* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), pp. 250–68 (pp. 250–52).

Cruttwell, the empirical emphasis of these journals and the immediacy of the press enabled her to publish transcriptions of her archival discoveries in advance of publishing related monographs. With the establishment of the aforementioned *Burlington Magazine* as well as the *Connoisseur* (1901), English art history now had its own vehicles for disseminating news and research commensurate with continental titles. However, asserting one's authority in such publications necessitated navigating the increasingly restrictive boundaries of disciplinary institutionalisation, explored in the example of Edith Coulson James and her experience with the *Burlington*.

In relation to the popular dissemination of art history, Amy Von Lintel has recently questioned the critical bias that usually eschews mass-produced forms of art historical publishing from scholarly consideration, examining the impact of early survey histories of art by Nancy Bell (1844–1933) and Heaton.⁴⁵ Lintel, together with Julie Codell, Gabriel Guercio and Friederike Kitschen have renewed critical attention on the genre of the popular artist monograph.⁴⁶ In Chapter Two: 'Influencing the Canon: Monographs and Writing the Artist into History', I examine women's engagement with this genre, which came to prominence at the end of the nineteenth century. As yet unexplored is the fact that many of these women's contributions to this genre constituted the first separate English-language study of their subject old master; interestingly, they chose to write on artists who were for the most part considered unpopular and difficult for the general public to appreciate. Drawing together three examples of such studies — Cartwright on Andrea Mantegna (1431–1506), Cruttwell on Antonio del Pollaiuolo (c.1432–98), and Ethel Halsey on Gaudenzio

⁴⁵ Amy Von Lintel, 'Nancy Bell's Elementary History of Art and the British Origins of Popular Art History', *Nineteenth-Century Art Worldwide*, 14:2 (Summer 2015) <<http://www.19thc-artworldwide.org/summer15/lintel-on-bell-s-elementary-history-of-art-and-the-british-origins-of-popular-art-history>>.

⁴⁶ Lintel, "'Excessive Industry'"; Julie Codell, *The Victorian Artist: Artists' Life Writings in Britain, c.1870–1910* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003); Gabriele Guercio, *Art as Existence: The Artist's Monograph and Its Project* (Cambridge, Massachusetts; London: MIT Press, 2006); Friederike Kitschen, 'Making the Canon Visible: Art Historical Book Series in the Late Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries', in *Canons and Values: Ancient to Modern*, ed. by Larry Silver and Kevin Terraciano (Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute, 2019), pp. 216–44.

Ferrari (c.1480–1546) — this chapter examines how women made important, and lasting, interventions into the canon via this format. Developing the existing scholarship that has explored how earlier women writers like Callcott, Eastlake and Jameson successfully promoted the much-maligned Italian Primitives to a wider British public, this chapter explores how later generations of women made tactical authorial choices in a burgeoning field, taking advantage of gaps in English-language art criticism to promote the taste for those ‘difficult’ artists who straddled the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries.⁴⁷

By the latter half of the nineteenth century, seeing Italy became a matter of course if one was to make a career from writing on the old masters. Despite the wealth of scholarship on nineteenth-century women’s travel and travel writing to Italy, there is still limited examination of the art historical impact of these texts. However, progress has recently been made in this area by Isabelle Baudino and Caroline Palmer, in relation to the art historical emphasis of early women’s travel writing, while Judith Johnston has explored the effect of women’s increasing social and geographic mobility on their writing towards the end of the century.⁴⁸ I go on to draw this work together in my

⁴⁷ On British taste for the early Italian Primitives, see: Matthew T. W. Plampin, ‘From Rio to Romola: Morality and Didacticism in the English Appreciation of Early Italian Art, 1836–1863’, unpublished doctoral thesis, Courtauld Institute of Art, 2001; Susanna Avery-Quash, ‘The Growth of Interest in Early Italian Painting in Britain with Particular Reference to Pictures in the National Gallery’, in Dillian Gordon, *National Gallery Catalogues: The Fifteenth Century Italian Paintings* (London: National Gallery, 2003), pp. xxiv–xliv; Carly Collier, ‘British Artists and Early Italian Art, c.1770–1845’, unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Warwick, 2013; Maureen McCue, *British Romanticism and the Reception of Italian Old Master Art, 1793–1840* (Farnham, UK: Ashgate, 2014); Carly Collier, ‘From “Gothic Atrocities” to Objects of Aesthetic Appreciation: The Transition from Marginal to Mainstream of Early Italian Art in British Taste During the Long Eighteenth Century’, in *The Centre and the Margins in Eighteenth-Century British and Italian Cultures*, ed. by Frank O’Gorman and Lia Guerra (Newcastle upon Tyne, UK: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2013), pp. 117–30; Carly Collier, ‘Maria Callcott, Queen Victoria and the “Primitives”’, *Visual Resources*, 33:1–2 (2017), 27–47.

⁴⁸ Caroline Palmer, ‘“I Will Tell Nothing That I Did Not See”: British Women’s Travel Writing, Art and the Science of Connoisseurship, 1776–1860’, *Forum for Modern Language Studies*, 51:3 (2015), 248–68; Isabelle Baudino, ‘“Nothing seems to have escaped her”: British Women Travellers as Art Critics and Connoisseurs (1775–1825)’, *19: Interdisciplinary Studies in the Long Nineteenth Century*, 28 (2019), DOI: <<http://doi.org/10.16995/ntn.820>>; Judith Johnston, *Victorian Women and the Economies of Travel, Translation and Culture, 1830–1870* (Farnham, UK: Ashgate, 2013).

third chapter ‘Daughters of Corinne: Art Historical Tourism and Women’s Guidebooks to Italy’. Here I look to women’s publication of turn-of-the-century guidebooks produced and informed by their experiences of travelling and residing in Italy. I explore how women impacted art historical tourism through their self-positioning as informed mediators of Italy’s art and culture, continuing the tradition set by Germaine de Staël’s (1766–1817) *Corinne, Or Italy* (1807). This chapter takes Florence as its focus, drawing attention to three little-examined examples of women-authored guidebooks: Baxter’s *Castle of Vincigliata* (1898), Cartwright’s *Painters of Florence* (1901) and Cruttwell’s *Florentine Churches* (1908). These publications gained substantial success and I will examine how their authors shaped their own personal approach to the role of *cicerone*, while also demonstrating their willingness to work in genres that, though not now seen as ‘scholarly’, undoubtedly then had a wide reach.

Moving away from Florence, I then turn to explore women’s engagement with a city less familiar in the study of nineteenth-century art writing, namely Perugia. Here, I will examine Lina Duff Gordon and Margaret Symonds’ *The Story of Perugia* (1898) and Jean Carlyle Graham Speakman’s *The Problem of Fiorenzo di Lorenzo* (1904).⁴⁹ The former text is a guidebook, while the latter focuses on the work of an artist who lived and worked at Perugia, and the majority of whose authenticated works are preserved in Perugia’s Galleria Nazionale dell’Umbria. While Gordon and Symonds deliberately avoided the use of conventional art criticism, though nonetheless intending to encourage wider appreciation of Perugia’s artistic culture, Graham used her personal acquaintance with the city to question the conclusions in relation to certain attributional and dating issues reached by established connoisseurs like Bernard Berenson.

My fourth and final chapter, ‘Women at the Front Line: Campaigning for Heritage’, argues for greater recognition of women’s impact and influence on the developing arena of historic heritage

⁴⁹ This latter book was published under the name Jean Carlyle Graham, and the name Graham will be used to refer to this writer in this thesis.

preservation at the turn of the twentieth century. Recent scholarship by Zahira Bomford, Meaghan Clarke, Alexandra Loske and Caroline Palmer has demonstrated that women such as Merrifield and Christiana Herringham (1852–1929) produced crucial work in relation to old master painting techniques and conservation methods that remain influential on conservation practice to this day.⁵⁰ My chapter builds on this work, arguing that there were many other women whose later work helped to further other areas related to conservation and technical knowledge, specifically that of the burgeoning heritage movement. The protection of Italian artistic heritage became a major topic of debate in which women were active campaigners. Vernon Lee was a driving force behind the successful group the *Associazione per la difesa di Firenze antica* (Association for the Protection of Old Florence), established in 1898 to protect Florence’s Piazza di Parte Guelfa from proposed destruction as part of the local authority’s urban renewal project. I have sought to add to our understanding of women’s contributions to issues surrounding the conservation and protection of art, with an investigation of their activism at the moment that heritage emerged as a distinctly public cultural concern. There is still little critical literature on this particular area; however, recent work by Astrid Swenson has been especially influential for my own study, as have important arguments raised by Jordanna Bailkin, Kate Hill and Ruth Hoberman in relation to women, the politicisation of the museum space and debates on the public and private ownership of cultural property.⁵¹

⁵⁰ Caroline Palmer, ‘Colour, Chemistry and Corsets: Mary Philadelphia Merrifield’s Dress as a Fine Art’, *Costume*, 47:1 (2013), 3–27, DOI: <10.1179/0590887612Z.00000000012>; Meaghan Clarke, ‘On Tempera and Temperament: Women, Art, and Feeling at the *Fin de Siècle*’, *19: Interdisciplinary Studies in the Long Nineteenth Century*, 23 (2016), DOI: <<http://doi.org/10.16995/ntn.767>>; Alexandra Loske, ‘Mary Philadelphia Merrifield: Color History as Expertise’, *Visual Resources*, 33 (2017), 11–26, DOI: <10.1080/01973762.2016.1214802>; Meaghan Clarke, ‘“The Greatest Living Critic”: Christiana Herringham and the Practice of Connoisseurship’, *Visual Resources*, 33:1–2 (2017), 94–116, DOI: <10.1080/01973762.2017.1282658>; Zahira Véliz Bomford, ‘Navigating Networks in the Victorian Age: Mary Philadelphia Merrifield’s Writing on the Arts’, *19: Interdisciplinary Studies in the Long Nineteenth Century*, 28 (2019), DOI: <<http://doi.org/10.16995/ntn.826>>.

⁵¹ Jordanna Bailkin, *The Culture of Property: The Crisis of Liberalism in Modern Britain* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004); Ruth Hoberman, *Museum Trouble: Edwardian Fiction and the Emergence of Modernism* (Charlottesville; London: University of Virginia Press, 2011); Astrid Swenson, *The Rise of Heritage: Preserving the Past in France, Germany and England, 1789–1914* (Cambridge: Cambridge

In the broader field of scholarship into nineteenth-century British art writing and Italian Renaissance historiography, women have remained conspicuously absent or only fleetingly noted.⁵² However, a flourishing of recent scholarship, particularly of the last six years, has started to address this omission, bringing to light the names and contributions of a whole coterie of women writers publishing art history in the nineteenth century. It is within this work that my own thesis is placed, focusing especially on late nineteenth-century women and their influence on the formation of canonical art history, in relation to the Italian old masters of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.

My thesis questions why these women went missing from the history of the discipline and asks: where are they today? As previously stated, it is not the lack of concrete examples of women's work that is the problem, but the 'historiographical silencing' of this work, enacted by the discipline's institutionalisation in the early twentieth century.⁵³ This exclusion is then replicated beyond academia in general histories and thus to the wider public. For example, despite devoting equal coverage to male and female art historians in its individual biographical entries, the online *Dictionary of Art Historians*' introductory essay, 'An Outline History of the History of Art History', fails to mention any women until the 1960s, ironically demonstrating its own claim that 'a linear view of art history ignores many important influences'.⁵⁴ My thesis challenges the ongoing persistence of this lineage, arguing for a place for women whose lives and works may appear to be outside the boundaries of what we today consider professional or canonical, but who nonetheless made significant in-roads for the very development of that professionalism and canonicity, the many traces of which are still felt in our own practice today.

University Press, 2013); Kate Hill, *Women and Museums 1850–1914: Modernity and the Gendering of Knowledge* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2016).

⁵² See for example: Kate Flint, *The Victorians and the Visual Imagination* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000); Rachel Teukolsky, *The Literate Eye: Victorian Art Writing and Modernist Aesthetics* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2009).

⁵³ Meaghan Clarke and Francesco Ventrella, 'Introduction', *Visual Resources*, 33:1–2 (2017), 1–10 (pp. 6–7).

⁵⁴ [Anon.], 'An Outline of the History of Art History' <<http://arthistorians.info/about/outline>>.

CHAPTER ONE

BECOMING A ‘LADY ART CRITIC’:

WRITING ART HISTORY FOR THE PERIODICAL PRESS IN THE LATE NINETEENTH CENTURY

In 1892, the *Art Journal* (1839–1912) — one of the most popular and widely-read British art periodicals of its time — observed in an article titled ‘Art Critics of To-Day’: ‘several of the most admirable writers on Art during recent years have been, and are, highly cultivated women’.⁵⁵ The rise to prominence of women as recognised writers on art in the second half of the nineteenth century was aided by the establishment of dedicated periodicals like the *Art Journal*. While on the continent, periodicals such as France’s *Gazette des beaux-arts* (1859–present) and Germany’s *Zeitschrift für bildende Kunst* (1866–1932) were recognised for their informed scholarship and quality illustrations, it was only well into the latter decades of the nineteenth century that England’s own dedicated art periodicals come to the fore.⁵⁶ The emergence of a host of new titles catering specifically to the dissemination of art news and research, with other prominent examples being the *Portfolio* (1870–94) and *Magazine of Art* (1878–1904), provided a direct entry point for writing about art.⁵⁷

For women in particular, long-standing journalistic conventions facilitated their participation in the art press. The ability to write anonymously and the perceived respectability of the profession for middle-class women who needed to support a family were factors influencing the contributions and careers of writers like Elizabeth Eastlake and Anna Jameson.⁵⁸ Towards the end of the century, a

⁵⁵ Aliquis (pseud.), ‘Art Critics of To-Day’, *Art Journal* (July 1892), 193–97 (p. 193). Meaghan Clarke discusses this article in the context of women’s prominence as critics of contemporary art; see Clarke, *Critical Voices: Women and Art Criticism in Britain, 1880–1905* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005), pp. 3–7.

⁵⁶ Anthony Burton, ‘Nineteenth Century Periodicals’, in *The Art Press: Two Centuries of Art Magazines*, ed. by Trevor Fawcett and Clive Phillpot (London: The Art Book Company, 1976), pp. 3–10 (p. 7).

⁵⁷ Meaghan Clarke, ‘1894: The Year of the New Woman Art Critic’, *BRANCH: Britain, Representation and Nineteenth-Century History*, ed. by Dino Franco Felluga (2015)

<http://www.branchcollective.org/?ps_articles=meaghan-clarke-1894-the-year-of-the-new-woman-art-critic>.

⁵⁸ Judith Johnston and Hilary Fraser, ‘The Professionalization of Women’s Writing: Extending the Canon’, in *Women and Literature in Britain, 1800–1900*, ed. by Joanne Shattock (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), pp. 231–50. On the advantages of publishing anonymously for Lady Eastlake at the *Quarterly*

shift in societal attitudes resulted in journalism being actively promoted as a suitable occupation for women.⁵⁹ Moreover, entering the periodical press was often a more efficient way to make one's name known as a writer, being more easily accessible to prospective women writers than the book trade.⁶⁰

The art writing appearing in such organs as those named above has, for the most part, been examined by later commentators primarily for what it can tell us about the reception of contemporary artists, or the developments of modern artistic movements such as Aestheticism.⁶¹ The considerable space which they devoted to the old masters has received comparatively little examination to date. Of especial interest to my own research is the fact that several women who became established authorities on Italian old master art in the second half of the nineteenth century, first gained their reputations through their writings in such periodicals. Indeed, their articles make up a significant proportion of their published output and it is on this material that the current chapter focuses, examining women's contributions to the formation and circulation of knowledge on old master art through the late-century periodical press.

In exploring how women writers engaged with, contributed to and disseminated the latest cutting-edge information, I will demonstrate how they preferred to work not in isolation, but rather as active members of the broader art historical community. In particular, this chapter illuminates these women's connections with their now more famous male contemporaries. Julia Cartwright's

Review, see: Susanna Avery-Quash and Julie Sheldon, *Art for the Nation: The Eastlakes and the Victorian Art World* (London: National Gallery, 2011), pp. 73–74.

⁵⁹ F. Elizabeth Gray, ed., *Women in Journalism: Making a Name for Herself* (Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), pp. 4–7.

⁶⁰ Alexis Easley, 'Making a Debut', in *The Cambridge Companion to Victorian Women's Writing*, ed. by Linda H. Peterson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), pp. 15–27 (p. 16–17).

⁶¹ For example, see: Helen E. Roberts, 'Exhibition and Review: The Periodical Press and the Victorian Art Exhibition System,' in *The Victorian Periodical Press: Sampling and Soundings*, ed. by Joanne Shattock and Michael Wolff (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1982), pp. 79–107; Katherine Haskins, *The Art-Journal and Fine Art Publishing in Victorian England, 1850–1880* (Farnham, Surrey; Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2012).

influence on promoting the young connoisseur and dealer Bernard Berenson's new theories, or Edith Coulson James' appeal to Adolfo Venturi for support of her own theories, underscores how these women were active and acknowledged participants in art historical communities at the turn-of-the-century. Furthermore, just as earlier women writers positioned themselves as disseminators of the pioneering art historical scholarship promoted by German critics and curators such as Franz Kugler (1808–58) and Gustav Waagen, this chapter underscores how later writers were influential in promoting ideas regarding the new 'scientific method' of connoisseurship as espoused in the work of the Italian critic and connoisseur Giovanni Morelli (1816–91).

In the first section of this chapter, 'Victorian Art Periodicals and the Rise of the Art Critic in the Early Nineteenth Century', I will contextualise my exploration of the periodical contributions of women writers on the Italian old masters by establishing the status of the Victorian art periodical and the emergence of the art critic in the first half of the century. The second section, 'Becoming a 'lady art critic' in London: Julia Cartwright and the *Portfolio*', follows the development and early success of Cartwright, with a focus on her contributions to the *Portfolio*, one of the most prestigious art journals then in publication. Examining a selection of Cartwright's articles published in the *Portfolio*, I will demonstrate how she anticipated and treated some of the most pressing art historical debates of the day.

The third section, 'From the City of Flowers: Writing for the Periodical Press from Florence', moves to that other major nineteenth-century centre for Anglophone art history, Florence, to examine how women acted as cultural mediators between this city and London. Lucy Baxter and Helen Zimmern were prominent members of the Anglo-Florentine community who established themselves in Florence's local journalism network, while remaining favoured contributors with editors of journals published in London. Unlike book publishing, the fast-paced nature of the periodical press made it an amenable vehicle for communicating the latest art historical news and discoveries to an eager readership. During the 1880s and 1890s, both women were regular contributors to publications

such as the *Illustrated London News* and *Magazine of Art*. I will examine how their cosmopolitan identity informed their contributions, exploring the advantageous position a woman writer could occupy as a correspondent for the latest art events from Florence. Competency with modern foreign languages was an essential skill among women writing about the old masters, and meant that foreign art periodicals were also open as a means through which to publish. Towards the turn of the century, developments in art historical practice and the declining reputation of certain older and catch-all British art periodicals, made publishing in esteemed Italian journals such as *L'Arte* and *Rassegna d'arte* (1901–14, thereafter *Rassegna d'arte antica e moderna* until 1922) a preferable option for the ambitions of writers such as Maud Cruttwell and Constance Jocelyn Ffoulkes (1858–1950). The second half of this section will examine their preferences and ambitions in this regard.

The final section of this chapter, 'Writing for the New Art Magazines', begins with an examination of three important periodical articles published in prominent journals by Mary Berenson, Julia Cartwright and Elizabeth Eastlake, signalling the advent of a new chapter for the development of art history in Britain. I will then explore the challenges faced by women seeking to publish in Britain's long-awaited answer to such respected and established foreign journals – the *Burlington Magazine* (1903–present). The origins of the *Burlington* were beset with rivalry and financial difficulty, as has been well-documented.⁶² However, with the exception of the British artist, copyist and patron Christiana Herringham (one of the few women, together with Julia Frankau (1859–1916) and Edith Nevill Jackson (dates untraced) to sit on its Consultative Committee), the contributions of other women to the *Burlington's* early years have been rarely examined.⁶³ Consequently, an exploration of what the example of the *Burlington* can tell us about women's

⁶² Helen Rees Leahy, "For Connoisseurs": *The Burlington Magazine* 1903–11', in *Art History and Its Institutions: Foundations of a Discipline*, ed. by Elizabeth Mansfield (London: Routledge, 2002), pp. 231–45; Caroline Elam, "A More and More Important Work": Roger Fry and *The Burlington Magazine*', *Burlington Magazine*, 145:1200 (March 2003), 142–52.

⁶³ Meaghan Clarke, "The Greatest Living Critic": Christiana Herringham and the Practice of Connoisseurship', *Visual Resources*, 33:1–2 (2017), 94–116, DOI: <10.1080/01973762.2017.1282658>; Elam, "A More and More Important Work", p. 146.

opportunities and career paths in the art press, at a moment of increasing professionalisation and formalisation for the discipline, will be a useful and timely addition to scholarship. This will be investigated through a case study of Edith Coulson James and the influence of the editor Roger Fry (1866–1934) over her attempts to secure endorsement from the *Burlington* for her attribution of a self-portrait by the Bolognese artist Francesco Francia (c.1447–1517).

Drawing together a range of texts from across the late-century art press, this chapter seeks not only to illuminate women’s work through these media, but also to nuance further current understanding of what Anne Helmreich describes as the ‘death’ of the Victorian art periodical and the rise of specialist magazines, through the mapping of activities and contributions of women writers during a moment of great upheaval.⁶⁴

1.1 Victorian Art Periodicals and the Rise of the Art Critic in the Early Nineteenth Century

Writing in 1845, the art historian Anna Jameson encapsulated a pivotal moment for the development of art history in Britain:

In these days, when we cannot walk through the streets even of a third-rate town without passing shops filled with engravings and prints, when not our books only but the newspapers that lie on our tables are illustrated; when the ‘Penny Magazine’ can place a little print after Mantegna at once before the eyes of fifty thousand readers [...] we find it difficult to throw our imagination back to a time when such things were not.⁶⁵

The mid-century boom in the printing press, combined with rapidly developing technologies enabling more sophisticated and economical means of image reproduction, resulted in unprecedented circulation and visibility of the art of the old masters. The *Penny Magazine* (1832–45) played a

⁶⁴ Anne Helmreich, ‘The Death of the Victorian Art Periodical’, *Visual Resources*, 26:3 (2010), 242–53, DOI: <10.1080/01973762.2010.499646>.

⁶⁵ Anna Jameson, *Memoirs of the Early Italian Painters, and of the Progress of Painting in Italy, from Cimabue to Bassano*, 2 vols (London: Knight, 1845), vol. 1, p. 168. This was a collected volume of Jameson’s reprinted articles, which had originally appeared in the *Penny Magazine*, as discussed below.

significant early role in this circulation, as did Jameson herself. Her series ‘Essays on the Lives of Remarkable Painters’ (1843–45) comprised forty-seven articles published in that magazine, each treating an individual Italian artist and accompanied with wood engravings (**fig 1.1**). Appearing in chronological order, covering Cimabue (documented 1272–died 1302) to Titian (active c.1506–died 1576), the series proved an early successful attempt in English-language art history to disseminate knowledge and visual awareness of the Italian old masters through the periodical press, to a broad non-specialist audience.⁶⁶

Despite the popularity of the *Penny Magazine*, it ceased publication in 1845 and its mid-century imitators, such as *Reynolds’s Miscellany* (1846–69) and *Cassell’s Illustrated Family Paper* (1853–67), as generalist magazines, mainly purveyed the idea of ‘art largely for entertainment’s sake’.⁶⁷ For the most part, the *Penny Magazine* proved an exception among British periodicals which avowedly dedicated themselves to cultural matters in the early decades of the nineteenth century. The majority tended to be short-lived ventures, their offering on the artistic front consisting of lengthy essays espousing aesthetic philosophy or literary responses to the fine arts.⁶⁸ Mainstream periodicals such as *Blackwood’s Edinburgh Magazine* (1817–1980), and the *Athenaeum* (1828–1921), which featured art-related content, did so principally in the form of artist biographies, but were also important sources for reviews of the latest exhibitions and art-related publications.⁶⁹ Importantly for the art writers themselves, having a review accepted in such periodicals was a crucial

⁶⁶ Susanna Avery-Quash, ‘Illuminating the Old Masters and Enlightening the British Public: Anna Jameson and the Contribution of British Women to Empirical Art History in the 1840s’, *19: Interdisciplinary Studies in the Long Nineteenth Century*, 28 (2019), DOI: <<http://doi.org/10.16995/ntn.832>>.

⁶⁷ Patricia Anderson, *The Printed Image and the Transformation of Popular Culture, 1790–1860* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991), p. 110.

⁶⁸ Burton, ‘Nineteenth Century Periodicals’, p. 4. For example, one type of the kind of periodical Burton describes was the *Annals of Fine Arts* (1816–20), which saw the first publication of John Keats’ (1795–1821) poem, ‘On a Grecian Urn’ (1819).

⁶⁹ Julie Codell, ‘Art Periodicals’, in *The Routledge Handbook to Nineteenth-Century British Periodicals and Newspapers*, ed. by Andrew King, Alexis Easley and John Morton (London; New York: Routledge, 2016), pp. 377–89 (p. 378).

indicator of their success and represented a significant milestone within their careers, as Ainslie Robinson has explored in relation to Jameson's literary debut.⁷⁰

It was the appearance of a sixteen-page pamphlet entitled the *Art-Union* in 1839 that signalled the advent of the English art periodical proper. Following its rebranding as the *Art Journal* in 1849 (it continued under this name until 1912), it transformed into a quarto publication, furnished with multiple wood- and steel-engravings to rival the visual appeal of its various European counterparts.⁷¹ By 1851, the *Art Journal* achieved a monthly circulation of almost 25, 000, indicative of the increasing popularity — and thus influence — of the press in the cultural arena.⁷² Together with the establishment of the *Portfolio* in 1870 and the *Magazine of Art* in 1878, these periodicals became 'self-appointed arbiters of the art world'.⁷³

Such periodicals have generally been cast as amateur precedents to their more scholarly early twentieth-century counterparts, the *Connoisseur* and the *Burlington Magazine*. Their coverage of the old masters in the intervening years prior to the arrival of these latter art magazines has perhaps been overlooked, particularly in comparison to established foundational texts such as John Arthur Crowe and Giovanni Battista Cavalcaselle's *A New History of Painting in Italy* (1864–66) and *A History of Painting in North Italy* (1871).⁷⁴ Yet publications such as Crowe and Cavalcaselle's erudite reference book were not easily assimilated into a wider public reception, being frequently criticised for their dry and pedantic style, not least by other critics.⁷⁵ In the intermediary decades before the

⁷⁰ Ainslie Robinson, 'Stalking Through the Literary World: Anna Jameson and the Periodical Press, 1826–1860', *Victorian Periodicals Review*, 33:2 (Summer 2000), 165–77.

⁷¹ Burton, 'Nineteenth-Century Periodicals', p. 6; Haskins, *The Art-Journal*, p. 11.

⁷² Codell, 'Art Periodicals', p. 379.

⁷³ Helmreich, 'Death of the Victorian Art Periodical', p. 244.

⁷⁴ J. A. Crowe and G. B. Cavalcaselle, *A New History of Painting in Italy from the Second to the Sixteenth Century*, 3 vols (London: John Murray, 1864–66); J. A. Crowe and G. B. Cavalcaselle, *A History of Painting in North Italy: Venice, Padua, Vincenza, Verona, Ferrara, Milan, Friuli, Brescia, from the Fourteenth to the Sixteenth Century*, 2 vols (London: John Murray, 1871).

⁷⁵ Caroline Elam, *Roger Fry and Italian Art* (London: Ad Illisum; Burlington Magazine, 2019), p. 91. Elizabeth Eastlake was particularly disparaging of Crowe and Cavalcaselle's style, see: Avery-Quash and Sheldon, *Art for the Nation*, pp. 191–93.

establishment of specialist journals, publications like the *Portfolio* functioned as a principal source of new information on the old masters. As a key publishing outlet for aspiring art historians aimed at audiences beyond the informed circles of the art critic or connoisseur, such journals provided a source of nineteenth-century art history writing that merits greater critical examination.

The emergence of these journals coincided with that of the art critic, who became a significant figure in the British press from the 1860s, as art criticism accrued greater cultural importance and influence.⁷⁶ Two key mid-century developments in journalism informed this cultural ascendance: the move away from anonymity, towards publishing signed articles, and the emphasis on dedicated personal study of works of art and related critical texts.⁷⁷ Both factors had important implications for women's access to the profession.

Anonymity went hand-in-hand with generalisation, enabling women to capitalise on the multifarious nature of the periodical press by writing on a variety of subjects, including those that would have been deemed unsuitable under a recognisably 'feminine' authorial identity.⁷⁸ This approach can be seen in the example of Elizabeth Eastlake, who often appropriated a male persona for her articles in the *Quarterly Review*.⁷⁹ However, this also entailed a scattering of expertise across a range of different publications and under varying personae, making it difficult to cohere a consistent body of work to a single, recognisable name. The increasing use of a signature in journals in the second half of the century enabled greater public visibility and therefore recognition as a specialist, a significant difference from the context in which Eastlake was writing.⁸⁰ The women under review in this thesis were on the cusp of this period of transition.

⁷⁶ Elizabeth Prettejohn, 'Aesthetic Value and the Professionalization of Victorian Art Criticism, 1837–78', *Journal of Victorian Culture*, 2:1 (Spring 1997), 71–94 (p. 73).

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 74–75.

⁷⁸ Alexis Easley, *First-Person Anonymous: Women Writers and Victorian Print Media, 1830–70* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004), pp. 1–7.

⁷⁹ Avery-Quash and Sheldon, *Art for the Nation*, pp. 190–92.

⁸⁰ Clarke, *Critical Voices*, p. 21. See also the discussion of the growth of the art press and the female voice in Fiona Mann, 'Lifting the "Universal Veil" of Anonymity: Writers on Art in the British Periodical Press 1850–1880', *British Art Journal*, 15:2 (2014), 33–46 (pp. 39–40).

In relation to personal familiarity with works of art, a new emphasis on first-hand observation became a mainstay strategy used by women art writers throughout the century to authenticate their scholarship. As established by Caroline Palmer, the ‘increasingly scientific approach to art criticism [...] offered women an advantage, as it valued individual knowledge acquired through empirical experience above innate taste’.⁸¹ This approach underscored the production of important texts such as Maria Callcott’s *Description of the Chapel of the Annunziata dell’Arena; or Giotto’s Chapel, in Padua* (1835), where her observations made ‘on the spot’ in Padua in November 1827 informed Callcott’s descriptions of the frescoes and the accompanying line drawings by her husband, the artist Augustus Wall Callcott (1779–1844).⁸²

For early Victorian women art writers, the culture and type of press available meant they had to work with generalist review periodicals, and publish translations or travel memoirs to establish themselves, spreading their research through a range of outlets, where their art criticism was often printed alongside an eclectic variety of other material. With the establishment of dedicated art journals in the second half of the century, women could add their voices to the growing art press as individualised and specialised contributors, pursuing art writing as their principal literary output. One key figure who built on the foundation established by her earlier counterparts, to disseminate art historical scholarship to a wider audience, was Cartwright. Although she became one of the most prominent names in the pages of the *Portfolio*, *Art Journal* and *Magazine of Art*, among other journals, her prolific periodical output has yet to be examined in any depth.

However, Easley makes the important observation that this was not a positive development for all women writers. The push for signed work made it difficult for women who actively chose a low-profile career, while also embedding a qualitative cultural distinction between signed publications and ‘low-brow’ anonymous literary production (*First-Person Anonymous*, p. 5).

⁸¹ Caroline Palmer, “‘I Will Tell Nothing That I Did Not See’”: British Women’s Travel Writing, Art and the Science of Connoisseurship, 1776–1860’, *Forum for Modern Language Studies*, 51:3 (2015), 248–68 (p. 249).

⁸² *Ibid.*, p. 260.

1.2 Becoming a ‘lady art critic’ in London: Julia Cartwright and the *Portfolio*

Born into gentry stock of Anglican persuasion, Cartwright was the third of nine children (**fig 1.2**).

The two close-knit branches of her family resided at Edgcote and Aynhoe House, both in Northamptonshire.⁸³ Presiding over the latter household was Cartwright’s uncle, the art collector and Member of Parliament William Cornwallis Cartwright (1825–1915).⁸⁴ It was in her uncle’s private art collection at Aynhoe that Cartwright first encountered old master paintings, including works by Giovanni Battista Cima da Conegliano (c.1459/60–c.1517/18), Mariotto Albertinelli (1474–1515) and Bartolomé Esteban Murillo (1617–82) (**fig. 1.3**). Some of these he lent to important exhibitions in London, including the Royal Academy’s annual Winter Exhibitions, which had been dedicated to the old masters from 1870.⁸⁵ A supporter of the Italian Risorgimento, Cornwallis Cartwright regularly spent time in Rome, while hosting Italian visitors and artist friends such as Giovanni Costa (1826–1903) and Frederic Leighton (1830–96) at his home.⁸⁶ Cartwright therefore grew up in an environment infused with the appreciation of both old master and contemporary art.

Both Edgcote and Aynhoe had well-stocked libraries, and through her private education at home, Cartwright acquired proficiency in French, German and Italian.⁸⁷ A voracious reader of periodicals, she had easy access to the *Quarterly Review* at Edgcote together with the *Pall Mall*,

⁸³ Angela Emanuel, ‘Julia Cartwright 1851–1924: Art Critic and Historian of Renaissance Italy’, unpublished doctoral thesis, University College London, 1985, p. 1. For a general biography of Cartwright, see: Maria Alambritis, ‘Julia Cartwright’, in *The Palgrave Encyclopedia of Victorian Women’s Writing: Living Edition*, ed. by Lesa Scholl (Palgrave Macmillan, 2020) <<https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-02721-6>>.

⁸⁴ Petà Dunstan, ‘Cartwright, William Cornwallis (1825–1915), politician and journalist’, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (3 January 2008) <<https://www.oxforddnb.com/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-45518>>.

⁸⁵ Emanuel, ‘Julia Cartwright’, p. 5. Cornwallis Cartwright exhibited paintings from his collection regularly: See cat. nos 3, 16, 33, 72, 200, 249, 335 and 373 in Charles Boyd Curtis, *Velazquez and Murillo: a descriptive and historical catalogue of the works of Don Diego de Silva Velazquez and Bartolomé Estéban Murillo, comprising a classified list of their paintings, with descriptions* (London: Sampson Low, 1883) and cat. nos 23 and 26 in *Exhibition of the Works of Old Masters and Deceased Masters of the British School*, Winter Exhibition, 35th year, exhibiton catalogue (London: William Clowes and Sons, 1904).

⁸⁶ Dunstan, ‘Cartwright, William Cornwallis’; Emanuel, ‘Julia Cartwright’, p. 5.

⁸⁷ Emanuel, ‘Julia Cartwright’, pp. 12–14.

Fortnightly Review, and *Cornhill Magazine*, while her father's membership of the London Library made available a range of other material.⁸⁸ Spurred on by her lessons in Italian and the paintings she had seen at Aynhoe, she determined to 'find out all [she could] about the different schools of painting', ahead of the family's first trip to Italy in 1868.⁸⁹

It is in her diaries that we find details concerning precisely what Cartwright read to achieve her aim. Alongside consulting the hallowed *Vite* of Giorgio Vasari, Cartwright familiarised herself with the works of Jameson and John Ruskin. Her artistic preferences during her early twenties reflected the on-going influence these authors wielded on Victorian taste. Initially drawn to write on the early Italian painters, she confessed to her uncle Stephen Fremantle (1845–74) that her reading proved 'delightful work, even if I can't make much out of it after Mrs. Jameson and Ruskin — one especially charming book I have come across is Rio's *Art Chrétien*'.⁹⁰ Cartwright was acutely aware that she faced a 'very uphill task at first, as the market is overstocked already and hardly any editors will look at mss [manuscripts] from unknown authors'.⁹¹ Much to her distress, her worst fears were realised when in 1873, an article on Giotto (c.1267/76–1337) into which she had poured 'all the study of last winter' was rejected by *Macmillan's Magazine*.⁹² Nonetheless, Cartwright felt that she had:

at least acquired a stock of knowledge on the art history of Italy that I knew nothing of before and will be useful all my life. It seems to have opened quite fresh fields of reading and I never found a subject that suited me better.⁹³

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 17.

⁸⁹ Angela Emanuel, ed., *A Bright Remembrance: The Diaries of Julia Cartwright, 1851–1924* (London: Wiedenfeld and Nicholson, 1989), p. 30 (22 April 1868).

⁹⁰ Julia Cartwright to Stephen Fremantle, 19 October 1872 [CE 27/38], CENA, quoted in Emanuel, 'Julia Cartwright', p. 34. Alexis-François Rio (1797–1874) was a French writer on art, whose *De la poésie chrétienne* (1835), later expanded into the four-volume *De l'art chrétien* (1861–67), was a pioneering text for the promotion of early Catholic art in Britain.

⁹¹ Emanuel, *A Bright Remembrance*, p. 59 (31 December 1871).

⁹² *Ibid.*, p. 65 (15 May 1873).

⁹³ *Ibid.*

The challenges to making her name heard in a field then dominated by the likes of Jameson and Ruskin spurred Cartwright to keep abreast of the latest developments. For example, Crowe and Cavalcaselle's *New History of Painting* was a particularly important source in aiding her visual knowledge and she studied the accompanying engravings to 'know every feature and every head by heart'.⁹⁴ However, conscious of the need to develop her own distinct approach if she was to command the attention of prospective editors, Cartwright was not averse to formulating her own critiques of those prominent voices in art criticism. Describing Walter Pater's *Studies in the History of the Renaissance* (1873) as 'perfectly pagan', she admired his distinctive and novel style of writing, but felt Pater's assertion of 'the childishness of religious aim in Giotto' showed unreasonable irreverence towards the spiritual beauty of this early Italian artist's work.⁹⁵ Through her family connection with the Aclands, Cartwright was able to attend her first lecture, which was given by Ruskin at Keble College, Oxford in 1871.⁹⁶ Cartwright recorded her aversion to Ruskin's highly moralistic approach: 'I like his ideas extremely and it was immensely interesting. The only thing I object to is the way he abuses artists he differs from as if they must necessarily be wicked'.⁹⁷ At the age of twenty therefore, Cartwright was already developing her own ideas particularly in relation to what Elizabeth Prettejohn has described as the '1500 divide'. A dominating factor dictating mid-Victorian taste in the old masters, this categorisation of Italian Renaissance art saw the year 1500 as a pivotal moment, upon which artists active on either side were cast as 'ideal' or in 'decline', depending on preferred taste. For Ruskin, a prime exponent of this concept, pre-1500 artists such as Cimabue and Giotto were championed in opposition to the corrupted work of a post-1500 Titian or

⁹⁴ Diary entry of 15 May 1873, quoted in Emanuel, 'Julia Cartwright', p. 37.

⁹⁵ Emanuel, *A Bright Remembrance*, p. 64 (30 April 1873).

⁹⁶ Sir Henry Acland (1815–1900), Regius Professor of Medicine at Christ Church, Oxford, as well as curator of the university's art collection, was a close friend of Ruskin's.

⁹⁷ Emanuel, *A Bright Remembrance*, pp. 57–8 (23 February 1871). Cartwright acknowledged the influence of Ruskin throughout her life and wrote the homage to him published in the *Quarterly Review*: Anon. [Julia Cartwright], 'John Ruskin', *Quarterly Review* (April 1900), 393–414. Amongst her papers at Northampton are numerous cuttings of his obituaries.

Michelangelo (1475–1564).⁹⁸ Cartwright’s departure from this norm and willingness to bridge this divide was a crucial step towards influencing her choice of subject matter that would shape her own distinctive critical view and lead to her success as a contributor to art journalism.

For a young woman residing outside London, maintaining a connection to this publishing and artistic centre was vital for ensuring literary success. Cartwright quickly became adept at forming important contacts and broadening her network. The importance of cultivating such a network for the establishment of Cartwright’s professional literary persona, and that of other women discussed in this thesis, cannot be overstated. As Linda Peterson and others have argued, Victorian women writers should be situated alongside their male contemporaries ‘as contributors to a period or movement in literary history’ and, importantly, as ‘members of a regional coterie or professional group’.⁹⁹ Cartwright presents an especially fruitful figure for determining the influence and position of a woman writer in art history in this regard, thanks to the abundance of extant, if hitherto overlooked, archival documentation.

Surviving letters from Charles Appleton (1841–79), founder and editor of the *Academy* (1869–1916), provide evidence of an important early contact for Cartwright in the periodical press. Following her submission of an unsolicited review of the historian and novelist Margaret Oliphant’s (1828–97) *The Makers of Florence* (1866), Appleton offered to visit Cartwright at Edgcote to ‘set her on the right path’ and discuss the potential of her contributing to the journal.¹⁰⁰ The importance of such visits for a young, unmarried woman residing away from the capital is emphasised in Cartwright’s record of Appleton’s first visit in August 1877:

I think I have never talked so hard or heard so much literary conversation in my life as in

⁹⁸ Elizabeth Prettejohn, *Old Masters, Modern Painters: The Art of Imitation from the Pre-Raphaelites to the First World War* (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 2017), pp. 103–04.

⁹⁹ Linda H. Peterson, ‘Introduction’ to Peterson, ed., *The Cambridge Companion to Victorian Women’s Writing* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), pp. 1–6.

¹⁰⁰ Charles Appleton to Julia Cartwright, 3 May 1877 [CE/A/VII/101/2], CENA.

these last two days [...] he looked at my photos, at the Angelicos and the Della Robbias and Botticelli [...] we talk of his and my literary plans. *His great advice to me is to stick to art.*¹⁰¹

Appleton's encouragement of Cartwright and his advice to her to find a specialism recalls the same advice given to Emilia Dilke by her first husband, Mark Pattison (1813–84).¹⁰² In response, Appleton sent Cartwright's articles to established critics such as Sidney Colvin (1845–1927) and Philip Hamerton (1834–94), the latter being the editor at the respected *Portfolio*. Meanwhile, Appleton mentored Cartwright in securing the attention of editors, advising her to 'cultivate style a little more, if you want to get on [their] soft side. They are savage creatures and require this bait, like Cerberus'.¹⁰³ Cartwright's efforts were soon rewarded when her article on Giotto, previously rejected by *Macmillan's*, was accepted in 1877 by the *New Quarterly Magazine*.¹⁰⁴ Appleton wrote to congratulate Cartwright warmly on her success: 'let this be an encouragement to you to cherish and still further enrich your admirable and scholarly talent in this direction'.¹⁰⁵

It was not only Cartwright who gained from social visits to her home. Appleton saw an opportunity to profit from her location in Northamptonshire and the wide network of her family's social connections. Expressing his anxiety over the *Academy's* limited circulation in London, he requested her support in gaining interest in the periodical in the regions, asking Cartwright if she would 'write to some of [her] numerous friends and ask them to take it in?' and 'get say ten subscribers for [him] in the country [...]'.¹⁰⁶ This example adds to our understanding of women writers and the often unrecognised channels through which they exerted some influence in the press, while also demonstrating Cartwright's ability to cultivate relationships of mutual respect and support

¹⁰¹ Emanuel, *A Bright Remembrance*, p. 93 (8 August 1877). Own emphasis.

¹⁰² Elizabeth Mansfield, 'Articulating Authority: Emilia Dilke's Early Essays and Reviews', *Victorian Periodicals Review*, 31:1 (Spring 1998), 75–86 (p. 77).

¹⁰³ Appleton to Cartwright, 19 July 1877 [CE/A/VII/101/4], CENA.

¹⁰⁴ Julia Cartwright, 'Giotto', *New Quarterly Magazine*, 9 (October 1877), 169–202.

¹⁰⁵ Appleton to Cartwright, 10 October 1877, [CE/A/VII/101/6], CENA.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*

among influential and established male colleagues.

Cartwright's introduction to Hamerton was a turning point for her publishing ambitions. The *Portfolio* was among the most specialised art journals of the 1870s and 1880s and its contributors actively imitated the latest scholarly and connoisseurial modes of writing about art.¹⁰⁷

With Appleton's endorsement, Hamerton added Cartwright to the roster of *Portfolio* contributors, marking the beginning of a long and fruitful collaboration between author and journal.¹⁰⁸ It brought Cartwright into a circle of prominent art critics and museum professionals, including Colvin, Vernon Lee and Claude Phillips (1846–1924).¹⁰⁹ Cartwright developed a close friendship with Lee, the two often visiting the National Gallery together when Lee was in London. Colvin remained a strong supporter of Cartwright's work, writing recommendations to the *Quarterly Review* and *Magazine of Art* for her and later, as Keeper of Prints and Drawings at the British Museum (from 1883–1912), facilitating her visits to this collection. Phillips, the future Keeper of the Wallace Collection (from 1897–1911), also remained a close contact for Cartwright.¹¹⁰

Aimed at a well-educated readership with an appetite for informed art criticism, the *Portfolio* is described by James Kissane as 'marked by the intention of informing public taste without startling it' — at least in relation to its articles on contemporary art.¹¹¹ Cartwright wrote numerous articles, but on the art, history and culture of the Italian Renaissance, inspired by her regular travel to Italy.

¹⁰⁷ Julie Codell, "Moderate Praise": The Contribution to Art Criticism of *The Portfolio*, *Victorian Periodicals Review*, 20:3 (Autumn 1987), 83–93.

¹⁰⁸ The *Portfolio* ran from 1870 to 1893, and it was the journal to which Cartwright would contribute the most work over the longest period of time, publishing 45 articles between 1878 and 1894. After this date, the *Portfolio* changed its format and became an annual series of artist monographs, written by esteemed critics. Cartwright was commissioned to write three of these: *Jules Baptiste-Lepange* (1894), *The Early Work of Raphael* (1895) and *Raphael in Rome* (1895).

¹⁰⁹ Codell, 'Moderate Praise', pp. 84–5.

¹¹⁰ Although Cartwright found that Colvin's expertise was not what she anticipated, noting after a visit to view drawings by Raphael in preparation for her monograph on the artist: 'I am a little disappointed to find he knew less than I do about Raphael's drawings [...]' in Emanuel, *A Bright Remembrance*, p. 190 (22 October 1894).

¹¹¹ James Kissane, 'Art Historians and Art Critics — IX: P. G. Hamerton, Victorian Art Critic', *Burlington Magazine*, 114:826 (January 1972), 22–29.

Her *Portfolio* articles treated important Italian sites of artistic and historical interest, both well-known and less familiar, such as ‘Varallo and Her Painter’ (1880) and ‘Assisi’ (1882).¹¹² She published on ‘Botticelli’ (1882), while also introducing her readers to artists just emerging as important figures in scholarship, like ‘Lorenzo Lotto’ (1889).¹¹³ Her contribution is distinctive for introducing more peripheral names and focusing on topics beyond attribution or style.

Cartwright’s first appearance in the *Portfolio*, secured with Appleton’s support, was ‘The Florentine Bridal Chamber’.¹¹⁴ Published in 1878, it was inspired by a visit Cartwright had paid the previous year to the Burlington House Winter Exhibition of Old Masters. Here, two small panels by an artist ‘not very familiar to English ears’ caught her attention. Painted by Francesco Ubertini, known as Il Bacchiacca (1494–1557), their ‘singular shape and bright colouring’ had ‘attracted general attention’, alerting Cartwright to a worthwhile topic of interest for *Portfolio* readers, who were likely to be the same interested audience attending such exhibitions.¹¹⁵ Cartwright’s article on the panels, which were then part of the Methuen collection, expands on the spare details offered by the exhibition catalogue, namely that they originally formed part of the decorative fittings designed for the marriage chamber of the Florentine nobleman Pierfrancesco Borgherini (1480–1558) and his wife Margherita Acciaiuoli (dates untraced).

Elaborating on the history of the bedchamber, Cartwright turns first to Vasari who, having seen the chamber ‘before the colours of the painter’s brush were dry’, provides, in her opinion, a trustworthy description of its original appearance.¹¹⁶ Cartwright then employs the more recent scholarship of German historian Alfred von Reumont (1808–87) to ascertain the date of 1523 as the year in which Borgherini and Acciaiuoli were betrothed, and to sketch out the historical context of

¹¹² Julia Cartwright, ‘Varallo and Her Painter’, *Portfolio*, 11 (1880), 50–56; Julia Cartwright, ‘Assisi’, *Portfolio*, 13 (1882), 180–83, 198–202, 207–12.

¹¹³ Julia Cartwright, ‘Sandro Botticelli’, *Portfolio*, 13 (1882), 58–60, 70–74, 92–95, 110–13; and Julia Cartwright, ‘Lorenzo Lotto’, *Portfolio*, 20 (1889), 16–19, 26–30.

¹¹⁴ Julia Cartwright, ‘A Florentine Bridal Chamber’, *Portfolio*, 9 (1878), 21–27.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 21.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*

post-Savonarola Florence.¹¹⁷ Her selection of critical sources demonstrates her wide-ranging yet judicious use of both historical and more recent scholarship.

Cartwright then proceeds to reconstruct the original appearance of the marriage chamber, building up an image for her readers to illuminate the intended display and function of the Bacchiacca panels. Giving equal importance to both the carved and painted elements of the chamber, Cartwright emphasises the ‘exquisite workmanship’ of the ‘celebrated carver in wood’ Baccio d’Agnolo (1462–1543), to whom the decoration of the chamber was entrusted. She notes that the production of furniture and the ‘beautifying of the commonest necessities’ were not then viewed as ‘unworthy’ of the best artists of the day. Following her description of the carving of the doors and bedframe, Cartwright populates the chamber through a description of other pieces of furniture, providing the original terms for the ‘high backed-chairs (*spalliere*)’ and ‘seats or stools (*sederi*)’, and offers further explanation of ‘*cassoni*’, which from ‘rude wooden or leather chests’ had by the sixteenth century become a ‘speciality’ and ‘carved, painted or gilt at pleasure’.¹¹⁸

This historical contextualisation is followed by an overview of the painted elements of the room as a whole and close visual analysis of the subject matter. Along with Bacchiacca, the artists Francesco Granacci (1469/70–1543), Andrea del Sarto (1486–1530) and Jacopo Pontorno (1494–1556/7) are noted as having contributed panels depicting scenes from the life of the Old Testament figure Joseph. Such a topic, as Cartwright states, was a rarity in fourteenth- and fifteenth-century Florentine painting, where the New Testament and lives of later martyrs of the Christian church formed the main source of subject matter.¹¹⁹ To provide her readers with a visual context for these panels, Cartwright identifies two works of art that also depicted scenes from the Old Testament with

¹¹⁷ Cartwright’s source here must have been von Reumont’s *Geschichte Toscanas seit dem Ende des florentinischen Freistaats* (Gotha: F. A. Perthes, 1876–77), published two years prior to Cartwright’s article, which demonstrates her up-to-date knowledge of relevant foreign literature.

¹¹⁸ Cartwright, ‘Florentine Bridal Chamber’, p. 22. A *spalliera* is not in fact a high-backed chair, but a wide rectangular panel, set in wainscoting or as the back piece of a *lettuccio* – a kind of day bed.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 23–24.

which they would have been more familiar: the sculptor Lorenzo Ghiberti's (1378–1455) *Gates of Paradise* (1425–52), a pair of gilded bronze doors installed at the east entrance of the Baptistery of San Giovanni, Florence and Benozzo Gozzoli's (c.1420/2–97) cycle of frescoes incorporating Old Testament scenes (1468–84) for the north corridor of the Campo Santo of Pisa.¹²⁰

It is the scenes painted by Andrea del Sarto that Cartwright focuses on next, including the two extant panels which had ended up (and still are) in the Pitti Palace, Florence. Demonstrating her awareness of earlier artistic precedents for this subject, Cartwright observes that it is curious that the 'touching scene of Joseph meeting with his brethren', which earlier artists treated with 'so much force and pathos', was not a scene treated in Andrea's panels.¹²¹ She goes on to make the suggestion, albeit with careful framing that she had 'no authority for the supposition', that a predella panel then attributed to the artist in the Earl of Cowper's collection at Panshanger may once have formed part of the Borgherini chamber.¹²² Furthermore, she notes two other panels in the same British collection attributed to the painter, but 'justly' given to Pontormo by Crowe and Cavalcaselle, as forming part of the same decorative scheme.¹²³ Cartwright's suggestion was to prove correct. All three Panshanger panels were purchased by the National Gallery in 1979 (NG6451–3) and are now acknowledged to be part of the Borgherini chamber and catalogued as by Pontormo.¹²⁴

Following this examination of subject matter and provenance, Cartwright then looks to the subsequent history of the chamber. Here she gives prominence to Margherita Acciaiuoli. During the siege of Florence from 1529 to 1530, Acciaiuoli had confronted and thwarted King Francis I's (1494–1547) art agent Giovanbattista Della Palla (1489–1532) in his unscrupulous attempt to seize the celebrated paintings and furniture of the chamber. Cartwright's interest in both Acciaiuoli's role

¹²⁰ On Victorian responses to the Campo Santo, see Robyn Cooper, 'The Crowning Glory of Pisa: Nineteenth-Century Reactions to the Campo Santo', *Italian Studies*, 37 (1982), 72–100.

¹²¹ 'Florentine Bridal Chamber', p. 24.

¹²² *Ibid.*

¹²³ *Ibid.*, p. 25.

¹²⁴ These joined the Methuen Bacchiacca panels (NG1218–9), together with another Pontormo (NG1131) purchased from the Duke of Hamilton sale in 1882.

in preventing the dispersal of the Borgherini bedchamber and in the importance of this event for Vasari, is evident from the fact that she transcribes in full the dramatic scene as given by the latter. Cartwright comments, ‘we would gladly have learnt more of this valiant lady [...] but history is silent, and although the bridal chamber is often mentioned by Vasari, we hear no more of Margherita Acciajuoli [*sic*]’.¹²⁵ Cartwright’s interest in reviving the reputations of historical female figures of the Renaissance and their contributions as patrons and protectors of the arts was to form a long-standing theme of her work, culminating in her two significant biographies on Isabella (1474–1539) and Beatrice (1475–97) d’Este of Mantua, leading women of the Italian Renaissance and major cultural and political figures.¹²⁶ It is worth noting that Cartwright’s sentiments, together with her transcription of Vasari’s passage in full, are echoed in Paul Barolsky’s discussion of the meaning of this passage and the figure of Margherita Acciaiuoli in Vasari’s life of Pontormo.¹²⁷ As Barolsky notes, compared to the status of the Mona Lisa, Acciaiuoli is practically unknown today and, in contrast to discussions of portraits or altarpieces, there is no ‘clear sense of the convention that we might speak of bedroom art’.¹²⁸

Another frequent theme of Cartwright’s *Portfolio* articles was that of important Italian sites of artistic and historical interest, both well-known and less familiar, among which can be identified ‘Varallo and Her Painter’ (1880). Varallo Sesia, a town in the province of Vercelli in the region of Piedmont in northwest Italy, is the location of the sanctuary and pilgrimage site of Sacro Monte (founded 1491), a monumental devotional complex. The area comprises a basilica and forty-five chapels in which are staged scenes from the life of Christ depicted in fresco and populated with over eight-hundred life-size polychrome terracotta figures. Cartwright’s interest in the Sacro Monte had in

¹²⁵ Cartwright, ‘Florentine Bridal Chamber’, p. 27.

¹²⁶ Julia Cartwright, *Beatrice d’Este, Duchess of Milan, 1475–1497: A Study of the Renaissance* (London: J. M. Dent, 1899); and Julia Cartwright, *Isabella d’Este, Marchioness of Mantua, 1474–1539: A Study of the Renaissance*, 2 vols (London: John Murray, 1903).

¹²⁷ Paul Barolsky, *Why Mona Lisa Smiles and Other Tales by Vasari* (University Park, Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1991), pp. 65–79.

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 65, 67.

fact begun much earlier than the publication of her article in 1880. In 1873, she had published anonymously ‘The Sacro Monte of Varallo’ in the *Monthly Packet*, as yet unnoticed in the secondary literature on the site.¹²⁹ In this instance, her article was written in response to the recent fascination among British visitors with the ‘Ammergau [Oberammergau] Passion Play’, suggesting Varallo’s Sacro Monte as an equally worthy site for British travellers.¹³⁰ Considering the *Monthly Packet*’s religious tone, in this instance Cartwright focuses on the spiritual experience of Varallo as a pilgrimage site, rather than on its artistic or aesthetic qualities.

In keeping with Protestant values of the time, the response of earlier English writers to the Sacro Monte treated it as a distasteful, provincial example of excessive Catholic piety, rather than a site of serious artistic merit.¹³¹ One such example is the response of Charles Eastlake. He had visited Varallo in 1861 and came away describing it as ‘an absurd exhibition of painted & clothed statues in the style of Mad[ame] Tussaud (but very inferior)’.¹³² In 1880, Cartwright conducted a three-month honeymoon tour through north Italy following her marriage to the Reverend Henry Ady ([?]-1915), rector of Edgcote, during which time she wrote a second article about the works of art of Varallo and the surrounding area.

Cartwright’s ‘Varallo and Her Painter’ article was published in the November 1880 issue of the *Portfolio*. As Rossana Sacchi observes, Cartwright was diligent in her exploration of the peripheral regions of Valsesia.¹³³ It is worth noting here that the railway line connecting Varallo with

¹²⁹ Anon. [Julia Cartwright], ‘The Sacro Monte of Varallo’, *Monthly Packet* (1 October 1873), 402–7.

¹³⁰ This passion play, performed every ten years in a small Bavarian village, experienced a sudden peak of interest from British visitors, and inspired several responses from women travellers and writers. See Leanne Groeneveld, “‘He Showed Himself in Response to Your Longing’”: Women Spectators at the Oberammergau Passion Play’, in *Women Rewriting Boundaries: Victorian Women Travel Writers*, ed. by Precious McKenzie Stearns (Cambridge: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2016), pp. 133–66.

¹³¹ Simone Bertelli, ‘La riscoperta del Sacro Monte di Varallo tra ottocento e novecento: il ruolo della fotografia’, *Sacri Monti*, 2 (2010), 20–59 (p. 23).

¹³² Susanna Avery-Quash, ed., ‘The Travel Notebooks of Sir Charles Eastlake’, 2 vols, *Walpole Society*, 73 (2011), vol. 1, p. 562.

¹³³ Rossana Sacchi, *Gaudenzio a Milano* (Milan: Officina Libraria, 2015), p. 16.

Borgosesia, the largest town in Valsesia, was not to open for another six years, so Cartwright was unable to make use of this convenient mode of transport for her journey.¹³⁴ Cartwright and Ady's travel recalls that conducted by Maria and Augustus Wall Callcott during their own honeymoon in 1834, setting out to explore minor towns with the aim of developing their connoisseurial knowledge.

Cartwright's article presents an accurate account of Varallo's principal site of artistic interest, the Sacro Monte, and its main artist Gaudenzio Ferrari (c.1480–1546). Despite a limited range of bibliographic material then available, her article demonstrates her evident wide exploration of the locality.¹³⁵ In particular, she departs from the previous opinion of her fellow English critics in her perception of the Sacro Monte chapels. What Eastlake saw as 'absurd', Cartwright perceives as affective piety expressed in the 'singular combination' of terracotta figures and fresco.¹³⁶ In the Chapel of the Crucifixion, one of the chapels attributed to Gaudenzio, she describes the statuettes as representing the 'chief actors in a drama', while the frescoed figures present 'a multitude of spectators [...] represented in elaborate costume with endless variety of character and expression' (**fig. 1.4**).¹³⁷ Cartwright's efforts to reframe late fifteenth- and early sixteenth-century Italian sanctuary art for her readers can be aligned with the work of Jameson. Jameson's six volume compendium of Christian iconography, *Sacred and Legendary Art* (1848–64), made significant progress in facilitating the understanding of such art for her mainly Protestant readership, through an emphasis on the aesthetic and literary contexts of such images, rather than on their underlying religious doctrine.¹³⁸

¹³⁴ [Anon.], 'Elenco cronological dell'apertura al pubblico esercizio delle linee dell ferrovie Italiane e loro lunghezza d'esercizio', in *Sviluppo delle Ferrovie Italiane dal 1839 al 31 dicembre 1926* (Rome: Ufficio Centrale di Statistica delle Ferrovie dello Stato, 1927). This completed a railway line between Novara and Varallo that had been ongoing since 1883.

¹³⁵ Sacchi, *Gaudenzio a Milano*, p. 18. The first major monograph to consider Gaudenzio's work critically was that written by Giuseppe Colombo and published in 1881: Giuseppe Colombo, *Vite ed opere di Gaudenzio Ferrari* (Turin: Fratelli Bocca Librai di S. M., 1881).

¹³⁶ Cartwright, 'Varallo and her Painter', p. 51.

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 53.

¹³⁸ Avery-Quash, 'Illuminating the Old Masters'; Anna Jameson, *The Poetry of Sacred and Legendary Art*, 6

Cartwright was also keen on disseminating the latest research on those artists newly emerging as figures of interest among scholars and connoisseurs, as demonstrated in her article on Lorenzo Lotto (c.1480–1556/7), published in the *Portfolio* in 1889. Appearing six years prior to Bernard Berenson’s celebrated monograph on the artist, Cartwright’s *Portfolio* article was the first to appear in English on Lotto.¹³⁹ Introducing the artist as ‘one of the most important’, yet ‘most little known’ of early sixteenth-century Venetian painters, Cartwright contests the longstanding critical consensus that labelled Lotto a ‘mere imitator’ of the more famous Giorgione (c.1477–1510) and Titian. She instead argues for the ‘strong individuality’ found in Lotto’s work, ‘which makes him always interesting’.¹⁴⁰

As she noted, Lotto had only recently become the focus of critical attention, and Cartwright’s decision to write on this unfamiliar artist was driven by recent developments in art historical research. Specifically, she was informed by the new light shone on the Venetian school in Sir Austen Henry Layard’s (1817–94) edition of the German scholar Franz Kugler’s seminal *Handbook to the Italian Schools* (1887).¹⁴¹ It is certain that Cartwright read this work, as she reviewed it for the *Magazine of Art*.¹⁴² Layard was a Trustee of the National Gallery (from 1866), an important art collector, and a major influence on the work of the Arundel Society, a group established in 1848 to promote and champion awareness of early Italian frescoes in England.¹⁴³ A central figure in the Victorian art world, Layard’s *Handbook* was a significant new update to a key text in art scholarship. Cartwright herself was already acquainted with Layard and his wife Enid (1843–1912). The Cartwright family were neighbours of the Guests (Enid’s birth family) when they spent the winter in

vols (London: Longmans, 1848–64).

¹³⁹ Bernard Berenson, *Lorenzo Lotto: An Essay in Constructive Art Criticism* (London: G. P. Putnam’s Sons, 1895).

¹⁴⁰ Cartwright, ‘Lorenzo Lotto’, p. 16.

¹⁴¹ Sir Austen Henry Layard, *Handbook of Painting: The Italian Schools, based on the Handbook of Kugler*, originally edited by Sir Charles L. Eastlake, P.R.A., 5th edn, 2 vols (London: John Murray, 1887).

¹⁴² Julia Cartwright, ‘Kugler’s “Italian Schools of Painting”’, *Magazine of Art*, 10 (1887), 277–81.

¹⁴³ Robyn Cooper, ‘The Popularization of Renaissance Art in Victorian England’, *Art History*, 1:3 (September 1978), 263–92 (p. 264).

Brighton during the 1860s and Cartwright would later become a regular visitor to the Layard's home in Venice, Ca' Capello.¹⁴⁴

Cartwright underscored the necessity of Layard's new edition, considering the 'fresh stage in the history of art criticism' arrived at in recent years thanks to the impact of Giovanni Morelli.¹⁴⁵ Morelli valued close observation of the work of art under review as the primary tool for identifying the hand of the artist and believed that Italian art needed to be studied 'organically' according to its relevant school or regional grouping. Dismissing the German-influenced approach of using archival documentation and empirical evidence to assign an attribution, Morelli developed what he promoted as a 'scientific method', which entailed singling out the idiosyncratic means by which an artist depicted seemingly insignificant elements of anatomy.¹⁴⁶ Layard was a close friend and supporter of Morelli, the latter advising him on works to purchase for his collection displayed at Ca' Capello, later bequeathed to the National Gallery in 1916.¹⁴⁷ The choice of Layard as editor therefore — Morelli's 'able advocate', as Cartwright noted — ensured that Kugler's text would now 'keep its hold on the popular mind as a standard book', in reflecting Morelli's 'subtle analysis [...] and a scientific method unknown in former years', for the study of art in Britain.¹⁴⁸

Beyond this methodological affiliation, Cartwright's main praise for this edition is reserved for the reorganisation of Kugler's text from chronological into regional divisions. This new emphasis would have resonated both with art writers like Cartwright and with the general public, as that same

¹⁴⁴ Angela Emanuel, 'Enid Layard and Julia Cartwright', in *Austen Henry Layard tra l'Oriente e Venezia*, ed. by Mario F. Fales and Bernard H. Hickey (Rome: L'Erma di Bretschneider, 1987), pp. 167–73. Julia's brother Chauncy served as secretary to the Embassy in Constantinople during Layard's period as Ambassador there. On Layard, see Nicholas Penny, *National Gallery Schools Catalogues: The Sixteenth Century Italian Paintings – Vol. 1: Paintings from Bergamo, Brescia and Cremona* (London: National Gallery Company, 2004), pp. 372–80.

¹⁴⁵ Cartwright, 'Kugler's "Italian Schools of Painting"', p. 277.

¹⁴⁶ Carol Gibson-Wood, *Studies in the Theory of Connoisseurship from Vasari to Morelli* (New York; London: Garland Publishing, 1988), pp. 210–11.

¹⁴⁷ Madeline Lennon, 'Morelli and the Layard collection: Influence as Intellectual Exchange', in *Giovanni Morelli e la cultura dei conoscitori*, ed. by Giacomo Agosti (Bergamo: Lubrina, 1993), pp. 241–52.

¹⁴⁸ Cartwright, 'Kugler's "Italian Schools of Painting"', p. 227.

year the National Gallery had made a significant change to the hanging arrangement of the Italian old master paintings. Though Charles Eastlake had long advocated for a hang according to regional affiliation, progress towards this aim had been slow. The efforts of subsequent directors William Boxall (1800–79) and Frederic Burton (1816–1900), and the work of Eastlake’s eponymous nephew Charles Locke Eastlake (1836–1906), who was employed at the Gallery as its Keeper for twenty years from 1878, culminated in new building extensions to gradually expand the available space.¹⁴⁹ Finally, a new suite of rooms designed by architect Edward Middleton Barry (1830–80) and completed in 1887, provided for the first time the means to move away decisively from a chronological arrangement and instead to hang the paintings with greater specification along regional divisions.¹⁵⁰ In her review, Cartwright drew attention to the portion of Layard’s edition addressing the newly defined northern Italian schools, and specifically his inclusion of Lotto, an artist ‘whose merits have never before been sufficiently recognised’.¹⁵¹ In his concise entry, Layard had acknowledged Lotto as a painter of ‘undoubted merit’, but viewed unfairly as a ‘mere imitator’ and providing a potted chronological history of his life and works, emphasising his prolific production of altarpieces and portraits, as yet still little known to English-speaking audiences.¹⁵²

Cartwright expanded Layard’s introduction to Lotto into a two-part article that developed and disseminated this new assessment of the artist for the readership of the *Portfolio*. Cartwright attributed Lotto’s neglect in England in large part to the fact that he was ‘almost entirely known by his portraits’, and at the time of publication, the National Gallery possessed two works by Lotto, both portrait groups.¹⁵³ One from the artist’s early period, depicting *The Physician Giovanni Agostino della Torre and his Son, Niccolò* (1515, NG599), had been purchased by Eastlake from Morelli in 1862. The second and later work, the *Portrait of Giovanni della Volta with his Wife and Children*

¹⁴⁹ Avery-Quash and Sheldon, *Art for the Nation*, p. 210.

¹⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 211.

¹⁵¹ Cartwright, ‘Kugler’s “Italian Schools of Painting”’, p. 279.

¹⁵² Layard, *Handbook of Painting*, vol. 2, p. 568.

¹⁵³ Cartwright, ‘Lorenzo Lotto’, pp. 16–17.

(1547, NG1047), reached the Gallery through a bequest in 1879 by Sarah Solly (dates untraced), daughter of the noted art collector Edward Solly (1776–1844). Cartwright contended that ‘many of [Lotto’s] finest works are scattered over comparatively unvisited districts’, namely the northern Italian city of Bergamo, in Lombardy and the region of the Marche, in central Italy.¹⁵⁴ It is upon this latter region, in her opinion, that Lotto ‘left so profound and lasting a mark’.¹⁵⁵ The region of Le Marche, stretching along Italy’s Adriatic Coast, was little favoured by British travellers in the first half of the nineteenth century. This was in large part due to the ongoing Papal rule of the region until 1860, viewed with suspicion by Protestant travellers.¹⁵⁶ As the nineteenth century wore on, however, the popular poetry of Giacomo Leopardi (1798–1837) and Germaine de Staël’s run-away success *Corinne, Or Italy* (1807) encouraged a new appreciation of the region, which consequently led to it being discussed more frequently in travel literature, particularly by women.¹⁵⁷

As demonstrated by the endeavor she had taken to see Varallo, Cartwright made a point to explore such ‘unvisited districts’ of Italy during her own trips to the peninsula, which she conducted for three to four months at a time. Her diaries are replete with notes from these visits, where her day-to-day activities are organised according to which museum or church she intended to see. Cartwright frequently revisited certain monuments and works of art over the span of several years, recording the changing impressions they made on her.¹⁵⁸ Of Lotto’s altarpieces, Layard had only listed the various churches in which they were to be found, summarising that they were numerous, grand and ‘unequal

¹⁵⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵⁵ Ibid.

¹⁵⁶ Giorgio Mangani, ed., *The English in the Marche* (Ancona: Il Lavoro Editoriale, 2005), pp. 7–8.

¹⁵⁷ Claudia Capancioni, “‘L’altro lato d’Italia’”: viaggiatrici britanniche alla scoperta delle Marche nell’ottocento’, in *Il viaggio e i viaggiatori in età moderna: gli inglesi in Italia e le avventure dei viaggiatori italiani*, ed. by Attilio Brilli and Elisabetta Federici (Bologna: Edizioni Pendragon, 2009), pp. 193–216. For example, see: Margaret Collier, *Our Home by the Adriatic* (London: Richard Bentley and Son, 1886).

¹⁵⁸ Cartwright’s last trip to Italy occurred in 1910, as following the death of Enid Layard in 1912, Cartwright did not return again. Cartwright wrote Enid’s obituary for *The Times* and dedicated her penultimate book, *Italian Gardens of the Renaissance, and Other Studies* (London: Smith, Elder, 1914), to her.

in merit'.¹⁵⁹ Cartwright had seen several of these for herself and seized on the opportunity to deploy her first-hand experience to expand on an artist newly emerging as a significant figure in the rapidly developing landscape of art historical knowledge.

It is on the comparatively early and 'finest works' of Lotto scattered in areas 'unknown to the ordinary tourist' that Cartwright focused her own investigations.¹⁶⁰ She begins with Lotto's major polyptych of 1508 for the church of San Domenico in Recanati.¹⁶¹ She had seen this work in its original location, at the time in an unfortunate state of display: the smaller panels were hung separately in the choir, the central panel placed in the sacristy and the predella since lost, which Vasari had praised for depicting 'the most graceful little figures in the world'.¹⁶² Focusing on the central panel of the enthroned Madonna and saints still in 'comparatively good preservation', Cartwright emphasises the 'remarkably beautiful' heads and the 'naïve and charming' cherubs playing the lute and viol at the foot of the throne. Recalling that Otto Mündler (1811–70) had discussed the picture with 'enthusiastic praise', Cartwright supplemented the assessment of the National Gallery's former Travelling Agent with her own positive appraisal, thereby reinforcing the merits of a visit to the 'remote but curious old town of Recanati'.¹⁶³

In Bergamo Cartwright highlighted Lotto's *Madonna and Saints*, also known as the 'Martinengo Altarpiece' (1516), painted for the church of San Bartolomeo as a work 'deserv[ing] to rank among the master-pieces of Venetian art'.¹⁶⁴ As she explained, the success of this painting lay in its fusion of the 'traditional type of the old school of Venice' with the 'individual bent of Lotto's genius'.¹⁶⁵ While the type of composition resembles that employed in more famous Venetian work

¹⁵⁹ Layard, *Handbook of Painting*, vol. 2, p. 560.

¹⁶⁰ Cartwright, 'Lorenzo Lotto', p. 16.

¹⁶¹ Lorenzo Lotto, *San Domenico Polyptych*, 1508, Pinacoteca Villa Colloredo Mels, Recanati.

¹⁶² Cartwright, 'Lorenzo Lotto', p. 17.

¹⁶³ *Ibid.*

¹⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 18; Lorenzo Lotto, *Madonna and Child Enthroned (Martinengo Altarpiece)*, 1516, Church of Santi Bartolomeo e Stefano, Bergamo.

¹⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

by those masters Lotto was seen to be imitative of, such as Giorgione's *Castelfranco Madonna* (c.1504), it is in the 'variety of surroundings', 'elaborate details' of 'gay flags and banners' and 'joyous flight of angels', which 'enliven the scene' and convey Lotto's own distinctive touch.¹⁶⁶ In September 1898, Cartwright was to return to see this work during an extended visit to Italy, taking her daughter Cecilia Ady (1881–1958), then aged seventeen, around the towns, churches and museums she had visited many times before: 'it is astonishing how brilliant the blue and pinks are & how modern the little angels pulling away the carpet from the steps of the throne'.¹⁶⁷

Cartwright devotes the second part of her article to those works more familiar to her audience, Lotto's portraits. As she informs her readers, they had been so admired as to be frequently misattributed to the then more esteemed masters Giorgione and Titian. The portrait of the family group at the National Gallery was then held to be that of Lotto himself and his wife and children. Cartwright dismissed this as 'highly improbable' due to the lack of evidence the painter ever married. More than the biographic, she points to the value of this painting for an understanding of Lotto's skill in conveying the 'touch of *genre*' and 'delight [...] in the passing incidents of daily life', which she perceptively described as a characteristic feature of Lotto's work.¹⁶⁸

Together with those paintings already noted at the National Gallery, Lotto was also represented in London by portraits at Dorchester House and Hampton Court. In particular, Cartwright places emphasis on a work then in this latter collection of the Venetian merchant and collector Andrea Odoni (1488–1545).¹⁶⁹ In its portrayal of a 'distinguished personage' and Venetian patron of art, Lotto's depiction of the 'great connoisseur' surrounded by beautiful objects shows the sitter in his 'habitual surroundings', conveying the character of Odoni, while in its 'richness of tone and delicacy of modelling, in transparency of light and shade' Cartwright posits that it excels even

¹⁶⁶ Ibid.

¹⁶⁷ 16 September 1898 [Diary CE382], CENA.

¹⁶⁸ Cartwright, 'Lorenzo Lotto', p. 27. Emphasis in original.

¹⁶⁹ Lorenzo Lotto, *Andrea Odoni*, 1527, Picture Gallery, Buckingham Palace, London (RCIN 405776).

the portraits of Titian.¹⁷⁰ Cartwright here provides fresh interpretation of Lotto's familiar works, drawing the attention of her readers to distinctive aspects of the artist's style and subject-matter, which, to her mind, sets him apart from, even above, those better-known painters of whom he was labelled as an imitator.

Beyond the *Portfolio*'s readership, the impact of Cartwright's article on the wider art historical community was proven when it caught the attention of the leading Polish critic T  odor Wyzewa (1862–1917) at the *Gazette des beaux-arts*. There, in a review summarising the latest research published by figures such as the Director of the Berlin gallery, Wilhelm von Bode (1845–1929), for the *Repertorium f  r Kunstwissenschaft*, and the Professor of Medieval and Modern Art at the Institute of Art History, Leipzig, Antoine Springer (1825–91) for the *Zeitschrift*, Wyzewa commends the rehabilitation of Lotto undertaken by Cartwright in the *Portfolio*. Despite agreeing wholeheartedly with Cartwright's account of an artist whose 'fame, once very bright, has long since been erased by his contemporaries', Wyzewa admits:

[...] we fear that the excellent arguments of Miss Cartwright will not convince everyone, and for a long time still she alone will remain an admirer of the remarkable and deserving talent of Lorenzo Lotto. The generations of today really have something else in their minds.¹⁷¹

Cartwright's appreciation of Lotto is here praised for pushing towards new developments in art historical scholarship, but deemed too premature for the current tastes of the wider public. Just as earlier women like Maria Callcott were at the vanguard of promoting the taste for the Italian Primitives, despite the little sympathy with which they were viewed at the time, Cartwright is here acknowledged for her unusual appreciation of an artist overshadowed by his more famous Venetian counterparts, marking her article as an important step in the revival of interest in the painter.

¹⁷⁰ Cartwright, 'Lorenzo Lotto', p. 27.

¹⁷¹ T  odor Wyzewa, 'Le mouvement des arts en Allemagne et en Angleterre', *Gazette des beaux-arts*, 1 (1889), 428–40 (p. 436). Own translation.

When Berenson came to publish his monograph on the artist in 1895, Cartwright was by then an established and respected writer for several art periodicals and the author of nine volumes spanning historical biography, old master and contemporary art. Her name and opinion carried weight and a favourable review from her pen could do much to promote a book and its author. Cartwright was first made aware of Berenson in 1893, when Vernon Lee had informed her of ‘a pupil of Morelli who is writing a book on Lotto’.¹⁷² Insisting Cartwright ‘ought to know him’, the following summer Lee provided her with details of Berenson’s upcoming lectures in London on Giorgione, Giotto, and Lotto.¹⁷³ Cartwright met Berenson there for the first time in July 1894 and in her diaries records her impressions of his lectures. Of Berenson’s talk on Lotto, Cartwright noted that he was ‘admirable’ and ‘showed us fine photos of Recanati & Bergamo works, “The Annunciation” has quite a Rossetti look & the portraits are most noble — the Doria one is unexpectedly touching’.¹⁷⁴

The following week, they arranged a visit to the National Gallery together, where Berenson:

poured out all manner of interesting things about Piero d[ella] Francesca & his master Domenico Veneziano & the 5 Botticelli’s, Lotto & Bonsignori’s wonderful portraits. The g[rea]t Perugino whi[ch] he loves as I do & we sat before the Crivellis a long time. He thinks him a still g[rea]ter painter than Lotto & belonging to the Vivarini school.¹⁷⁵

On this occasion, Berenson also asked Cartwright to review his forthcoming book on Lotto, seeking to draw on her standing in the London art world and the influence of her name. This was to be the first of several visits to the National Gallery that the pair would undertake together to look at and discuss the Italian old masters and their prospective publications, and the beginning of a mutual

¹⁷² Emanuel, *A Bright Remembrance*, p. 177 (20 July 1893).

¹⁷³ Vernon Lee to Julia Cartwright, [1894] [CE109/2], CENA.

¹⁷⁴ 17 July 1894 [Diary CE378], CENA; partially transcribed in Emanuel, *A Bright Remembrance*, p. 186. The ‘Rossetti look’ Cartwright refers to here is clearly a comparison of Lotto’s *Recanati Annunciation* with Dante Gabriel Rossetti’s (1828–82) *Ecce Ancilli Domini!* (1849–50), both of which depict a strange, cramped figure of the Madonna and a composition at odds with usual depictions of the subject; Lorenzo Lotto, *Portrait of a Man aged Thirty-Seven*, c.1543, Galleria Doria-Pamphilj, Rome (FC 673).

¹⁷⁵ 30 July 1894 [Diary CE378], CENA; partially transcribed in Emanuel, *A Bright Remembrance*, p. 188.

relationship of collegial support.¹⁷⁶ In fact, Cartwright was one of the few art historians with whom Berenson retained a cordial relationship. He observed to a mutual friend, somewhat patronisingly, that Cartwright was ‘quite unlike the ordinary lady art critic, for [she] *knew* what [she] was talking about and was perfectly sincere and straightforward’.¹⁷⁷ The relationship between the two underscores how connoisseurship originated as a “disseminated discipline”, as Meaghan Clarke and Francesco Ventrella have demonstrated, and how it depended on ‘collaboration, interdisciplinarity and mobility’, in contrast to the ‘modernist myth’ of the connoisseur as an innately gifted, isolated individual.¹⁷⁸

Berenson accurately anticipated that his monograph would need a sympathetic and well-respected reviewer if it was to pass muster in the eyes of the English reading public. His fears were warranted when, in April 1895, a reviewer in the *Athenaeum* suggested that the ‘columns of an artistic journal or review’ would be a more suitable medium for discussing the work of an artist of Lotto’s position. Berenson himself was satirised as an ‘author strong in the “ologies”’ and a ‘disciple of the “ear and toenail” school’, a common disparagement levelled at art critics who followed the Morellian method.¹⁷⁹ This was quickly followed by two articles by Mary Berenson (publishing as Mary Logan) in May 1895 for the *Studio* and *Gazette des beaux-arts*, attempting to rectify this poor initial reception and elucidate Bernard’s methodology, which presented a means to intuit ‘artistic personality’.¹⁸⁰ As Tiffany Johnston notes, Berenson was taken aback at this oversight of what he felt to be a game-changing contribution.¹⁸¹ Although he did not acknowledge publicly Cartwright’s efforts, it was in fact these which yielded the results he sought.

¹⁷⁶ Angela Emanuel, ‘Julia Cartwright and Bernard Berenson’, *Apollo*, 120 (October 1984), 273–77.

¹⁷⁷ Emanuel, *A Bright Remembrance*, p. 221 (9 December 1897). Emphasis in original.

¹⁷⁸ Meaghan Clarke and Francesco Ventrella, ‘Introduction’, *Visual Resources*, 33:1–2 (2017), 1–10 (p. 6).

¹⁷⁹ [Anon.], ‘Review of Lorenzo Lotto’, *Athenaeum* (13 April 1895), 481.

¹⁸⁰ Mary Logan, ‘Lorenzo Lotto’, *Gazette des beaux-arts*, 13 (1895), 361–78; and Mary Logan, ‘On a Recent Criticism of the Works of Lorenzo Lotto’, *Studio* (15 May 1895), 63–65.

¹⁸¹ Tiffany Johnston, ‘The Correggiosity of Correggio: On the Origin of Berensonian Connoisseurship’, *I Tatti Studies in the Italian Renaissance*, 19:2 (2016), 385–425 (p. 416).

However, even Cartwright herself needed to push for the publication of her review. It was intended for the *Art Journal*, where Cartwright's recent series of articles on pilgrimage sites in Canterbury proved successful enough to warrant their publication into a stand-alone volume.¹⁸² Yet a review of a book discussing the 'artistic personality' of an obscure Venetian painter was a rather different story. Cartwright took an active role in ensuring the review's timely appearance, meeting directly with the editor of the *Art Journal*, David Croal Thompson (1855–1930), who eventually,

promised to put in my review of Lotto, but says the *Art Journal* is always attacked as too learned! They sell fifteen thousand and want to sell twenty thousand copies while the *Gazette [des beaux-arts]* only sells 800 or so. I am afraid the public don't appreciate high art as yet and it is a bad outlook for Berenson and Cona [Constance Jocelyn] Ffoulkes [...]¹⁸³

This extract demonstrates the discrepancies between the intentions of art periodical editors keen to publish material that would ensure high sales and those of art historians seeking to be taken seriously by the scholarly community. While today we may consider the *Art Journal* a less prestigious organ in terms of art historical scholarship as compared to the *Gazette des beaux-arts*, a review in the former journal ensured far greater exposure to a much larger audience. As a writer who could mediate between aspiring connoisseurs like Berenson and a public yet to 'appreciate high art', Cartwright was aptly placed to use her influence and ensure the wider success of such texts.

Indeed, Cartwright's review was a carefully-planned introduction of Berenson to the *Art Journal's* readership. Cartwright corresponded with Berenson over the contents of the review, and even accompanied him in January 1895 to the New Gallery's 'Venetian Art' exhibition (which he later notoriously lambasted) to discuss potential Lotto illustrations.¹⁸⁴ Berenson responded in kind, reviewing Cartwright's *Early Work of Raphael* and *Raphael in Rome* (both 1895) for the *Chronique*

¹⁸² Julia Cartwright, *The Pilgrims' Way from Winchester to Canterbury* (London: J. S. Virtue and Co., 1893).

¹⁸³ Emanuel, *A Bright Remembrance*, p. 189 (4 August 1894).

¹⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 192 (5 January 1895).

des Arts, (a supplement to the *Gazette des beaux-arts*), and later recommending her for the commission to write the obituary article for the artist Edward Burne-Jones (1833–98) in the *Gazette*.¹⁸⁵

Appearing in August 1895, Cartwright's *Art Journal* review presented the first public endorsement of Berenson and his work to a more general readership.¹⁸⁶ The *Art Journal*'s review format allowed for an extended treatment of the subject-matter of a book, and moreover, included illustrations. It is notable that in this review, Cartwright avoids lengthy discussion of Berenson's method, the focus of Mary Berenson's *Studio* and *Gazette des beaux-arts* articles. Instead, Cartwright looked to establishing Berenson and his new publication as a natural progressive stage in the development of art criticism. Firstly, as with Layard, Cartwright identifies Berenson as 'one of the ablest of Signor Morelli's followers' and hails his work as 'proof' of the 'vitality' and 'gradual advance of the scientific method of art criticism'.¹⁸⁷ She encourages prospective readers of Berenson's *Lorenzo Lotto*, particularly those 'outsiders who smile at the constant references to ears and hands', to pay close attention to Berenson's introduction in which he explains that it is in these 'least-noticed features that habits of execution are the strongest', and which therefore offer insight into an artist's training.¹⁸⁸ Connecting to this theory, Cartwright praises Berenson for 'being the first writer who has done full justice' to Lotto, alighting immediately on his new theory that it was not under Giovanni Bellini (c.1435–1516) that Lotto studied, but in fact Alvise Vivarini (living 1457–died 1503/05).¹⁸⁹

¹⁸⁵ B. B. [Bernard Berenson], 'Review of *The Early Works of Raphael* by Julia Cartwright (1895)', *Chronique des Arts* (26 January 1895), 35–36; Julia Cartwright, 'Burne-Jones', *Gazette des beaux-arts*, 24 (1900), 25–38, 237–52.

¹⁸⁶ Julia Cartwright, 'Lorenzo Lotto', *Art Journal* (August 1895), 233–37.

¹⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 233.

¹⁸⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁸⁹ *Ibid.* This was a theory that Berenson would later go on to negate.

Secondly, Cartwright draws out Berenson's emphasis on the 'personal and individual note' of Lotto's early work.¹⁹⁰ This factor had been of great interest to her since her *Portfolio* article, in which she had extolled the power of Lotto's portraits in 'reveal[ing] [...] not only the outer form, but the inner soul of the man or woman before him'.¹⁹¹ In relation to this idea, Cartwright discusses 'the little Danae belonging to Professor Conway, lately exhibited at the New Gallery', which Berenson had identified as one of Lotto's earliest works.¹⁹² This surely must have been one of the paintings which Berenson and Cartwright discussed together in person during their visit to this very exhibition.

Quoting Berenson's description of Lotto's figures as 'characters [...] in a modern psychological novel', Cartwright turns to the National Gallery's family portrait group as one such example of where, rather than a 'mere collection of portraits', Lotto presents 'a family story, in which situations are as complicated and life as full of hidden meanings as in a poem of Browning's or a novel by Tolstoi [*sic*]'.¹⁹³ Here, Cartwright offers her readers a means of understanding Berenson's approach, presented as a visual analysis of character akin to that found in familiar works of fiction and poetry, thereby introducing his theories through a medium amenable to the more literary-minded readers of the *Art Journal*. Describing the *Portrait of a Man* (c.1535) in the Villa Borghese, Rome, which 'comparatively few may know', Cartwright draws attention to the 'flower-wreathed skull', the 'mournful look in his eyes' and the 'loveliness of the summer landscape' seen through the window behind, which 'speak of the tender grace of a day that is dead'.¹⁹⁴ Rather than a theoretical excursus into Berenson's method, Cartwright focuses on the visual qualities of those paintings which best conveyed his idea of the 'modern note in Lotto's personality', ending her

¹⁹⁰ Ibid., p. 234.

¹⁹¹ Cartwright, 'Lorenzo Lotto', *Portfolio*, p. 28.

¹⁹² Cartwright, 'Lorenzo Lotto', *Art Journal*, p. 233. See Berenson, *Lorenzo Lotto*, pp. 1–3 for his description of this work. It is now identified as an *Allegory of Chastity*, c. 1505, National Gallery of Art, Washington (inv. 1939.1.147).

¹⁹³ Cartwright, 'Lorenzo Lotto', *Art Journal*, p. 234.

¹⁹⁴ Ibid., pp. 234–35; Lorenzo Lotto, *Portrait of a Man (Mercurio Bua)*, c.1535, Galleria Borghese, Rome (inv. 185).

review by citing Berenson's comparison of the 'vigorous interpretation' in Lotto's late works with the 'French Impressionists of to-day'.¹⁹⁵

Cartwright's article evidently had the desired effect, as Berenson wrote to inform her that he had read it 'with much pleasure', acknowledging her ability to parse his ideas through her 'gift for "boiling down" & making palatable'.¹⁹⁶ In September of that year, Berenson invited Cartwright to join him in Paris, and recalling a trip the two took to the Louvre, she recorded that he had informed her that:

to popularise truth as I do, is the brightest and holiest work! Poor man. He is really grateful for my *Lotto* review, which made up a little for the unfair one in the *Athenaeum*. Certainly, he is a great power and must come to the front someday [...]¹⁹⁷

This record of the dynamic between Berenson and Cartwright is key, as it challenges the idea that art history was definitively a 'male-dominated discipline' in the nineteenth century. While an account of scholarly monographs or attributional arguments places a small group of male scholars at the centre, these men did not acquire their status or authority alone. As in the case of Cartwright, she was the figure of authority and influence to whom Berenson turned in order to 'popularise' his work. Indeed, it was Cartwright's reputation and standing as a writer on art that placed her at the front in her lifetime. For example, she was honoured as the main guest at the Lyceum Club's Art Critics' Dinner held on the 19 May 1906, where she recalled:

Sidney Colvin finally wound up by proposing my health in a very flattering speech saying how fortunate the Lyceum was to secure me for the occasion as I was 'one of themselves' and had written about art of the most varied kinds and had written admirably of Millet and Lepage as well as of Botticelli and Watts and that I had made incursions into historical biography and

¹⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 237.

¹⁹⁶ Berenson to Cartwright, 17 August 1895 [CE 110/9], CENA.

¹⁹⁷ Emanuel, *A Bright Remembrance*, p. 194 (21 September 1895).

written lives of the Este princesses, who were such illustrious patrons of art in its golden age etc.¹⁹⁸

Cartwright's evident sympathy for Berenson, and belief that he too 'must come to the front someday', is the opinion of one who is themselves secure in their status. This now strikes us as ironic, considering the vastly differing reputations of Berenson and Cartwright today.¹⁹⁹ It can be said that Cartwright's ability to 'boil down and make palatable' is one of the reasons for her decline in critical fortune, as she became unfairly characterised as a passive populariser rather than an active innovator.

Berenson's ascendancy in the British art press was sealed the following year with a laudatory review of his *Venetian Painters* (1894), *Florentine Painters* (1896) and *Lorenzo Lotto* (1901), again written by Cartwright for the *Quarterly Review* (discussed in more detail later). Berenson wrote to Cartwright, delighted with its effect:

I have read y[ou]r Article in the Quarterly & hasten to thank you for the charming, genial, whole-hearted way you introduce me to the respectable [*sic*] part of the British public in whose midst, by your canonisation I shall henceforth count as a species of minor saint — I really mean minor lightly. I am serious, but laughing for glee.²⁰⁰

Both writers therefore benefited from each other's networks to further their own authorial ambitions. While Berenson sought wider commercial success and public recognition, Cartwright, already a household name in England, was keen for positive appraisal by her foreign peers.

¹⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 283–84 (19 May 1906).

¹⁹⁹ Vernon Lee also had a similar portent, as recounted to Berenson by Lina Duff Gordon in 1952: 'I came across a reference to you in Vernon Lee's letters. She was taken to see you in London by Kit Thomson [Clementina Anstruther-Thomson] in 1893 & says: "that little art critic who appears destined to become famous"'; Lina Duff Gordon to Bernard Berenson [WAT:I:G:34:H9], BIF.

²⁰⁰ Berenson to Cartwright, 5 November 1896 [CE110/23], CENA.

When discussing the intricacies of changes of taste, the existence of Cartwright's article undoubtedly marks an important earlier step in Lotto's revival, particularly considering how little was actually published on him in English. That it was not developed into a full-scale book does not detract from its significance as an indicator of trends in taste, nuancing the timeline of Lotto's discovery in Britain and adding to the voices by which we trace such changes today. Historiography of the reception of Italian Renaissance artists in Britain has tended to favour late nineteenth-century major monographs, or articles in established scholarly journals such as the *Burlington* for its source material. Where more literary sources are used, this usually revolves around the works of familiar names from an earlier generation, like Ruskin and Pater. However, between the work of such 'great men' and the turn-of-the-century flourishing of monographs and specialist art magazines, journals such as the *Portfolio* were a key source for the discussion and dissemination of old master research in these intervening years.

For women like Cartwright, they proved essential for building up a reputation and establishing authority prior to publishing their own books. As with the examples discussed here, they provided a vehicle to test out innovative ideas or suggest new avenues of exploration. In the case of Lotto, while Berenson remains credited for virtually single-handedly reviving the artist's reputation, Cartwright's article is yet to be acknowledged in historiographic accounts. The recent major exhibition *Lorenzo Lotto Portraits* at the National Gallery cites Berenson's 1895 monograph, Adolfo Venturi's *Libro di spese diversi* (1896), a document of the artist's expenses, and the 'discerning eye' of Crowe and Cavalcaselle and Morelli, but Cartwright's article is absent from the catalogue's bibliography.²⁰¹ While some may consider this to be an inconsequential omission, if today we contend Lotto to be a 'fully Novecento painter'²⁰² who only emerged at the end of the nineteenth century, surely Cartwright's 1889 article merits inclusion in this history.

²⁰¹ Enrico Maria Dal Pozzolo, Miguel Falomir and Matthias Wivel, eds, *Lorenzo Lotto Portraits* (London: Thames and Hudson, 2018), pp. 15–16.

²⁰² Vittorio Sgarbi, 'Lorenzo Lotto: una pittura di pensiero', in *I volti e la anima: Lorenzo Lotto*, exhibition

In her own time, Cartwright was the only female art critic to feature in *The Imperial Gallery of Portraiture and Biographical Encyclopedia* (1901), a deluxe, limited edition volume of short biographies and portraits of the ‘chief men and women of this country’, covering the Royal family, politicians, the military, and figures from literature and the arts (**fig. 1.5**).²⁰³ Cartwright continued to publish widely on Italian art throughout her career, across the span of periodicals and magazines. Indeed, the volume of her work marks her name as one of the most prolific, and recognisable, in art criticism in the years around the turn of the twentieth century.

1.3 ‘From the City of Flowers’: Writing for the Periodical Press from Florence

It is now well established that, since the late eighteenth century, travel writing functioned as a means of demonstrating women’s connoisseurial aptitude and verifying their first-hand knowledge of art, as may be seen in the work of prominent early writers such as Callcott and Jameson.²⁰⁴ This was also true for women of later generations, who could partake in travel with far greater self-determination and independence, no longer restricted to travelling as a wife, governess or carer.²⁰⁵ Unsurprisingly, the later period saw increasing numbers of women writers choosing not only to travel, but to settle in Italy, living independently outside of marriage or the necessity of employing chaperones, a situation quite different from that pertaining to convention-bound middle-class Victorian England. The improvements to geographical mobility, combined with greater social mobility to pursue an

catalogue (Savigliano: L’Artistica Editrice, 2013), p. 11, quoted in *ibid.*, p. 15.

²⁰³ W. Lawler Wilson, ed., *The Imperial Gallery of Portraiture and Biographical Encyclopedia* (London: Iliffe and Sons, 1901), p. 176. Cartwright is listed under ‘Literature, Journalism and Drama’, where she is among the select few women chosen, alongside Florence Montgomery (1843–1923), Mrs Humphry Ward (1851–1920), Sarah Grand (1854–1943), Ada Baillin (1862–1906), and John Oliver Hobbes (1867–1906). Under the section ‘Arts and Sciences’, the only woman to feature is the actress Ellen Terry (1847–1928).

²⁰⁴ Palmer, “‘I Will Tell Nothing That I Did Not See’”, pp. 248–68.

²⁰⁵ Maria H. Frawley, *A Wider Range: Travel Writing by Women in Victorian England* (London; Toronto: Associated University Presses, 1994), p. 22.

‘emancipatory lifestyle’, created ‘new visual possibilities, [which] resonated in [women’s] writing about art’.²⁰⁶

Scholarly focus on Anglophone women in Italy, exemplified by Alison Chapman and Jane Stabler’s important edited collection *Unfolding the South* (2003), has explored the multifarious ways in which Italy represented for nineteenth- and early twentieth-century women a place of personal and professional liberty and emancipation.²⁰⁷ Of the Anglophone expatriate communities which populated Italian cities over the course of the nineteenth century, that found in Florence was among the most enduring. The allure of Florence for British visitors has been the subject of extensive scholarship, particularly in relation to how Florence, its art and cultural life, manifested itself in contemporary expatriate literary and artistic production.²⁰⁸

Florence, as Justine Antonia Maldon notes, was viewed especially as a place in which British women writers could achieve both personal and professional success. A principal reason for Florence’s popularity among the British was its image as ‘one compact and accessible city’ into which was concentrated all that ‘the rest of Italy [...] was celebrated for’.²⁰⁹ Writing to her sister, Jameson had praised Florence for possessing ‘the advantage of a small but magnificent capital’,

²⁰⁶ Clarke, ‘Critical Mediators’, pp. 227, 229.

²⁰⁷ Alison Chapman and Jane Stabler, eds, *Unfolding the South: Nineteenth-Century British Women Writers and Artists in Italy* (Manchester; New York: Manchester University Press, 2003). See also: Susan Cahill, ed., *Desiring Italy* (New York: Fawcett Colombia, 1997); Bruno P. F. Wanrooij, ed., *Otherness: Anglo-American Women in 19th and 20th Century Florence* (Florence: Edizioni Cadmo, 2001); Kathryn Walchester, *Our Own Fair Italy: Nineteenth Century Women’s Travel Writing and Italy, 1800–1844* (Bern: Peter Lang, 2007); Annie Richardson and Catherine Dille, eds, *Women’s Travel Writings in Italy* (London: Pickering and Chatto, 2009); Alison Chapman, *Networking the Nation: British and American Women’s Poetry and Italy, 1840–1870* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015).

²⁰⁸ Among the many other studies of this topic, see most recently: Marcello Fantoni, ed., *Gli anglo-americani a Firenze: idea e costruzione del Rinascimento* (Rome: Bulzoni Editore, 2000); Irene Marchegiani Jones and Thomas Haussler, eds, *The Poetics of Place: Florence Imagined* (Florence: Leo S. Olschki, 2001); Margherita Ciacci and Grazia Gobbi Sica, eds, *I giardini delle regine: Of Queens’ Gardens: The Myth of Florence in the Pre-Raphaelite Milieu and in American Culture (19th–20th Centuries)* (Livorno: Sillabe, 2004); Serena Cenni and Francesca Di Blasio, eds, *Una sconfinata infatuazione: Firenze e la Toscana nelle metamorfosi della cultura anglo-americana, 1861–1915* (Florence: Consiglio regionale della Toscana, 2012).

²⁰⁹ Justine Antonia Maldon, ‘Escaping the Fetters of Custom: Victorian Women in Florence, 1825–1875’, unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Western Australia, 2005, p. 40.

compared to a city like Naples which, ‘being of immense size, all the principal objects are at a great distance’.²¹⁰ Likewise at a later date, women like Vernon Lee ‘found it far easier to exist at peace not merely with their bank managers but with society and themselves in Florence than in England’, due to more affordable rents, a high standard of living, and relaxed social codes.²¹¹

Maria Frawley has discussed how women utilised their experiences abroad to ‘forge identities at home with the reading public’, as ‘travel conferred [...] cultural competence’ and ‘was empowering’.²¹² Yet, paradoxically, Frawley goes on to conclude that travel ‘did not, however, ultimately empower any of them as women’, and that it was back home in England that the ‘*making of the woman art historian* happened’.²¹³ These contradictory claims perhaps stem from Frawley’s overarching emphasis on the work of Elizabeth Eastlake and Jameson. Acknowledging that they were not the only women to work as art historians in this period, Frawley accords them the merit of being the most influential. While their influence cannot be doubted, Frawley conflates the historical moments and experiences of Eastlake and Jameson with those of later women writers, claiming they were impacted by much the same challenges and obstacles as their predecessors.²¹⁴

In this section, I will demonstrate how not only travel, but also residence in Italy was a crucial factor in the authority commanded by later women art writers and the shaping of their reputation, particularly those who left England permanently. Exploring the work of Lucy Baxter, Maud Cruttwell and Helen Zimmern — all residents of Florence, with markedly different approaches to writing about art — I will examine how women could, and did, cultivate their reputations as art historians outside London, utilising their access to periodicals both in Italy and the UK to establish a name for themselves that crossed national boundaries. All three women began their careers in

²¹⁰ Beatrice Erskine, *Anna Jameson: Letters and Friendships, 1812–1860* (London: T. F. Unwin, 1915), pp. 340, 60, quoted in *ibid.*

²¹¹ Clara Louise Dentler, *Famous Foreigners in Florence, 1400–1900* (Florence: Bemporad Marzocco, 1964), p. 3.

²¹² Frawley, *A Wider Range*, pp. 24, 74, 78.

²¹³ *Ibid.*, pp. 102–3. Emphasis in original.

²¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 101.

London, but later took up residence in Florence, where their integration into the local community put them in an advantageous position. From there, they could act as correspondents for the main London newspapers and art periodicals, writing on newly-discovered works of art and research and sites of artistic interest.

The third daughter of the Dorset poet William Barnes (1801–86) and his wife Julia (née Miles, 1805–52), Baxter was encouraged to develop her literary and artistic tastes throughout her childhood. In similar fashion to Cartwright, Baxter began writing at the early age of eighteen and also had to navigate the pervasive early Victorian societal expectations of appropriate female accomplishment in relation to her desire to write professionally. Her father, interestingly, encouraged her on this course, and chose a clever pseudonym for her — ‘Leader Scott’, a combination of her grandmothers’ maiden names — which, as with Vernon Lee, functioned effectively as a gender-neutral matronymic with which to sign her work.²¹⁵

Her father’s love for the Italian language and translations of the Italian poets Francesco Petrarca (1304–74) and Pietro Metastasio (1698–1782) meant that, prior to her first trip to Florence in 1867, Baxter spoke Italian fluently and was well read in Florentine history and literature.²¹⁶ During that first Italian visit, she met and married Samuel Thomas Baxter (1810–1903), whose family had been long settled in Florence.²¹⁷ Over the course of the next thirty-five years, Baxter cemented her position as a ‘*persona grata* in literary and artistic Italian circles’.²¹⁸ Her local cultural connections made her sought after by London-based editors to provide the ‘latest scoop’ on artistic events in Florence, from an insider’s perspective and she published numerous monographs, guides,

²¹⁵ Lucy Baxter, *The Life of William Barnes, Poet and Philologist* (London: Macmillan, 1887), p. ix; Rosemary Mitchell, ‘Baxter [née Barnes], Lucy [pseud. Leader Scott] (1837–1902), writer on art’, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (23 September 2004) <<https://www.oxforddnb.com/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-30646>>.

²¹⁶ Dentler, *Famous Foreigners in Florence*, p. 16.

²¹⁷ Paul Waterhouse, ‘Baxter, Lucy’, *Dictionary of National Biography: Second supplement* (London: Oxford University Press, 1901), vol. I, p. 113.

²¹⁸ E. D., ‘Mrs S. T. Baxter’, *Athenaeum* (22 November 1902), 684.

articles, and histories of Florentine art and artists. Her contemporary reputation was such that she had the rare honour bestowed on her of being elected as an honorary member of Florence's prestigious and ancient Accademia di Belle Arti in 1882, but to date she has been considered only briefly in surveys of nineteenth-century women art historians.²¹⁹

Born in Hamburg to a liberal German Jewish middle-class family who emigrated to England in 1848 when she was aged just two, Zimmern completed her education principally under private tuition and by attendance at a finishing school. A naturalised English citizen, she decided to become a writer at eighteen and her fluency in four languages (English, French, German, Italian) secured her consistent translation work, among numerous fiction articles for the various weeklies. Her biographies on Gotthold Ephraim Lessing (1729–81), Lawrence Alma-Tadema (1836–1912), Hubert von Herkomer (1849–1914), and a new edition of Joshua Reynolds' (1723–92) *Discourses* established her focus on art.²²⁰ From 1884, Zimmern began working as the London correspondent for the Italian daily newspaper the *Corriere della Sera* (1876–present), a regular and well-remunerated collaboration that she maintained until 1910 and which enabled her to reside for parts of the year in Florence. By the end of the century Zimmern had moved permanently to Italy, where she would remain for over forty years, principally based in Florence (**fig. 1.6**).²²¹

Zimmern frequently attended the artistic and literary salons of the city. It was at one such salon at Villa Il Palmerino in January 1885 that Lee introduced Zimmern to the Macchiaioli artist Telemaco Signorini (1835–1901) as the 'distinguished English journalist [...] who intends to write

²¹⁹ Mitchell, 'Baxter, Lucy', *ODNB*. A generation earlier, Mary Philadelphia Merrifield was made an honorary member of the Academy of Fine Arts in Bologna in 1847.

²²⁰ Caterina Del Vivo, *Helen Zimmern: Corriere di Londra, 1884–1910* (Milan: Fondazione Corriere della Sera, 2014), pp. 9, 21–27. See the Bibliography for full details of these publications.

²²¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 38–41. Zimmern's articles for the *Corriere* covered the development of collections in London museums, as well as political events, the activities of the aristocracy, and literature. Caterina Del Vivo observes that Zimmern clearly held a position of authority at the newspaper, considering the frequency with which her articles appeared, their position (almost always front page or feature articles) and the fact that she was paid at least as much as her male contemporaries such as Luca Beltrami (1854–1933) or Alessandro Luzio (1857–1946) (*Helen Zimmern*, pp. 33–40).

on Florentine painting'.²²² Lee and Zimmern maintained a cordial friendship, with Zimmern regularly invited to Il Palmerino. During the 1890s, Zimmern began writing for the *Magazine of Art* and *Art Journal* on British and European contemporary artists, while developing her interest in the old masters through prestigious publication projects, such as a new edition of Michelangelo's letters in collaboration with Guido Biagi (1855–1925), director of Florence's Biblioteca Laurenziana.²²³ In a similar fashion to Baxter, Zimmern maintained a position as a correspondent for London papers such as the *Illustrated London News*, becoming a renowned mediator across a wide spectrum of Italian cultural and artistic production.

In contrast to Baxter and Zimmern, Cruttwell has undergone a dramatic turn of critical fortune in recent years, as noted in the Introduction (**fig. 1.7**). Beginning her career as a painter in London, Cruttwell moved to Florence in 1890, where she integrated herself into the social set of Vernon Lee and the Berensons. It was here that she gained her first introduction to the field of art history and connoisseurship.²²⁴ Embarking independently on a career as an art historian, Cruttwell produced no fewer than six monographs specialising in quattrocento Florentine artistic production (to be discussed in Chapter Two). Her periodical publications, while far more limited in number compared to Baxter or Zimmern's, are likewise important in representing a liminal moment between the 'death' of the Victorian art periodical and the rise of the specialist art journal.

Both Baxter (publishing as Leader Scott) and Zimmern appeared regularly in periodicals such as the *Magazine of Art*, *Illustrated London News*, and *Academy*. Baxter contributed to the *Magazine's* feature 'The Romance of Art', which, as the editor Henley had informed her fellow

²²² 'La distinta giornalista inglese molto amica del Tadema, che ha intenzione di scrivere sulla pittura in Firenze': Vernon Lee to Telemaco Signorini, 30[?] January 1885 [C.V.471.24], BNF, quoted in Vivo, *Helen Zimmern*, p. 43.

²²³ Vivo, *Helen Zimmern*, pp. 44–45.

²²⁴ Francesco Ventrella, 'Maud Alice Wilson Cruttwell (1860–1939)', *19: Interdisciplinary Studies in the Long Nineteenth Century*, 28 (2019), DOI: <<https://doi.org/10.16995/ntn.861>>. See also Tiffany Johnston, 'Maud Cruttwell and the Berensons: "A preliminary canter to an independent career"', *ibid.*, DOI: <<http://doi.org/10.16995/ntn.821>> in the same issue for a detailed discussion of Cruttwell's early formation in Florence.

contributor Cartwright, focused on ‘anecdotes of painters and histories of pictures etc. which [his] superiors are always wanting’.²²⁵ Baxter also travelled to report on recent exhibitions both in Florence and other Italian cities, such as Rome and Turin.²²⁶ The opening of the ‘Esposizione Beatrice’ in 1890 to commemorate the fifth centenary of the death of Beatrice Portinari (c.1265–90), earned Baxter three commissions from the *Illustrated London News*, *Woman’s World* and *Queen* newspapers. As the woman commonly identified as the principal inspiration for the medieval poet Dante Alighieri’s (c.1265–1321) *Vita Nuova*, Beatrice was a figure of great interest to English audiences, particularly in light of the Pre-Raphaelite painter Dante Gabriel Rossetti’s (1828–1882) veneration of her in several of his paintings.

Baxter wrote to the exhibition’s organiser, the writer and editor Count Angelo de Gubernatis (1840–1913), requesting a ‘*tessera da stampa*’ to gain access to the exhibition outside of public opening hours for herself and an artist, J. F. Weedon (dates untraced), who would make sketches to accompany her text (**fig. 1.8**).²²⁷ In her review for the *Illustrated London News*, Baxter described a room dedicated to the ‘culto di Beatrice’, featuring walls draped in deep blue and embroidered with golden lilies, in which carved wooden cases displayed objects related to the show’s namesake, such as medieval manuscripts, pictures and dedicated poems.²²⁸ Zimmern’s regular feature for the *Illustrated London News*, ‘From the City of Flowers’, also reviewed new exhibitions, while commenting on recent political developments in relation to art and culture, especially with reference

²²⁵ Emanuel, *A Bright Remembrance*, p. 130 (28 November 1882).

²²⁶ See for example: Leader Scott, ‘Art in Turin’, *Magazine of Art*, 3 (1880), 435–36; Leader Scott, ‘The Art Exhibition at Rome’, *Academy* (3 March 1883), 156.

²²⁷ Lucy Baxter to Angelo de Gubernatis, 18 April 1890 [Raccolta: Angelo De Gubernatis, 10.18, 1], BNF. I am very grateful to Alyson Price for drawing my attention to these unpublished letters. The illustration for the *Illustrated London News* article is signed ‘J. F. Weedon’, who appears to have been a regular illustrator for newspapers and magazines. Other works by the artist are in the collection of the Victoria and Albert Museum (inv. S.429–2012; inv. E.1685–1888).

²²⁸ Leader Scott, ‘The Beatrice Exhibition at Florence’, *Illustrated London News* (10 May 1890), 590.

to preservation and restoration (discussed further in Chapter Four).²²⁹

One particular topic that provided much noteworthy material for English audiences was the late nineteenth-century spate of rediscoveries of previously hidden Italian paintings and frescoes. Whether through new identification as archival documentation came to light, or revealed from under whitewash and behind later altarpieces, the women discussed here were often on hand to witness these events, examine them and publish articles on the new findings. Among her articles about such works of art and sites of artistic interest, Baxter published an account on a recently discovered fresco by Domenico Ghirlandaio (1449–94) in the church of the Ognissanti.²³⁰ This work, the *Madonna della Misericordia Protecting Members of the Vespucci Family* (c.1472), was reported to depict a portrait of the Italian explorer and navigator Amerigo Vespucci (1454–1512). It was also commented on by Cruttwell, who covered the event for the rival *Art Journal*.²³¹

Comparing Baxter and Cruttwell's articles on the re-discovery of the Vespucci fresco shows the two different 'camps' of art historical writing, which existed side-by-side in the Anglo-Florentine community. Baxter's article, appearing in April 1898, focuses on the historical, Florentine context (**fig. 1.9**). She notes the fortuitous coinciding of the fresco's re-discovery with the Vespucci centenary celebrations in Florence and acknowledges the role of the local historian and Franciscan friar, Roberto Razzioli, a member of the Minori Osservanti, who had been researching the history of the order within the Church.²³² Baxter describes the depicted figures, referring to the city's archival records to provide their names and ages. Diverging from the opinion of the local Florentines, Baxter hesitates in accepting that the fresco depicts Amerigo Vespucci, observing that this figure's dress is 'emphatically the dress of a child', and therefore at odds with Amerigo's age at the time of painting.

²²⁹ Helen Zimmern, 'From the City of Flowers', *Illustrated London News* (4 April 1891), 441; Helen Zimmern, 'From the City of Flowers', *Illustrated London News* (9 May 1891), 618; Helen Zimmern, 'A Letter from Florence', *Illustrated London News* (13 June 1891), 775.

²³⁰ Leader Scott, 'The Discovery of Ghirlandajo's Vespucci Fresco', *Magazine of Art*, 22 (1898), 324–28.

²³¹ Maud Cruttwell, 'The Discoverer of America: A Newly-Found Portrait by Ghirlandaio of Amerigo Vespucci', *Art Journal* (May 1898), 150.

²³² Roberto Razzioli, *La Chiesa d'Ognissanti in Firenze* (Florence: E. Ariani, 1898).

Baxter suggests he is represented instead in one of the older male figures in the background, an issue that continues to be debated even today.

Cruttwell's *Art Journal* feature published the following month, focused on confirming the attribution to Ghirlandaio and the authenticity of the fresco (**fig. 1.10**). Describing the group portrait of the Vespucci family as demonstrating the 'very best style of the master', she laments the 'evident marks of late 16th or early 17th century style' in the figures of the *Pietà* of the lower half, which makes it 'at first sight hardly recognisable'.²³³ However, in the 'characteristic studied grouping of the figures' and 'wooden and photographic appearance', Cruttwell nonetheless 'recognise[d] [Ghirlandaio's] hand behind the repaint'.²³⁴ It is interesting to note that, as discussed by Jean Cadogan, later critics including Bernard Berenson and Raimond van Marle (1887–1936) found the 'awkward composition' of the *Pietà* grouping to be evidence of a workshop intervention or the hand of Domenico's brother, Davide (1452–1525).²³⁵ This attribution is traceable back to the English designer and art historian Herbert Horne (1864–1916), who, in his own response to the discovery published in February 1898, described the 'inferior quality of the painting' as poor enough to 'strike the most inexpert eye', and established Davide as the author of the 'ungainly' work.²³⁶ Cadogan suggests a more likely explanation is that Domenico was inspired by the example of Netherlandish painting, something that has been corroborated more recently by Michelle O'Malley.²³⁷ Cruttwell does not elaborate on the 'wooden and photographic' appearance of the *Pietà* group (perhaps the

²³³ Cruttwell, 'The Discoverer of America', p. 150.

²³⁴ Discerning an artist's original work despite heavy repaint appears to have been a particular skill of Cruttwell's. See Chapter Two, pp. 168–69.

²³⁵ Jean K. Cadogan, *Domenico Ghirlandaio: Artist and Artisan* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000), p. 193.

²³⁶ Herbert Horne, 'The Newly Discovered Portrait of Amerigo Vespucci, by Ghirlandaio', *Saturday Review* (19 February 1898), 248–49 (p. 248).

²³⁷ Cadogan, *Domenico Ghirlandaio*, p. 194; Michelle O'Malley, 'Finding Fame: Painting and the Making of Careers in Renaissance Italy', in *Re-thinking Renaissance Objects: Design, Function and Meaning*, ed. by Peta Motture and Michelle O'Malley (Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011), pp. 9–32 (pp. 17–18).

brevity of her *Art Journal* report did not allow her to do so), but her recognition of the work of the master, rather than the workshop, aligns her attribution with that of scholars today.

Establishing connections with local Italian scholars and publishers was also crucial for furthering research and securing work, a major boon afforded by residence in Italy. Janet Ross (1842–1927) the writer and historian who presided over Villa Poggio Gherardo, and became the doyenne of Anglo-Florentine society after Baxter, recalled that:

In Italy, if recommended by any well-known person, you are allowed to take books home, and if you need some special book it will be got for you from any public library in Italy, sent free of cost from one library to the other by post. I have had books from Palermo and from Rome lent to me this way.²³⁸

Such connections were particularly helpful for gaining an advantage in the field of translating foreign-language books on art for English readers. Baxter had a close relationship with one of the principal Florentine publishing houses, G. Barbèra Editore. Upon receiving a copy of their latest ‘cicerone’ for Florence — presumably the guide by Giuseppe Marcotti (1850–1922) of 1892 — Baxter assured Luigi Barbèra (dates untraced) that she would ‘show it to all [her] English friends and do [her] best to get it known’ and ‘send a notice of it to a literary friend in London to insert in one or two reviews’.²³⁹ After congratulating her publisher on their new guidebook, Baxter confidently proposed that ‘if [he] should ever think of bringing out an English edition [to] let [her] be its translator’.²⁴⁰ Similarly, Constance Jocelyn Ffoulkes, a close friend of Cartwright’s who published the major monograph on the Milanese painter Vincenzo Foppa (c.1430–1515/16), used her direct line of contact with Adolfo Venturi to pitch herself as the translator for his works and to request suggestions for books on art in Italian, French or German, for which she could provide

²³⁸ Janet Ross, *The Fourth Generation: Reminiscences* (London: Constable and Co., 1912), p. 391.

²³⁹ Giuseppe Marcotti, *Guide-Souvenir de Florence* (Florence: G. Barbèra, 1892); Lucy Baxter to Luigi Barbèra, 5 May 1892 [Raccolta: Barbera, 3.10, 1], BNF.

²⁴⁰ Baxter to Barbèra, *ibid.*

translations.²⁴¹ Translation still remained an important form of work to which women could turn their hand, thanks to their networks and training in modern foreign languages.

The expansion of the art world and art market brought exposure to numerous new artists, styles, and movements both contemporary and historic, for which organs such as the *Art Journal* struggled to provide relevant and sympathetic accounts. The status of the mass-market art periodical became increasingly challenged from the 1890s onwards. The proliferation of print periodicals, together with the success of individual artist monographs, marked a shift in the tone of the art press discourse, away from the didactic and broadly-appealing titles to highly specialised coverage aimed at smaller, and more informed audiences.²⁴² While the establishment of smaller magazines such as the *Studio* (1893–1964) signalled this new, international outlook and active engagement with developments at the forefront of the contemporary art scene, it would not be until the early years of the next century that a dedicated journal for old master art would be established in England. In these intermediary years, many British art historians forged connections with specialist foreign art magazines, to publish their work that as yet had no suitable outlet in England.

Turning to foreign art journals such as *L'archivio storico dell'arte* (*L'Arte* from 1898), *Rassegna d'arte* and *Gazette des beaux-arts* formed a valid medium for women to publish more documentary or connoisseurship-based art criticism, for an audience that included their peers. As such, British women numbered significantly as contributors to these journals around the turn of the century. For some, their competency in French and Italian, social mobility, and location in London placed them in the ideal position to act as correspondents for these journals. One prominent example is Ffoulkes, who became the London correspondent for *L'Arte* from 1895 to 1925. It is worth noting

²⁴¹ Constance Jocelyn Ffoulkes to Adolfo Venturi, 7 May [undated] [AV. Cart. XIV, 989], AVCA. On Ffoulkes, see Francesco Ventrella, 'Constance Jocelyn Ffoulkes and the Modernization of Scientific Connoisseurship', *Visual Resources*, 33:1–2 (2017), 117–39, DOI: <10.1080/01973762.2017.1276735>; and Francesco Ventrella, 'Feminine Inscriptions in the Morellian Method: Constance Jocelyn Ffoulkes and the Translation of Connoisseurship', in *Migrating Histories of Art: Self-Translations of a Discipline*, ed. by Maria Teresa Costa and Hans Christian Hönes (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2018), pp. 37–58.

²⁴² Helmreich, 'Death of the Victorian Art Periodical', p. 247.

that in 1894, Ethel Halsey — another London-based art historian who also specialised in the Lombard school (discussed further in Chapter Two) — was initially suggested by the English art patron and art historian Herbert Cook (1868–1939) to Venturi as a potential candidate for the role of that journal’s London correspondent.²⁴³ For reasons not given by Cook, Halsey was unable to take up the role at the time, and evidently Ffoulkes was then offered the position.

For others, like Cruttwell, such journals were able to publish the kind of empirical and documentary-based research that British periodicals, struggling to boost their popular appeal and circulation numbers, deemed ‘too learned’. Cruttwell was not only interested in pursuing the formal and stylistic approach of connoisseurship, but also engaging in extensive archival research, leading to her discovery of a number of primary documents that contributed to current knowledge of Florentine artists’ social and economic backgrounds. As Francesco Ventrella notes, the documentary and historical-based approach of journals such as *L’Arte* were at odds with Morellian-style connoisseurship; the decision of women like Cruttwell and Ffoulkes to engage with these journals marked a ‘shift from visuality to documentality’, and their alignment with the methods of Italian and German peers, whose philological approach gained ground in the early years of the 1900s.²⁴⁴

Prior to the publication of her monograph *Andrea Verrocchio* (1904), Cruttwell published three primary documents about the artist in *L’Arte*, none of which had previously been transcribed.²⁴⁵ In her short introductory paragraph, Cruttwell emphasised the novelty of her findings, underscoring that even the seminal edition of Vasari’s *Vite* by the Italian scholar Gaetano Milanesi (1813–95) had failed to notice this material.²⁴⁶ Cruttwell corresponded directly with Venturi to voice her intention to

²⁴³ Herbert Cook to Adolfo Venturi, 2 March [undated] [AV. Cart. X, 668], AVCA. As discussed in Chapter Two, Halsey’s name is unknown in scholarship on the late nineteenth-century art historical circles of London. In his letter, Cook states that upon receiving Venturi’s request for a London correspondent, he had ‘immediately approached Halsey’, which suggests that she was already a well-integrated and reputed figure at this point.

²⁴⁴ Ventrella, ‘Modernization of Scientific Connoisseurship’, pp. 131–32.

²⁴⁵ Maud Cruttwell, ‘Tre documenti del Verrocchio’, *L’Arte*, 7:2 (April 1904), 167–68.

²⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 167.

publish further documents, which anticipated her discovery of catasto records (a register of land ownership and hence taxation) relating to the Pollaiuolo family of artists.²⁴⁷ These appeared in 1905, again published for the first time in *L'Arte*.²⁴⁸ Unfortunately, Cruttwell does not preface them with any kind of essay or information as to the process of her discovery. She states simply that, to her knowledge, the documents had not been transcribed previously in their entirety and the record of 1498 relating to Antonio del Pollaiuolo had never before been published at all.

Her acknowledgement of the help of the archivist Umberto Dorino (dates untraced) of the State Archives in Florence demonstrates her cultivation of professional networks in order to access this sort of primary material to further her research.²⁴⁹ Cruttwell's interest in documentary evidence and her contributions to a journal renowned for its support of *Kunstwissenschaft* — the study of objects of art in their historical context — underlines her growing engagement with the European style of historically-grounded attribution making. Notably, the Kunsthistorisches Institut was established in the city in 1897 as the first German institute of art history in Italy.

1.4 Writing for the New Art Magazines

The death of Morelli in 1891 signalled a moment to take stock of the wide-ranging influence of his method and to reflect on who would be the ones to carry the field forward. Three articles titled 'The New Art Criticism' appeared in quick succession in prominent periodicals — all authored by women, who represented three different stages of art history's development in Britain: Elizabeth Eastlake, Julia Cartwright and Mary Costelloe, the future Mary Berenson.

²⁴⁷ 'Now I have begun to look for the documents – the Portate al Catasto of the Pollaiuolo family – which exist, but have never, to my knowledge, been transcribed or published. When I find them, I want very much to publish them in *L'Arte*, if you will accept them, as you did with the three documents on Verrocchio last year': Maud Cruttwell to Adolfo Venturi, 9 February 1905 [AV. Cart. XI, 711], AVCA. Own translation. This letter was previously catalogued as from an unidentified correspondent and confirmed by myself as written by Cruttwell.

²⁴⁸ Maud Cruttwell, 'Quattro portate del catasto e della decima fatte da Antonio Pollaiuolo, dal fratello Giovanni e Jacopo loro padre', *L'Arte* 8:5 (1905), 381–85.

²⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 381.

The first article was published in the *Quarterly Review* in 1891 by Eastlake. It was written as a memorial to Morelli, while also presenting her stand on the irrefutable importance of the ‘new’ connoisseurship. She asserted that it required, ‘something of the astuteness of the lawyer, the diagnosis of the physician, and the research of the antiquary and the historian’ which are all ‘combined in an art [...] which all of us are practising everyday [...] the art of comparison’.²⁵⁰ Divesting the practice of connoisseurship from its earlier eighteenth-century conception as the elite leisure pursuit of the male aristocratic collector and instead presenting it as a defined set of practical skills, Eastlake simultaneously argued for it to be held in the same high regard as several other contemporaneously professionalising fields of specialised practice.²⁵¹

An American expatriate who moved to London in 1885, Costelloe published the second article, ‘The New and the Old Art Criticism’, in 1894.²⁵² Her opening query, ‘does the printed word of the Gallery Director settle all questions for the art-student?’ is answered with an emphatic ‘no’.²⁵³ Enumerating the unaddressed ‘decrepit attributions’ still to be found in the seemingly trustworthy catalogues of the Louvre and National Gallery, Costelloe warned that the stubbornness of directors in refusing to acknowledge the unequivocal results of recent critics’ work was egregious not only for the art student, but also ‘the unsuspecting public, in forming whose taste they play so great a part’.²⁵⁴ She took particular exception to the National Gallery’s liberal sprinkling of attributions to Sandro Botticelli (c.1445–1510), clear in her summary that this was a consequence of the artist’s recent resurgence as ‘a distinctly Anglo-Saxon fad’.²⁵⁵ Costelloe reproached ‘the authors of the National

²⁵⁰ Anon. [Elizabeth Eastlake], ‘The New Art Criticism’, *Quarterly Review* (July 1891), 235–52.

²⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 235.

²⁵² Mary Whitall Costelloe, ‘The New and the Old Art Criticism’, *Nineteenth Century* (May 1894), 828–37.

²⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. 828.

²⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 830. Among the extensive scholarship on Botticelli’s nineteenth-century revival, see most recently: Jeremy Melius, ‘Art History and the Invention of Botticelli’, unpublished doctoral thesis, University of California, Berkeley, 2010; Mark Evans and Stefan Weppelmann, eds, *Botticelli Reimagined*, exhibition catalogue (London: V&A Publishing, 2016); Ana Debenedetti and Caroline Elam, eds, *Botticelli Past and Present* (London: UCL Press, 2019) <<https://discovery.ucl.ac.uk/id/eprint/10065079/1/Botticelli-Past-and->

Gallery catalogue’, who have ‘done more to corrupt taste [...] than volumes of bad art criticism could possibly have done’.²⁵⁶ In particular, she denigrated the writings of Walter Pater and John Ruskin, for encouraging an attitude towards seeing art as ‘a peg to hang poetry on’ — in the case of Botticelli, ‘particularly poetry of the depressed, nihilistic kind’, especially in regard to many misattributed *Madonna and Child* tondos.²⁵⁷ Referring to the National Gallery’s *The Virgin and Child with Saint John and an Angel* (NG275), Costelloe satirically acknowledged that ‘to question this “Madonna” [...] always arouses a howl of indignation’, and in its ‘prominent position’ is ‘evidently meant to be taken for *the* Botticelli of the gallery *par excellence*’, a belief that she quickly dispatches as unfounded (**fig. 1.11**).²⁵⁸ Expressing her hopes that ‘the new scientific school of art-criticism’ will ‘win a hearing from the public’ over that of the gallery director, Costelloe affirms that the innovations of this new school are ‘only now becoming possible through the improvements and spread of photography and the conveniences of modern travel’.²⁵⁹

The third article appeared in the *Quarterly Review* in 1896, written by Cartwright.²⁶⁰ She deplored the same excruciating slowness of public galleries to adapt to new developments. Highlighting the failure of the National Gallery catalogue to reflect new commonly-held attributions in its published literature, Cartwright lampooned its display of ‘the same lamentable blindness and apathy, the same reluctance to correct the errors of past generations’.²⁶¹ Cartwright praises, by contrast, the ‘gratifying [...] progress lately made in this country by the new and scientific method of art-criticism’, where the name of Morelli, ‘generally recognised as the Darwin of this new branch of

Present.pdf>.

²⁵⁶ Costelloe, ‘The New and the Old Art Criticism’, p. 830.

²⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 832.

²⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 831–32.

²⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 834.

²⁶⁰ Anon. [Julia Cartwright], ‘The New Art-Criticism’, *Quarterly Review* (October 1896), 454–79.

²⁶¹ *Ibid.*, p. 454.

evolutionary science' now 'needs no introduction' and commends Eastlake's earlier article as 'a worthy tribute'.²⁶²

Cartwright then turns to the main intention of her article, identifying and praising the latest generation of art critics taking up the mantle to lead the 'new science'. She begins by lauding the 'excellent English translation' of Morelli's works by Ffoulkes 'whose own knowledge of Italian art and personal acquaintance with the great critic fitted her in an especial manner for the task'.²⁶³ Cartwright praises Costelloe, whose pamphlet on the collection of Hampton Court provided 'not only an admirable account of the paintings in that rich collection, but a concise and useful summary of recent conclusions as to the authorship of many disputed pictures'.²⁶⁴ Finally she turns to Bernard Berenson, 'the most ablest [*sic*] and daring of all Morelli's followers', and as previously noted, reviewed his recent publications. These three articles, all published within a few years of each other, clearly signalled the new, decisive direction being taken in English art criticism, and moreover, the rising writers of the field, women and men, whose work was being sorely overlooked by national collections.

At the opening of the twentieth century, the founding of new periodicals including the *Connoisseur* and the *Burlington Magazine*, marked the culmination of efforts to establish an art journal in Britain that could support this turn towards a methodologically rigorous form of art historical investigation, commensurate with that employed in already well-respected continental publications.²⁶⁵ Britain, out of all European countries, lacked 'any periodical which makes the serious and disinterested study of ancient art its chief occupation', as the *Burlington's* first editor Robert Dell (1865–1940) stated, by way of introducing the inaugural issue.²⁶⁶ Promoting a

²⁶² Ibid., p. 455.

²⁶³ Ibid.

²⁶⁴ Ibid.

²⁶⁵ Leahy, "'For Connoisseurs'", p. 231.

²⁶⁶ Anon. [Robert Dell], 'The *Burlington Magazine*: Editorial Article', *Burlington Magazine*, 1:1 (March 1903), 3–5.

methodology employing the use of documentary source material alongside formalist assessment of works of art, the *Burlington* aimed to elevate a historicist, over a poetic interpretation of old master art.²⁶⁷ Indeed, as Katherine Haskins observes, the *Burlington*'s 'position read almost as a form of "anti-*Art-Journal-ism*"'.²⁶⁸ This increasing specialisation contributed in large measure to the demise of the more literary art periodicals, while also having an impact on women's agency and visibility as authorities in the field.

The formation and functioning of the *Burlington*, and its more commercial-minded counterpart the *Connoisseur*, relied on a network of figures whose professional lives often fluctuated between the roles of art critic, writer, dealer and museum professional, and whose shared 'political and stylistic agenda' shaped the very art writing produced by the journal.²⁶⁹ Publishing in a magazine such as the *Burlington* conferred the association of being a specialist, newly inflected in the early twentieth century by the *Burlington*'s drive to establish the art historian as an acknowledged professional vocation. This was a significant development for the acknowledgement of women's professionalism in the field, considering only a few decades previously such public visibility was markedly more difficult for women to negotiate and establish for themselves.²⁷⁰ The *Burlington*'s range, which included an interest in early Italian and Netherlandish painting, and rigorous attendance to methodology, marked it as being a very different kind of periodical from its more literary predecessors such as the *Art Journal*, and even its contemporary, the *Connoisseur*.²⁷¹ As such, it counted a notable number of current and former curators and art librarians on its roster, along with

²⁶⁷ Barbara Pezzini, 'The *Burlington Magazine*, *The Burlington Gazette*, and *The Connoisseur*: The Art Periodical and the Market for Old Master Paintings in Edwardian London', *Visual Resources*, 29:3 (2013), 154–83 (p. 155), DOI: <10.1080/01973762.2013.814203>.

²⁶⁸ Haskins, *The Art-Journal*, p. 190.

²⁶⁹ Barbara Pezzini, 'Towards a Network Analysis of Art Writers in Edwardian London: The *Art Journal*, *Connoisseur* and *Burlington Magazine* in 1903', *Art Libraries Journal*, 38:1 (2013), 12–19 (pp. 13, 19), DOI: <10.1017/S030747220001782X>.

²⁷⁰ Joanne Shattock, 'Professional Networking: Masculine and Feminine', *Victorian Periodicals Review*, 44:2 (Summer 2011), 128–40.

²⁷¹ Pezzini, 'Network Analysis', p. 18.

accredited foreign critics, thereby placing a group of institutionally-sanctioned male figures at its forefront.

Several women did contribute to the journal in its early years, perhaps the most recognised being Christiana Herringham. Her expertise on historical painting techniques, established by her critical translation of Cennino Cennini's *Libro dell'arte* (1899) and her role as co-founder of the Society of Painters in Tempera (1901), warranted her position on the *Burlington's* Consultative Committee.²⁷² However, considering the number of women known to be working in the field at this time, the *Burlington*, even as the self-appointed vanguard in art history, did not give a wholly accurate representation of this fact. Three of the articles in its first issue were authored by women.²⁷³ Yet it would not be until the tenth issue, published in January 1904, that the next signed article by a woman appeared.²⁷⁴ An assessment of the *Burlington's* main editorial articles authored by women from 1903 to 1915 shows that they appeared much less frequently than their male counterparts, and even among these articles, only four focused on the topic of Italian Renaissance art.²⁷⁵ This presents a

²⁷² Meaghan Clarke, 'Women in the Galleries: New Angles on Old Masters in the Late Nineteenth Century', *19: Interdisciplinary Studies in the Long Nineteenth Century*, 28 (2019), DOI: <<http://doi.org/10.16995/ntn.823>>

²⁷³ These were: Rose Kingsley and Camille Grokowski, 'Types of Old Paris Houses — Hôtel de Lazun', *Burlington Magazine*, 1:1 (March 1903), 84–100; Constance Jocelyn Ffoulkes, 'The Date of Vincenzo Foppa's Death: Gleanings From the Archives of S. Alessandro at Brescia', *Burlington Magazine*, 1:1 (March 1903), 102–21; Julia Frankau, 'A Note on Five Portraits by John Downman, A.R.A.', *Burlington Magazine*, 1:1 (March 1903), 122–33.

²⁷⁴ Mrs F. Neville Jackson, 'Ecclesiastical Lace Ancient and Modern: A Comparison — I', *Burlington Magazine*, 4:10 (January 1904), 54–64. This information is based on my analysis of authors of openly signed main editorial articles (not including contributions published as 'Notes on Art', reviews and foreign correspondence). Some early articles remain unsigned or with unidentified initials.

²⁷⁵ These four articles include the one written by Ffoulkes, noted above, and: Edith A. Hewett, 'A Newly Discovered Portrait by Ambrogio De Predis', *Burlington Magazine*, 10:47 (February 1907), 309–13; Henriette Mendelsohn, 'Did the Dossi Brothers Sign Their Pictures?', *Burlington Magazine*, 19:98 (May 1911), 79–80; and Edith Coulson James, 'S. John the Baptist by Francesco Francia', *Burlington Magazine*, 20:103 (October 1911), 6–11, discussed later in this chapter. The other main editorial articles published by women in the *Burlington* from 1903 to 1915 covered topics including accounts of noted collectors and their collections, British, French and Northern European artists, and portraiture. Some women developed their own connoisseurial specialism in areas of artistic production that were relatively underexamined, such as the study of textiles, particularly lace and tapestry work, archaeology, and Byzantine and early Christian art. See: Giulia Della Rosa, 'Margaret Jourdain and the Burlington Magazine', *Burlington Magazine Index Blog* (24

stark contrast to the frequency of publication and strong presence women enjoyed in the earlier art journals, and suggests that greater specialisation also entailed greater regulation over what could be published and by whom.

As previously noted, while there has been much written of the attributional arguments in the magazine's early years, women's articles in relation to the old masters have received little attention. On the one hand, this is due to the fact that men did author the majority of the main feature articles appearing in the *Burlington's* pages. In some cases, women's contributions were subsumed under the name of a male collaborator, such as Lucy Olcott's work on articles related to Sieneese painters, which appeared under the names of Bernard Berenson and Olcott's husband, Frederic Mason Perkins (1874–1955).²⁷⁶ However, some women did openly engage in the foray of old master connoisseurship through the *Burlington*, one of whom was Edith Coulson James.

In the autumn of 1927, the pages of the *Burlington Magazine* and *The Times* were witness to a heated debate concerning the most appropriate method of proving a painting's authenticity. This debate involved three eminent specialists: the co-founder and former editor of the *Burlington* and curator at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, Roger Fry; the Professor of Chemistry at the Royal Academy and Fellow of the Royal Society of Edinburgh, Arthur Pillans Laurie (1861–1949); and the then current editor at the *Burlington*, Robert Rattray Tatlock (1889–1954). Laurie accused Fry of 'abandon[ing] his position as an art critic' by venturing into the 'region of expert chemical enquiry' when he had suggested that one could detect a forgery by observing anomalous effects of craquelure

September 2016) <<https://burlingtonindex.wordpress.com/2016/09/24/margaret-jourdain-and-the-burlington-magazine/>> for an account of Margaret Jourdain (1876–1951) and her articles on lace. On unsigned and initialled articles published in the early issues of the *Burlington*, see the blog by Barbara Pezzini on Mary Berenson's review work for the *Burlington*: 'Connoisseurship as the "art-element in art": Three Unknown Articles by Mary Berenson in the *Burlington Magazine* (1903)', *Burlington Magazine Index Blog* (19 March 2014) <<https://burlingtonindex.wordpress.com/2014/03/19/mary-berenson-burlington-magazine/>>.

²⁷⁶ Imogen Tedbury, 'Collaboration and Correction: Re-examining the Writings of Lucy Olcott Perkins, "a lady resident in Siena"', *19: Interdisciplinary Studies in the Long Nineteenth Century*, 28 (2019), DOI: <<http://doi.org/10.16995/ntn.838>>.

on the surface of a painting with the naked eye alone.²⁷⁷ Laurie insisted that only observation with a microscope could determine such claims, while Tatlock remonstrated that though such analyses were ‘sufficient to settle the date of the picture [...] we are compelled to continue to base our conclusions on the general impression formed by those skilled and experienced in judging old paintings [...]’.²⁷⁸

There was a fourth opinion added to that of this trio of prestigious male art world professionals. Printed in a short note the week following Tatlock’s response, a Miss Edith Coulson James of Tunbridge Wells suggested: ‘there is yet another kind of evidence that should be considered in trying to determine the age and authorship of pictures [...] the historical evidence’.²⁷⁹ However, as she observed dryly, such evidence was ‘too often overlooked by the great critics who expect the world to accept the conclusions of their experienced “general impressions”’.²⁸⁰

Coulson James is an unexamined figure among British women art historians (**fig. 1.12**). Her dissent from ‘the great critics’ and their ‘impressions’ was one of her last statements in defence of her own work, for which she had fought for recognition over the past two decades. During the course of those years, she had developed her expertise in the artistic and cultural history of Bologna and, especially, the art of the late-quattrocento Bolognese painter, goldsmith, and medallist Francesco Francia (c.1447–1517). Through her intimate acquaintance with the city, its works of art and archives, she set out to correct what she believed to be two ongoing, and misconstrued claims regarding the Bolognese school of art. The first of these was that no distinct school of art existed in Bologna prior to the rise of Ludovico (1555–1619), Agostino (1557–1602), and Annibale (1560–1609) Carracci, a Bolognese family of artists who had innovated the Baroque style of painting. The

²⁷⁷ A. P. Laurie, A. L. Nicholson and Hugh Blaker, ‘The Identification of Forged Pictures’, *Burlington Magazine*, 50:291 (June 1927), 342–44 (p. 343); Roger Fry, ‘The Authenticity of the Renders Collection’, *Burlington Magazine*, 50:290 (May 1927), 261–67 (p. 261).

²⁷⁸ Robert Tatlock, ‘Tests for Old Masters’, *The Times*, 16 September 1927, p. 12.

²⁷⁹ Edith Coulson James, ‘Tests for Old Masters’, *The Times*, 24 September 1927, p. 6.

²⁸⁰ *Ibid.*

second, was the framing of Francia as a minor artist, whose principal achievements were the religious altarpieces for which he was so well known.

In relation to the first claim, Coulson James intended to establish the existence of a dedicated early school of art at Bologna, deserving of far greater recognition than it had hitherto received in contemporary scholarship. Her aim in this regard can be aligned with that of other contemporary writers such as Olcott, who also worked to revive the reputation of the earliest representatives of another regional school then also considered to be marginal, that of Siena.²⁸¹ It is on the second claim that I wish to focus, because it was here that we can best see Coulson James negotiating and asserting her own connoisseurial expertise, rooted in an empirical and historical documentary-based method.

Halona Norton-Westbrook identifies the ‘connoisseur-scholar’ as a crucial figure in both Britain and America during the early twentieth century, a period when the art museum transformed from a ‘space dominated by gentlemanly amateurs to one in which academically trained art historians increasingly assumed positions of authority’.²⁸² However, ‘gentlemanly’ was one key attribute retained through this transition, as the connoisseur-scholar was presented and perceived as unquestionably male.²⁸³ As Meaghan Clarke states, the growing trend towards the end of the nineteenth century for art critics to possess academic titles and the increasing importance of institutional affiliation, diminished the means by which women could claim equal professional status in the field.²⁸⁴ From the pedantic, aristocratic antiquarian of the late eighteenth-century, the

²⁸¹ See Imogen Tedbury, ‘Collecting, Reception and Display of *trecento* and *quattrocento* Sieneese paintings in Britain, 1850–1950’, unpublished doctoral thesis, Courtauld Institute of Art, 2018.

²⁸² Halona Norton-Westbrook, ‘Between The “Collection Museum” and The University: The Rise of the Connoisseur-Scholar and the Evolution of Art Museum Curatorial Practice, 1900–1940’, unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Manchester, 2013, p. 16.

²⁸³ This assumption is also implied in Norton-Westbrook’s thesis, where all the examples of the ‘connoisseur-scholar’ she discusses are male. There is no commentary offered on the possibility of, or reasons for the lack of, women also occupying this role.

²⁸⁴ Clarke, *Critical Voices*, pp. 25–26.

connoisseur now became something of a celebrity, whose attributions wielded decisive authority as to the status and authenticity of the artists and paintings about which they wrote.

Coulson James began her research as an art historian in 1902, after the death of her mother, for whom she was the main carer.²⁸⁵ While it is difficult to ascertain exactly how and why she developed her interest in Italy, it was with her mother that she first visited Bologna, during trips in which they visited the spas in Porretta just outside the city.²⁸⁶ From 1903, Coulson James spent extended periods of time in Bologna conducting research for what would appear in 1909 as the most extensive historical study of the city then published in the English language, *Bologna: Its History, Antiquities and Art*.²⁸⁷ It was in this book that she introduced the idea that would occupy her subsequent articles in the *Burlington* and later, the *Connoisseur*: that the importance of Francia had yet to be fully realised in art history, as an artist who merited attention in his own right.

In the second half of the nineteenth century, Francia's reputation in England rested in large part on the popularity of the Buonvisi Altarpiece, which he had painted for the church of San Frediano, Lucca and which had been purchased by the National Gallery in 1841 (NG179–80). Nicholas Penny observes that by the end of the century, the lunette depicting the *Pietà* was the most copied work in the gallery's collection (**fig. 1.13**).²⁸⁸ Despite spending the majority of his working

²⁸⁵ James was the eldest of four younger brothers. Her father died when she was fifteen, leaving her the sole carer of her widowed mother, Susannah Elizabeth Rosher (c.1830–1902), a member of the Rosher family of Kent, proprietors of the Rosherville pleasure gardens and an estate in Monmouthshire. For information about Edith Coulson James, her family background and connections, I am extremely grateful to John Barnard and Rosetta Plummer for generously sharing with me their knowledge and personal papers relating to their family ancestry and history. Details can also be found in two obituaries: [Anon.], 'Death of Miss Edith Coulson James: A Lady of Intense Loyalties', *Kent and Sussex Courier*, 5 June 1936, p. 13 and [Anon.], 'Miss E. E. C. James, Italian Archaeology and Art', *The Times*, 3 June 1936, p. 16.

²⁸⁶ John E. Law, 'Interpreting the Italian Renaissance in Victorian and Edwardian Britain: Some Women Writers', *Textus: English Studies in Italy*, ed. by Alessandra Petrina and John E. Law, 24:3 (September–December 2011), 579–88 (p. 585). According to the obituary in the *Kent and Sussex Courier*, at some point Coulson James also attended Queen's School, in London.

²⁸⁷ Edith Coulson James, *Bologna: Its History, Antiquities and Art* (London: Oxford University Press, 1909).

²⁸⁸ Nicholas Penny and Giorgia Mancini, eds, *National Gallery Catalogues – The Sixteenth Century Italian Paintings – Vol. 3: Bologna and Ferrara* (London: National Gallery Company 2016), p. 152.

life in Bologna, Francia was viewed principally as a Ferrarese artist. Crowe and Cavalcaselle discussed Bolognese art in relation to its ‘Ferrarese origin’ and Berenson made no mention of the existence of a Bolognese school at all.²⁸⁹ Coulson James believed that Bologna, which had produced ‘the art of Francia, and the art of Italy’s latest great school of painting’, merited fresh reconsideration, particularly due to its strength as a self-contained centre of artistic production.²⁹⁰ Since the late eighteenth century, the conception of the Bolognese school had remained largely unchanged.²⁹¹ In fact, the very existence of a defined school of Bolognese art was seen to begin in the late sixteenth century under the Baroque painters the Carracci, Guido Reni (1575–1642) and Guercino (1591–1666). These artists were especially admired among late eighteenth-century British aristocratic collectors, as is demonstrated by the strong representation of these artists in the founding collection and early bequests to the National Gallery from the mid-1820s.²⁹²

Charles Eastlake had endeavoured to expand the representation of Bolognese artists at the gallery and acquire examples by earlier artists of that school, securing among other works, a *Madonna of Humility* (NG752) by Lippo di Dalmasio (c.1353–1410) in 1866. Despite Eastlake’s efforts, the school was still principally characterised by its later Baroque proponents, artists who were subsequently dismissed by those promoting the taste for the early Italian Primitives. Caroline Palmer observes, for example, that Maria Callcott was ‘one of the first to describe Bolognese art as vulgar, mannered and decadent’.²⁹³ The idea of Bologna having its own tradition of early art was

²⁸⁹ Crowe and Cavalcaselle, *History of Painting in North Italy*, vol. 1, p. 566; Bernard Berenson, *North Italian Painters of the Renaissance* (London; New York: G. P. Putnam, 1907), p. 69.

²⁹⁰ Coulson James, *Bologna*, p. xvii.

²⁹¹ Penny and Mancini, *Bologna and Ferrara*, p. 24.

²⁹² Robyn Cooper, ‘British Attitudes towards the Italian Primitives, 1815–1865, with Special Reference to the Mid-Nineteenth-Century Fashion’, unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Plymouth, 1976, p. 96. Examples include Guercino, *The Dead Christ Mourned by Two Angels* (NG22) and Domenichino, *The Vision of Saint Jerome* (NG85) both from the Holwell Carr Bequest, 1831 and Ludovico Carracci, *Susanna and the Elders* (NG28) purchased as part of the Angerstein collection in 1824.

²⁹³ Caroline Palmer, ‘Maria Callcott on Poussin, Painting, and the Primitives’, *19: Interdisciplinary Studies in the Long Nineteenth Century*, 28 (2019), DOI: <<http://doi.org/10.16995/ntn.833>>.

disregarded even in the latter decades of the nineteenth century, as succinctly laid out by Layard in 1887. Rejecting the existence of an early Bolognese school entirely, Layard described the first half of the fourteenth century in Bologna as having produced ‘a few painters’ who ‘were for the most part mere workmen of little ability’, asserting ‘it was not until the Carracci appeared that Bologna can claim to have had a school of its own’.²⁹⁴ In 1909, Coulson James had discussed Lippo di Dalmasio as an artist deserving of greater recognition and the National Gallery *Madonna of Humility* as an important example of his limited representation in public collections.²⁹⁵

Greater interest in the art of the Emilia-Romagna region was heralded by the Burlington Fine Art Club (1866–1952). Founded by a small group of art critics, collectors and politicians, it formed a unique institution among the gentlemen’s clubs and exhibition venues of late nineteenth-century London, being entirely privately funded and with its displays drawing principally on loans from the private collections of club members.²⁹⁶ It was particularly known for its ‘special exhibitions’, dedicated to a specific theme and designed and managed by a specialist committee, with external curators brought in to advise and contribute to the exhibition catalogue.²⁹⁷ In 1894, ‘Pictures of the School of Ferrara-Bologna’ was the chosen theme and formed the first of a series of specialist shows dedicated to individual regional schools of Italian art.²⁹⁸

In contrast to Bologna, the school of Ferrara had experienced a remarkable turn in fortune in the mid-century. This was in large part due to the collector Giovanni Battista Costabili Containi (1756–1841), who had dedicated himself to forming a collection of Ferrarese art at the turn of the

²⁹⁴ Layard, *Handbook of Painting*, vol. 2, p. 363.

²⁹⁵ Coulson James, *Bologna*, pp. 334–6.

²⁹⁶ Stacey J. Pierson, *Private Collecting, Exhibitions, and the Shaping of Art History in London: The Burlington Fine Arts Club* (London; New York: Routledge, 2017), p. x.

²⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 10–13.

²⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 27. As Francis Haskell discusses, this was a remarkable choice of subject for the exhibition, given that scholars had only recently turned their attention to these schools of art. See: Francis Haskell, *The Ephemeral Museum: Old Master Paintings and the Rise of the Art Exhibition* (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 2000), pp. 94–97.

nineteenth century, which soon garnered the interest of connoisseurs and museum directors.²⁹⁹ The gradual dispersal of the Costabili collection, with figures such as Layard and Charles Eastlake acting as principal buyers, created a flurry of interest in artists like Cosimo Tura (before 1431–95) and Francesco del Cossa (c.1435/36–c.1477/78), both leading painters at the court of the Dukes of Este at Ferrara.

The ‘Historical Preface’ given in the Burlington Fine Arts Club catalogue for the show was written by guest curator Venturi, and focused solely on the rise of the Ferrarese school, ‘high above that of the rest of Emilia’.³⁰⁰ The introduction, by co-committee member Robert Benson (1850–1929), again lauded the merits of the Ferrarese school and its far-reaching influence across the region. Benson named the school’s principal proponents as Tura, Cossa, Ercole de’ Roberti (c.1456–96) and Lorenzo Costa (1460–1535), including Francia among this group due to the presence of Ferrarese artists like Cossa and Costa in Bologna.³⁰¹ Coulson James, however, wished to demonstrate that Francia was in fact ‘the greatest artist of the Bolognese school, and wholly belonging to it’.³⁰² Her theories were not received positively. A reviewer in the *Athenaeum* disparaged her for ‘underrat[ing] the influence of Costa and Cossa upon Francia, [and] insisting upon a direct tradition of native art at Bologna starting from Lippo Dalmasio’.³⁰³ Coulson James realised that to be taken seriously, she would have to focus on specific, demonstrable findings, and publish them where they could be seen by specialists in the field — in the *Burlington Magazine*.

Sarah Blanshei Rubin comments that nineteenth-century Bologna witnessed the flourishing of specialised historiographic scholarship, characterised by intense study of the city’s past through

²⁹⁹ Jaynie Anderson, ‘The Rediscovery of Ferrarese Renaissance Painting in the Risorgimento’, *Burlington Magazine*, 135:1085 (August 1993), 539–49 (pp. 544–48).

³⁰⁰ Burlington Fine Arts Club, *Exhibition of Pictures, Drawings and Photographs of Works of the School of Ferrara-Bologna, 1440–1540* (London: Printed for the Burlington Fine Arts Club, 1894), p. vii.

³⁰¹ *Ibid.*, p. xxiii.

³⁰² Coulson James, *Bologna*, p. 343.

³⁰³ [Anon.], ‘Review of Edith Coulson James, *Bologna: its History, Antiquities, and Art* (1909)’, *Athenaeum* (28 May 1910), 632–33.

the wealth of its archival material.³⁰⁴ Coulson James was well connected among the scholarly community in Bologna and it was with this camp that she aligned herself. Copies of all her publications, with dedicated inscriptions, can be found in the private library of Albano Sorbelli (1875–1944), director of the Biblioteca Archiginnasio, which now forms part of the city’s important municipal library. In 1927, when Sorbelli published a four-volume edited collection *Bologna negli scrittori stranieri*, Coulson James was included among the dedicatees.³⁰⁵ Her letters to other Bolognese museum officials and scholars contain frequent expressions of gratitude and recollections of kind help and support during her time spent researching there. Her correspondents include Giovanni Capellini (1833–1922) a noted geologist at the University of Bologna, Edouardo Brizio (1846–1907) director of Bologna’s Museo Civico, and Giuseppe Tanari (1852–1933) the then mayor of Bologna.

In 1911, Coulson James wrote to Capellini, informing him that her forthcoming article on ‘the forgotten picture by Francia that [she] discovered’ was to be published in ‘[England’s] best art journal’.³⁰⁶ This was to be the first of her *Burlington* articles concerning Francia, and it reported her discovery of a small half-length portrait of Saint John the Baptist by Francia, located in the Palazzo Pubblico of San Giovanni in Persiceto, a small town just outside of Bologna. She had first noted this ‘forgotten gem’ in her 1909 volume, where she had described it as a ‘simple and a small picture [...] exquisitely painted’ (**fig. 1.14**).³⁰⁷ Her article published the first photographic reproduction of the Persiceto St John, which she had taken herself. Coulson James had in fact filed all her photographs

³⁰⁴ Sarah Rubin Blanshei, *A Companion to Medieval and Renaissance Bologna* (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2018), p. 8.

³⁰⁵ Albano Sorbelli, *Bologna negli scrittori stranieri*, 4 vols (Bologna: Nicola Zanichelli Editore, 1927). These volumes detail the impressions of foreign visitors to Bologna up until the eighteenth century and therefore do not include those of Coulson James.

³⁰⁶ Edith Coulson James to Giovanni Capellini, 13 September 1911 [14.37], BCABo. Coulson James also informed Capellini that Venturi had invited her to publish this article in *L’Arte*, but it appears this never came to fruition: Coulson James to Capellini, 17 October 1911 [14.37], BCABo.

³⁰⁷ Coulson James, *Bologna*, p. 352.

relating to this discovery for copyright in August and September 1911, in preparation for her article (fig. 1.15).³⁰⁸

Her published photograph allowed her to present her new discovery for comparison with other paintings by Francia, such as the *Madonna and Child with Saints (Manzuoli altarpiece)* from Bologna's Pinacoteca, which she also reproduced in her article (fig. 1.16). Using this painting as a point of comparison, Coulson James argued that it demonstrated,

precisely the same type for the Saint [John the Baptist]. The face, figure and dress are identical. The cross is the same in form [...] a beautiful little landscape with Francia's characteristic feathery trees forms the background of our half-length picture.³⁰⁹

From her personal observation, the 'exquisite delicacy of touch and the soft mellow tones' of the painting placed it 'among the very finest works of the master', especially as it was in 'perfect preservation' and signed 'FRANCIA AU...EX.P', translated to *Francia Aurifex pinxit*, in keeping with Francia's usual practice of signing himself as 'goldsmith'.³¹⁰

Her discovery was absorbed into the wider art-historical consensus — but without any acknowledgement to its author. Two years after the appearance of her article, the Italian literary critic Giuseppe Lipparini (1877–1951) published an Italian monograph on Francia, including a section listing new discoveries. While Lipparini acknowledged those recent findings by Berenson and the Italian art historian Gustavo Frizzoni (1840–1919) by name, the discovery of the Persiceto painting was given with no citation. Lipparini even reproduced the very photograph Coulson James took of the painting, again without credit.³¹¹ Though her discovery may not be groundbreaking, the omission of her responsibility for bringing it to light is one demonstrable example of the erasure of

³⁰⁸ 'Photograph of painting by F Francis of St John the Baptist', 3 August 1911 [COPY 1/559/15], Records of the Copyright Office, Stationers' Company, NA.

³⁰⁹ Coulson James, 'S. John the Baptist', p. 11.

³¹⁰ Ibid.

³¹¹ Giuseppe Lipparini, *Francesco Francia* (Bergamo: Istituto Italiano d'Arti Grafiche, 1913), p. 135.

women's work, particularly those whose lack of official affiliation rendered them easy targets for dismissal. In fact, it is only among recent scholars of Francia, Emilio Negro and Nicosetta Roio, that we find acknowledged the 'important discoveries of Edith Coulson James, unexplainably ignored in a historiography misogynistic to the point of obtuseness'.³¹² They observe that both Berenson and Venturi agreed that this work was an authentic Francia, although neither cited Coulson James as the person responsible for first recovering the painting to the artist's oeuvre.³¹³ In 1969, restoration of the painting revealed the underdrawing to be in Francia's hand and the work retains Coulson James' attribution today.³¹⁴

Coulson James' subsequent research concentrated on her attempt to identify and authenticate Francia's self-portrait. Published as a series of articles in the *Burlington*, *Connoisseur* and *L'Archiginnasio*, and culminating in her pamphlet *Gli auto-ritratti di Francesco Francia* (1922), she hoped that in identifying the artist's portrait and 'making it known will help to win for him the general recognition that [she believed] the greatness of his work merits'.³¹⁵ Francia was not represented in the Uffizi's famed collection of artists' self-portraits and no self-portrait of his was displayed at any of the other major European galleries. Coulson James was aware that the authentication of such a work was of great importance in bringing attention to Francia as an individual master in his own right.

Yet her first article presenting her efforts towards this aim ran into difficulties from the very start. She had begun her search for the portrait in April 1913 and by June 1915 had prepared an article on her preliminary findings. Then, in the *Burlington* issue of that month, Coulson James

³¹² Emilio Negro and Nicosetta Roio, *Francesco Francia e la sua scuola* (Modena: Artioli Editore, 1998), p. 64: 'le importanti scoperte di Edith Coulson James, inspiegabilmente ignorate da una storiografia tanto misogina, quanto ottusa'.

³¹³ Adolfo Venturi, *Storia dell'arte Italiana*, 11 vols in 25 parts (Milan: Ulrico Hoepli, 1901–40), vol. 7, no. 3 (1914), p. 929; Bernard Berenson, *Italian Painters of the Renaissance* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1932), p. 209.

³¹⁴ Negro and Roio, *Francesco Francia*, p. 201.

³¹⁵ Edith Coulson James, 'A Portrait from the Boschi Collection, Bologna', *Burlington Magazine*, 30:167 (February 1917), 73–78 (p. 78).

found her next lead, when Herbert Cook published an article featuring an illustration of the same painting for which she was searching. Here, Cook identified it as a depiction of the noted portrait painter Baldassare d'Este (1432–after 1506).³¹⁶ Coulson James amended her own article in response to Cook's and sent her work for publication in the subsequent July issue of the *Burlington*. However, without forewarning, her article was postponed and replaced with a short note stating that the evidence and illustrations of her 'interesting discovery' would be published as soon as possible, without further explanation as to the reasons for its delay.³¹⁷ In fact, Coulson James would have to wait almost two years to see her article in print. It finally appeared in the *Burlington* issue of February 1917.

So what evidence had Coulson James found regarding this portrait, prior to its appearance in Cook's article? Searching Bologna's archives, a note in an unpublished manuscript titled 'Memorie per la vita e delle opere artistiche del Francia' written by Gaetano Giordani (1800–73), the former Keeper of Bologna's Pinacoteca, had alerted her to the existence of a self-portrait by Francia in the collection of the local noble Boschi family. Here, Coulson James also learned that this same portrait had been engraved in the eighteenth century by Carlo Faucci (1729–84) (**fig. 1.17**). Giordani's notes led her to an earlier source, Marcello Oretti (1714–87), a famed authority on the art of Bologna, who provided two references to the portrait, described as a 'half figure of a man holding a ring'. This portrait is today in the collection of the Museo Nacional Thyssen-Bornemisza, Madrid, and attributed to Francesco del Cossa (**fig. 1.18**).³¹⁸

Obtaining an introduction to the Marchesa Boschi, Coulson James discovered that the portrait in question had remained in the family home until 1858, when upon the death of the Marchese Valerio Boschi, the collection was sold *en bloc* to one Vito Enei. In fact, Otto Mündler had seen the

³¹⁶ Herbert Cook, 'Further Light on Baldassare d'Este', *Burlington Magazine*, 27:147 (June 1915), 98–104. This followed up an earlier article by Cook, 'Baldassare d'Este', *Burlington Magazine*, 19:100 (July 1911), 228–233.

³¹⁷ [Anon.], 'Note', *Burlington Magazine*, 27:148 (July 1915), 172.

³¹⁸ Coulson James, 'Boschi Portrait', pp. 73–74.

painting in person prior to its sale, describing it as the ‘capital work of the collection [...] Possibly of [Francia’s] early stile [*sic*] [...] painted about 1480. But without the tradition (constant and scarcely doubtful?), one would scarcely think of Franco Fra[n]cia’.³¹⁹ This passage identifies the main point of contention about this painting which was to hinder the successful reception of Coulson James’ attribution: the discrepancy between the ‘constant and scarcely doubtful’ tradition recorded diligently in Bolognese archival documents and the appearance of the painting itself, which did not fit the contemporary conception of what a Francia *should* look like.

Though Coulson James was not to see the painting in person this time, her visit to the Casa Boschi did provide her with a copy of the Faucci engraving, given to her by the Marchesa. In her article, she noted the rarity of this print, a copy of which even the British Museum did not possess, a fact she remedied in 1922 when she donated her version to that institution. Coulson James acknowledged that the Faucci engraving could not provide steadfast proof that the portrait was indeed that of Francia, but noted that all the same it did provide ‘evidence that the owner of the picture in 1763 believed it to be the portrait’ of the artist, and her article presented both the engraving and an enlarged image of its inscription, identifying the image as a portrait of Francia.³²⁰

Bringing her findings up to date, Coulson James explained how, following two years of unsuccessful searching to find Vito Enei, it was in Cook’s article that she had recognised the illustration of the portrait which matched the Faucci engraving. Here it was identified as one that had recently belonged to Sir William Neville Abdy (1844–1910) and which had in fact been exhibited as Francia’s self portrait at Burlington House in 1881.³²¹ The portrait had since been sold at Christie’s in 1911, at which point ‘the attribution was changed on very high authority’ to Cosimo Tura.³²²

³¹⁹ Carol Togneri Dowd and Jaynie Anderson, eds, ‘The Travel Diaries of Otto Mündler 1855–1858’, *Walpole Society*, 51 (1985), pp. 116–17.

³²⁰ Coulson James, ‘Boschi Portrait’, p. 77.

³²¹ *Ibid.*

³²² *Ibid.*; *The Collection of Pictures by Old Masters of the late Sir William Neville Abdy, Bart*, 5 May 1911, Christie’s sale catalogue, No. 128 Cosimo Tura, ‘Portrait of a Gentleman’: ‘Bust to right, standing behind a balustrade, and holding a ring in his left hand; long fair hair; black cap; grey dress with slate-coloured cape;

Despite this new identification, and Cook's alternative assertion that the portrait was Baldassare d'Este, Coulson James disagreed on both accounts, insisting that her 'long experience of the trustworthiness of the records of Bologna' led her to follow the 'Bolognese tradition', even if it meant 'to differ from so eminent a critic'.³²³

Though Coulson James had yet to see the portrait in person, she posited an examination of its formal features from the photograph, a practice that she was especially comfortable with being an active photographer herself. While earlier women writers relied on their first-hand observations to authenticate their opinions, the flourishing of photography at the end of the century marked huge changes for the practice of art history.³²⁴ Photography provided another accessible tool that women could pick up and use to bolster their own connoisseurship, while the ability to read a photograph soon became viewed as a connoisseurial skill in its own right.³²⁵ As Coulson James noted, 'form and design are evidences' visible in a photograph and she observed that details such as the 'rocks, the water, the tiny figures' of the background and 'strongly characteristic' cloud formations were 'universally recognised examples' of Francia's work.³²⁶

Her article was accompanied by an editorial note from Fry praising, albeit in condescending tones, 'Miss James's documentary evidence, collected with much enthusiasm and industry', but disavowing her of the *Burlington*'s endorsement on the grounds that among 'critics of the present day who have examined the picture [...] we know of none who attributes the portrait to Francesco Francia'. Fry insisted that Coulson James needed to present 'stronger intrinsic evidence than she

rocks and water in the background. On panel – 13 ½ in by 9 ¼ in Exhibited at Burlington House, 1881, when it was described as "Francesca Francia, Portrait of the Painter", p. 29.

³²³ Coulson James, 'Boschi Portrait', p. 77.

³²⁴ Anthony Hamber, 'The Use of Photography by Nineteenth-Century Art Historians', in *Art History Through the Camera's Lens*, ed. by Helen E. Roberts (Amsterdam: Gordon and Breach, 1995), pp. 89–121.

³²⁵ For example, Constance Ffoulkes also posited attributions to paintings by Vincenzo Foppa in periodical articles where she had only seen the paintings in photographic reproduction; see Ventrella, 'Constance Jocelyn Ffoulkes', p. 123.

³²⁶ Coulson James, 'Boschi Portrait', p. 77.

offers'.³²⁷ It was here that her allegiance to the historical and documentary-based method of Bolognese scholarship placed her at odds with the primacy placed on the 'connoisseurial eye' and the 'impression' of an artist on the viewer.

Fry's dismissal of Coulson James' research appears at odds with a journal that prided itself as the place for scholarly debate and discussion of art among contributors from across methodological backgrounds. By postponing the publication of her article until 1917, Fry effectively removed her opinion from the active debate. Her contribution was deferred and the impact her article would have made, appearing immediately after Cook's, diffused. Coulson James herself was in no doubt that this delay was deliberate, to avoid any potential contradiction of the recent attribution change by the 'very high authority' or a potential clash with Cook's identification of Baldassare d'Este as the sitter. Turning to her later 1922 pamphlet on the issue, *Gli auto-ritratti di Francesco Francia*, published in Italian, further details are given of the frustration she experienced due to this hindrance to the publication of her research.³²⁸ Referring back to her postponed *Burlington* article of February 1917, Coulson James reveals that the editor, Fry, was aware of the potential conflict arising between her own opinion and that of the unnamed 'celebrated critic', who had appraised the painting prior to its sale at Christie's, and who was responsible for the change of attribution from Francia to Tura. She noted that for this same reason, Fry, without seeking her permission or notifying her before publication, had changed the title of her article, the caption she had provided for her own photograph of the Boschi portrait, and modified her argument, which she believed left holes in its clear sequence.³²⁹

Disheartened at this rather unfounded dismissal of what had constituted two years of dedicated research, Coulson James sought endorsement for her theories from a scholar more aligned

³²⁷ Ibid., p. 78.

³²⁸ Edith Coulson James, *Gli autoritratti di Francesco Raibolini, detto il Francia* (Bologna: L. Capelli, 1922), p. 6.

³²⁹ Ibid., pp. 6–7.

to her own approach, who also had influence among figures like Cook and Fry — Adolfo Venturi. In 1916, following the postponement of her article, Coulson James wrote to Venturi detailing her evidence for the Boschi portrait, including her photograph of the Faucci engraving (**fig. 1.19**). This letter reveals that the unnamed authority responsible for changing the painting's attribution at the Abdy sale was Claude Phillips. Fry had delayed the publication of her work when 'he discovered that the evidence of my article conflicted with the dictum of a high art authority in England'.³³⁰ Referring to her personal discussion with Phillips regarding both her own opinion on the portrait and that of Cook, Coulson James informed Venturi:

Both these authorities [Cook and Phillips] maintain that the portrait is not in the manner of Francia. I have not yet been able to see the picture itself, but so far as one can judge from a reproduction, I am convinced that there is nothing in the design or construction to preclude the possibility that it is the work of Francesco Francia. In fact there are many points that I note as evidence of his hand.³³¹

She noted with irony how, 'Sir Claude & others have failed to recognise the Ferrarese influence that came in the School of Bologna with Francesco Cossa, Cosimo Tura & Lorenzo Costa', the same factor which Cook and Venturi had been keen to further in the Burlington Fine Art's Club exhibition, and which she herself had been reprimanded for failing to acknowledge in her earlier work where she had framed Francia as Bolognese, rather than Ferrarese.³³²

Furthermore, Venturi himself was then in the process of reattributing a painting of strong Ferrarese quality. This concerned a *Saint Sebastian* in the gallery at Dresden then attributed to Cosimo Tura, which Venturi claimed was in fact by Lorenzo Costa (**fig. 1.20**). Coulson James informed Venturi that she had consulted the Regius Professor of Hebrew at Oxford, who had

³³⁰ Coulson James to Venturi, 12 May 1922 [AV. Cart. XIII, 895], AVCA.

³³¹ Coulson James to Venturi, 3 January 1916 [AV. Cart. XIII, 895], AVCA.

³³² Ibid.

confirmed that the Hebrew inscription in the picture read “Opus Lorenzo Costa”. Her motivation for seeking evidence to uphold Venturi’s attribution is clear in her explanation that it held implications for the endorsement of her own findings on the Boschi portrait, particularly as Phillips had since made the further suggestion that it could have been painted by Cossa:

Sir Claude Phillips referred to your opinion on the authorship of the [Dresden] picture, & said: “If this harsh & essentially Ferrarese work were really by Francia’s contemporary & friendly rival, it would be easier to accept as possible your attribution to Francia himself of the Tura (or Cossa) portrait. We should then be compelled to reconsider the origins of these closely related Bolognese masters. Personally I am entirely unable to accept either the one or the other attribution”.³³³

As Coulson James informed Venturi: ‘the revising of generally accepted views of Francia’s work is exactly what I am working for’.³³⁴ Though she maintained correspondence with Venturi until 1922, regularly updating him on the progress of her research, he did not ever come out publicly in support of her work. However, he did take it upon himself to make his own search for misattributed examples of Francia’s portraits, reattributing one in the collection at Hanover in Germany from the Umbrian Pietro Perugino (c.1450–1523) to the Bolognese artist.³³⁵ Coulson James wrote to Venturi once more, congratulating him on his finding and later published an article identifying the sitter in the Hanover portrait as the Bolognese poet Girolamo Casio (1464–1533).³³⁶ She also communicated in this article that she had succeeded in tracing the Boschi portrait to a Frau von Pannwitz in Holland, who had allowed her to examine the long sought for painting in person. This provided

³³³ Coulson James to Venturi, 3 January 1916 [AV. Cart. XIII, 895], AVCA.

³³⁴ Ibid.

³³⁵ Adolfo Venturi, ‘Ritratti del Baldovinetti a Hampton Court, del Perugino a Firenze, del Francia a Hannover, di Tiziano a Copenhagen’, *L’Arte*, 25:1 (1922), 10–14.

³³⁶ Edith Coulson James, ‘Un’ altra pittura creduta perduta, del Francia, ritrovata’, *L’Archiginnasio*, 18 (1923), 85–87.

Coulson James with the visual examination that confirmed, to her eyes, that the painting was indeed Francia's self-portrait as she believed it to be.³³⁷

Today, the Boschi portrait retains its attribution to Francesco del Cossa. Apart from Negro and Roio's acknowledgement of Coulson James' work, her rationale for attributing the portrait to Francia has been associated with the idea that the figure's possession of a ring refers to Francia's work as a goldsmith.³³⁸ However, a careful reading of her publications reveals a wealth of evidence on which she based her findings, while this particular fact she herself acknowledged to be 'incidental evidence'.³³⁹ Reading her work as a whole, the heavyweight reasoning in her argument is underscored by detailed investigation, painstaking pursuit of archival documentation and the tracing and comparing of various other examples of Francia's portrait work.

Coulson James would eventually go on to discover an even earlier engraving of the supposed Francia self-portrait by the seventeenth-century Bolognese artist Domenico Santi (1621–94). Publishing this in the *Connoisseur* in 1923, she stated that the discovery of this earlier engraving provided evidence of the 'trustworthiness for the tradition' of the Boschi portrait, traceable back to an artist who was himself familiar with the Carracci.³⁴⁰

It is fascinating to discover that today, countering the general consensus of the past, Negro and Roio now follow Coulson James and assert the work to be a genuine self-portrait by Francia.³⁴¹ In the recent National Gallery catalogue of the Bologna and Ferrara schools, Francia's contemporaneous reception as a portrait painter is acknowledged, as is Coulson James for her series

³³⁷ Ibid., p. 87.

³³⁸ Sabine Hoffmann, 'Cat. 112: Francesco del Cossa, *Portrait of a Young Man with a Ring*' in *The Renaissance Portrait: From Donatello to Bellini*, ed. by Keith Christiansen and Stefan Weppelmann (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2011), pp. 273–76.

³³⁹ Coulson James, 'Boschi Portrait', p. 74.

³⁴⁰ Edith Coulson James, 'An Engraved Portrait of Francesco Raibolini – Il Francia', *Connoisseur* 65 (January–April 1923), 88–90.

³⁴¹ Negro and Roio, *Francesco Francia*, p. 127.

of articles on the artist, although the only portrait cited as securely authentic is that of the *Portrait of Federigo Gonzaga* in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.³⁴²

Her attribution may not be widely upheld today, but it is nonetheless disappointing to see that the current detailed online catalogue entry for the portrait, now in the Museo Nacional Thyssen-Bornemisza in Madrid, is not complete. It provides information related to the painting's provenance, identifying it as the same portrait from the Boschi family that was later sold by Abdy and acknowledges the existence of both the Faucci and Santi engravings — all findings directly resulting from the careful research work of Coulson James into the portrait — yet, her name is not cited anywhere, while 'Berenson, Longhi and Cook' are all referred to.³⁴³ The erasure of her research and scholarship, both in her own time and today, provides another clear case of how the institutionalisation of art history in the first half of the twentieth century limited the kinds of voices deemed worthy of a platform. While earlier in the century, engagement with the methods and practice of foreign art scholarship gave women authority, this was no longer enough for women like Coulson James who were active in the field half a century later. Furthermore, her example begs the question: which other voices have also been pushed out of the frame, still to be recovered?

This chapter began by tracing the rise of Victorian art periodicals and the establishment of art writing in the press as an important entry point for women into the field. Since the early nineteenth century, women like Anna Jameson and Elizabeth Eastlake had proven the effectiveness of the press for aiding the dissemination of their new art historical knowledge to the general public, while also contributing to the circulation and individualisation of their names as authorities on art. With the boom in the art press of the 1870s–1890s, later writers like Lucy Baxter and Julia Cartwright would establish themselves as regular contributors to a journal, marking themselves as specialists in the

³⁴² Penny and Mancini, *Bologna and Ferrara*, p. 151.

³⁴³ Mar Borobia, 'Portrait of a Man with a Ring', online catalogue entry <<https://www.museothyssen.org/en/collection/artists/cossa-francesco/portrait-man-ring>>.

field. Nonetheless, with the ever-widening scope of the art press and the increasing circulation of foreign journals towards the end of the century, titles such as the *Art Journal* began to look outmoded and stagnant. For aspiring art historians rising to prominence at the very end of the century, like Maud Cruttwell, publishing in foreign art journals which catered for documentary-based material was the clear preference.

The establishment of the *Burlington Magazine* gave Britain at long last its own scholarly art journal. However, engaging in these publications also necessitated navigating the increasingly restrictive boundaries of disciplinary institutionalisation, something which most women at the time found difficult to achieve, as the case study of Edith Coulson James demonstrates. Overall, whether in Victorian art journals, foreign titles or specialist magazines, the contribution of women to the art press provided a means of articulating their findings at the moment of discovery and in asserting their voices in topical debates of the day. Though this material is often omitted in historiographical accounts, paying attention to it not only develops our understanding of a specific facet of nineteenth-century women's work in the periodical press more broadly, but also helps populate our existing understanding of taste, attribution and the reception of the old masters in unexpected and illuminating ways.

CHAPTER TWO
INFLUENCING THE CANON:
MONOGRAPHS AND WRITING THE ARTIST INTO HISTORY

In 1901, *The Times*' 'Reviews of Books' noted with alarm: 'books on the painters have lately been multiplied beyond the limits of right reason [...]. It looks as if the market was being overstocked with art books'.³⁴⁴ The rapid proliferation of books devoted to the old masters at the turn of the twentieth century marked the growth of art history from specialist journals, lengthy critical texts and Vasarian-style compendia into a subject commanding the attention of mass-market publishing. The individual artist monograph, to which *The Times* review alludes, quickly became the established format for the art historian seeking to claim authority and assert their professional status in the field.

While the periodical press had been long established as a format for the publication of art criticism, the emergence of the artist monograph at the end of the century presented a significant expansion to modes of publishing in the field. In Britain especially, it provided women with an opportunity to publish their research in a widely disseminated form, under the imprimatur of a recognisable and respected publisher. Indeed, women authored numerous contributions to successful series, notably George Bell and Sons' 'Great Masters in Painting and Sculpture' (1899–1914), Duckworth's 'Popular Library of Art' (1902–20) and Methuen's 'Little Books on Art' (1903–20). Importantly, the artist monograph offered even greater opportunity for the individualisation of the art critic, and increased women's visibility in the field, taking their name out of the general chorus of the periodical and placing it quite literally front and centre on the cover of a single-author volume.

The monograph title-page also placed the writer's name next to that of the artist who formed the subject of their study. An important, but as yet unacknowledged fact, in relation to women's engagement with this format, is that the majority of biographies penned by women for these series

³⁴⁴ [Anon.], 'Reviews of Books', *The Times*, 21 December 1901, p. 9.

constitute the first, separate study of the artist to appear in the English language. Although the popular artist monograph has become the focus of some scholarly attention in recent years and the number of women-authored monographs is now acknowledged, there has to date been no sustained critical engagement with these latter texts. Friederike Kitschen has recently drawn a correlation between visibility and canonisation through the art-book series, observing that monographs functioned as ‘authoritative agents of canon formation’.³⁴⁵ This chapter reviews a select group of artist monographs written by women, examining the impact they had on both the canonisation of less-appreciated Italian old masters and the establishment of women themselves into the canon of turn-of-the-century art history authorities. Placing the emergence of the popular artist monograph genre into the context of the Victorian fascination with life writing and the influential model of Giorgio Vasari’s *Le vite de’ più eccellenti pittori, scultori e architetti* (1550/68), I will provide for the first time a synthesised account of artist monographs authored by women in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

This chapter revolves around three case-studies, which each explore how women used the monograph format to achieve their professional ambitions: *Mantegna and Francia* by Julia Cartwright (1881); *Gaudenzio Ferrari* by Ethel Halsey (1904) and *Antonio Pollaiuolo* by Maud Cruttwell (1907). Their chosen artists were little discussed in English-language art historical scholarship at the time of publication, and sometimes underrepresented in public collections too. I will examine how these women took advantage of these gaps to find their own niche through exploring artists whose lives and works had yet to be brought to wider public attention beyond connoisseurial circles. As I will argue, writing on these artists was not an arbitrary choice, but rather a strategic decision to take advantage of less popular areas of study and to distinguish their voice in

³⁴⁵ Friederike Kitschen, ‘Making the Canon Visible: Art Historical Book Series in the Late Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries’, in *Canons and Values: Ancient to Modern*, ed. by Larry Silver and Kevin Terraciano (Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute, 2019), pp. 216–44 (p. 217).

an increasingly over-saturated market. I will also assess how influential their findings remain for the discipline today.

2.1 The Lives of the Old Masters and the Rise of the Art Monograph Series

Nineteenth-century life writing on the old masters has its roots in a long-standing tradition of writing historical biographies. The format had wielded appeal since the late eighteenth century and took on new impetus from the mid-nineteenth thanks to the influence of seminal works such as Thomas Carlyle's (1795–1881) extremely popular *On Heroes, Hero-Worship and the Heroic in History* (1841), which elevated the subject into an individual worthy of universal admiration.³⁴⁶ Rosemary Mitchell and Bonnie Smith observe that the dominance of such male-authored grand narratives of warfare, politics and the achievements of 'great men' provided impetus for women to explore new areas of historical focus.³⁴⁷

Nineteenth-century women writers had a strong precedent in the form of earlier women historians such as Lucy Aikin (1781–1864) and Agnes Strickland (1796–1874), among many others, whose numerous memoirs and biographies of famous women of the past provided what Rohan Maitzen has called 'useful camouflage' to 'treat serious historical material in what appeared to be appropriate ladylike fashion'.³⁴⁸ As Alison Booth has shown, Anna Jameson took up this mantle by pioneering a place for women in a literary field that aimed to promote 'socially useful character through model narratives', exemplified in several volumes, such as *Memoirs of Celebrated Female*

³⁴⁶ Michael K. Goldberg, Joel J. Brattin and Mark Engel, eds, *On Heroes, Hero-Worship, and the Heroic in History* (Berkeley; Los Angeles, California: University of California Press, 1993). These essays were initially delivered as a series of six public lectures between 5 and 22 May 1840, the popularity of which led on to their publication the following year.

³⁴⁷ Bonnie G. Smith, 'The Contribution of Women to Modern Historiography in Great Britain, France and the United States, 1750–1940', *American Historical Review*, 89:3 (June 1984), 709–32; Rosemary Ann Mitchell, "'The Busy Daughters of Clio": Women Writers of History from 1820 to 1880', *Women's History Review*, 7:1 (1998), 107–34.

³⁴⁸ Rohan Maitzen, "'This Feminine Preserve": Historical Biographies by Victorian Women', *Victorian Studies*, 38:3 (Spring 1995), 371–93 (pp. 373–74).

Sovereigns (1831).³⁴⁹ Such work opened up avenues in other areas of historical study, including, as Smith describes, ‘a luxuriant artistic past in need of restoration’.³⁵⁰ Out of the numerous figures forming the focus of biographical representation in the nineteenth century, arguably it was that of the (male) artist to which writers, not least women writers, paid the most attention.³⁵¹

The writing on this artistic past was intimately intertwined with the model inherited from Vasari and his *Vite*. As Hilary Fraser has argued, it was Vasari’s specific use of the biography model for this study of Renaissance art that resonated with the Victorian fervour for life writing.³⁵² Since the eighteenth century, the genre of biography proved a very successful format for stimulating interest in the lives of historical and artistic figures. Karen Junod identifies such popular early examples as William Roscoe’s (1753–1831) *Life of Lorenzo de’ Medici Called the Magnificent* (1795) and Richard Duppa’s (1770–1831) *Life and Literary Works of Michel Angelo Buonarroti* (1806), as anticipating the turn-of-the-century fever for old master monographs.³⁵³ As demonstrated by Jenny Graham with the example of Jan van Eyck (1422–41) and Filippo Lippi (c.1406–69), the circulation of captivating claims regarding an artist’s secret innovations or compelling anecdotes about their personal lives worked symbiotically with the ever-increasing appearance of works attributed to them on the art market and in public museums, to amplify their name and ‘persona’.³⁵⁴

³⁴⁹ Alison Booth, ‘The Lessons of the Medusa: Anna Jameson and Collective Biographies of Women’, *Victorian Studies*, 42:2 (Winter 1999–Winter 2000), 257–88 (p. 260); Anna Jameson, *Memoirs of Celebrated Female Sovereigns*, 2 vols (London: Colburn and Bentley, 1831).

³⁵⁰ Smith, ‘The Contribution of Women to Modern Historiography’, p. 724.

³⁵¹ Julie Codell, ‘Artists’ Biographies and the Anxieties of National Culture’, *Victorian Review*, 27:1 (Winter 2001), 1–35 (p. 1). Jameson did intend to produce a volume on female Renaissance artists, but this did not materialise. See: Adele Holcomb, ‘Anna Jameson on Women Artists’, *Woman’s Art Journal*, 8 (1987), 15–24. One exception is also Laura Marie Ragg, *The Women Artists of Bologna* (London: Methuen, 1907).

³⁵² Hilary Fraser, ‘Vasari’s *Lives* and the Victorians’, in *The Ashgate Research Companion to Giorgio Vasari*, ed. by David J. Cast (Farnham: Ashgate, 2014), pp. 277–94 (p. 278).

³⁵³ Karen Junod, ‘The Lives of the Old Masters: Reading, Writing, and Reviewing the Renaissance’, *Nineteenth-Century Contexts*, 30:1 (March 2008), 67–82.

³⁵⁴ Jennifer Graham, *Inventing Van Eyck: The Remaking of an Artist for the Modern Age* (Oxford; New York: Berg, 2007) and Jennifer Graham, ‘Amorous Passions: Vasari’s Legend of Fra Filippo Lippi in the Art and Poetry of the Nineteenth Century’, *Studi di Memofonte*, 12 (2014), 187–209.

With the first translation of Vasari's *Vite* into English in 1850–51 by Mrs Jonathan Foster (c.1802–84[?]), published as part of Bohn's Standard Library, the influence of Vasari for English-speaking audiences became all-pervading.³⁵⁵ However, as both Fraser and Cecilia Hurley establish, Vasari's *Lives* were not accepted without question by Victorian art writers. Hurley observes that 'in England [...] the Vasarian model was challenged from an early date', while Fraser points to Foster's translation as instigating a whole range of 'modern Vasaris'.³⁵⁶ Between 1880 and 1914, over sixty series on art and artists were published in Britain, most of which were biographies.³⁵⁷ Julie Codell attributes this extraordinary demand to the contemporary appetite for biography and growing acculturation of the middle and working classes, combined with the fascination exerted by the figure of the artist as arbiter of high Victorian ideals concerning national character, cultural wealth and the value of works of art.³⁵⁸

Broadly intended to provide affordable, illustrated and accessible volumes for the general public, the content, tone and scholarship of these monographs nevertheless ranged widely across the different series. Gabriele Guercio argues that the artist monograph functioned as 'an extremely malleable means of enquiry', which allowed its practitioners 'methodological freedom', while 'assuming its own distinctive stance in the realm of literature of art'.³⁵⁹ In Britain, the malleability of

³⁵⁵ For a detailed account of Foster's background, her commission for the Vasari translation and her working methods, see Patricia Rubin, "'Not [...] what I would fain offer, but [...] what I am able to present": Mrs. Jonathan Foster's Translation of Vasari's *Lives*', in *Le vite del Vasari: genesi, topoi, ricezione*, ed. by Katja Burzer et al (Venice: Marsilio, 2010), pp. 317–31. See also Patricia Rubin, 'Eliza Foster', *19: Interdisciplinary Studies in the Long Nineteenth Century*, 28 (2019), DOI: <<http://doi.org/10.16995/ntn.864>>.

³⁵⁶ Cecilia Hurley, 'Englishing Vasari', in *La Réception des 'Vite' de Giorgio Vasari dans l'Europe des xvi^e–xviii^e siècles*, ed. by Corinne Lucas Fiorato and Pascale Dubus (Geneva: Librairie Droz, 2017), pp. 409–25 (pp. 412–13); Fraser, 'Vasari's *Lives* and the Victorians', p. 278.

³⁵⁷ Julie Codell, *The Victorian Artist: Artists' Life Writings in Britain, c.1870–1910* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), p. 247.

³⁵⁸ Julie Codell, 'Serialized Artists' Biographies: A Culture Industry in Late Victorian Britain', in *Book History*, ed. by Ezra Greenspan and Jonathan Rose (Pennsylvania: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2000), pp. 94–124.

³⁵⁹ Gabriele Guercio, *Art as Existence: The Artist's Monograph and Its Project* (Cambridge, Massachusetts; London: MIT Press, 2006), pp. 5, 19.

art history itself was crucial for accommodating women into the genre. As Amy Von Lintel observes, there were far more women contributors to such series published in Britain than there were to those produced in Germany, where the early institutionalisation of art history in museums and universities meant publishers immediately looked to accredited male authors or museum professionals to produce handbooks and monographs for the German public.³⁶⁰

Recent scholarship has not sufficiently recognised English-speaking women’s contributions to this genre. For example, Guercio makes a qualitative distinction between ‘one off’ monographs written by canonical figures — such as Berenson, Passavant and Waagen — and monographs as part of popular series written by those he describes as ‘neither a connoisseur nor an orthodox art historian’, including Baxter and Cruttwell among this group. Guercio denigrates the work of these women as an ‘unsatisfactory’ attempt to reconcile the ‘study of the oeuvre requir[ing] specialized means’ with that of ‘novelistic’ biography.³⁶¹

Yet as Codell argues, popular serialised biographies exerted cultural authority by assisting a non-specialist readership to access art history through the construction of ‘accessible canons’.³⁶² Publishers’ advertisements attest to this aim. For example, as Sampson Low announced, their series ‘Illustrated Biographies of the Great Masters’ was intended to ‘produce, in an easily accessible form and at a price within the reach of everyone, the results of recent investigations which have been made by many well-known critics’.³⁶³ Guercio’s dismissal of serialised monographs for ‘dilut[ing]

³⁶⁰ Amy Von Lintel, “‘Excessive Industry’: Female Art Historians, Popular Publishing and Professional Access”, in *Women, Femininity and Public Space in European Visual Culture, 1789–1914*, ed. by Temma Balducci and Heather Belnap Jensen (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2014), pp. 115–29 (p. 116). To my knowledge, there has not yet been an examination of women working as art writers and historians in Germany in the nineteenth century. Many twentieth-century émigré German women became prominent art historians and museum professionals in Britain, such as Erna Auerbach (1897–1975) who was a pioneer in the study of art at the Tudor court and Gertrud Bing (1892–1965), an art historian and director at the Warburg Institute.

³⁶¹ Guercio, *Art as Existence*, pp. 148–49.

³⁶² Codell, *The Victorian Artist*, p. 5.

³⁶³ Quoted in Margaret M. Smith, ‘Joseph Cundall and the Binding Design for the “Illustrated Biographies of the Great Artists”’, *Library*, 5 (2004), 39–63 (p. 40). Bell’s Great Masters were sold for 5s. each; Duckworth’s ‘Popular Library of Art’, 2s.; Duckworth’s ‘A New Library of Art’, 7s. 6d.; Newnes’ ‘Art

the complex dialectic of an artist's life and work for a popular audience', fails to nuance the differing vehicles in which art historical knowledge was being disseminated at the time.³⁶⁴ Guercio's argument here upholds what Adele Ernstrom describes as an allegiance to 'institutional consecration' that 'particularly serve[s] to erase contributions by women from surviving recognition'.³⁶⁵ In fact, by its dual function — of providing art critics with a format accepted as appropriately scholarly in which to present, engage with and disseminate current knowledge of old master works of art, and ensuring a wide readership due to the genre's mass production and affordable prices — I argue that the serialised artist's biography held great influence over the reputation and visibility of an artist, and, by extension, also over taste and canon formation.³⁶⁶

George Bell's 'Great Masters' series demonstrates the visible and active presence of a group of women writing on Italian old masters. Of the thirty volumes comprising this series, eleven were authored by women.³⁶⁷ Several of these contributions focused on artists whose lives and works had yet to be the subject of dedicated and widespread study in English-language art criticism: *Andrea del Sarto* by Henrietta Guinness (1899); *Luca Signorelli* by Maud Cruttwell (1899); *Donatello* by Hope

Library', 3s. 6d. and Methuen's 'Little Books on Art', 2s. 6d. each. As was noted at the time, pricing, physical size, and number and quality of illustrations were seen to reflect differing levels of content and intended audience. See: [Anon.], 'Various Art Series', *Speaker* (27 February 1904), 532.

³⁶⁴ Guercio, *Art as Existence*, p. 149.

³⁶⁵ Adele M. Ernstrom, 'Editorial Introduction: Art History Inside and Outside the University', *RACAR: revue d'art canadienne/Canadian Art Review*, 28 (2001–2003), 1–6 (p. 3).

³⁶⁶ Some women did of course publish expensive, de-luxe art monographs aimed at their peers, such as Jean Carlyle Graham's 1904 *The Problem of Fiorenzo di Lorenzo* (discussed in Chapter Three) and Constance Jocelyn Ffoulkes and Rodolfo Maiocchi's *Vincenzo Foppa of Brescia, Founder of the Lombard School: His Life and Work* (London: John Lane, 1909). On this latter publication, see: Francesco Ventrella, 'Constance Jocelyn Ffoulkes and the Modernization of Scientific Connoisseurship', *Visual Resources*, 33:1–2 (2017), 117–39, DOI: <10.1080/01973762.2017.1276735>.

³⁶⁷ For comparison with other genres of scholarship, Trübner and Co.'s 'English and Foreign Philosophical Library' (1879–1911) featured only two women contributors in 49 volumes: Miss I. Frith, *Life of Giordano Bruno, the Nolan* (London: Trübner and Co., 1887) and Edith Simcox, *Natural Law: An Essay in Ethics* (London: Trübner and Co., 1878). Miss I. Frith was Isabella Frith Oppenheim (1846–1927), whose work on Bruno was pioneering for mid-twentieth century scholarly interest in the impact of Hermeticism in the Italian Renaissance. It influenced Renaissance historian Frances Yates (1899–1981), whose work represents another tangent in the tradition of independent female scholarship of the Renaissance. See Marjorie G. Jones, *Frances Yates and the Hermetic Tradition* (Lake Worth: Ibis Press, 2008), pp. 120–23.

Rea (1900); *Luca Della Robbia* by Marchesa Burlamacchi (1900); *Brunelleschi* by Leader Scott [Lucy Baxter] (1901); *Pintoricchio* by Evelyn March Phillipps (1901); *Gaudenzio Ferrari* by Ethel Halsey (1904); and *Sodoma* by Contessa Luisa Priuli-Bon (1908).³⁶⁸ Together with Maud Cruttwell's *Andrea Verrocchio* (1904) and *Antonio Pollaiuolo* (1907) published in Duckworth's 'New Library of Art' series and Nancy Bell's *Paolo Veronese* (1904) for Newnes' 'Art Library', several significant Italian old masters received their monographic 'debut' into the English-language art press in the form of an accessible, affordably priced, and portable volume, written by a woman.³⁶⁹

Today, the figures of Andrea Mantegna (1431–1506), Luca Signorelli (c.1440/50–1523), and Antonio del Pollaiuolo are acknowledged as major and influential artistic forces in mid-to-late fifteenth and early sixteenth-century northern Italy.³⁷⁰ Yet in late nineteenth-century Britain, they occupied an anomalous position in the popular contemporary consensus. Writers including Callcott, the Eastlakes, Jameson and Ruskin had done much to champion the so-called early Italian Primitives and, by mid-century, artists such as Fra Angelico (c.1395–1455) were transformed from perpetrators

³⁶⁸ Amy Von Lintel identifies Priuli-Bon and Burlamacchi as two foreign Italian women contributors to the 'Great Masters' series. However, Priuli-Bon was not Italian but of Swedish and Welsh descent, resided in Italy, and married the Venetian architect Lorenzo Priuli. See Colin Rowe and Daniel Naegele, 'Excursus on Contessa Priuli-Bon, with Postscript', *AA Files*, 72 (2016), 68–72. Similarly, Burlamacchi was the English Lucy Lang Burlamacchi (1844–1918), widow of Adolfo Burlamacchi (1841–68) and Marco Manzi ([?]-1879).

³⁶⁹ Henrietta Guinness, *Andrea del Sarto* (London: George Bell and Sons, 1899); Maud Cruttwell, *Luca Signorelli* (London: George Bell and Sons, 1899); Hope Rea, *Donatello* (London: George Bell and Sons, 1900); Marchesa Burlamacchi, *Luca Della Robbia* (London: George Bell and Sons, 1900); Leader Scott, *Brunelleschi* (London: George Bell and Sons, 1901); Evelyn March Phillipps, *Pintoricchio* (London: George Bell and Sons, 1901); Ethel Halsey, *Gaudenzio Ferrari* (London: George Bell and Sons, 1904); Contessa Luisa Priuli-Bon, *Sodoma* (London: George Bell and Sons, 1908); Maud Cruttwell, *Andrea Verrocchio* (London: Duckworth, 1904); Maud Cruttwell, *Antonio Pollaiuolo* (London: Duckworth, 1907); Nancy Bell, *Paolo Veronese* (London: George Newnes, 1904).

³⁷⁰ As demonstrated by the recent major retrospectives: 'Luca Signorelli "de ingegno et spirito pelegrino"', Galleria Nazionale dell'Umbria, Perugia, Museo dell'Opera del Duomo e Chiesa dei Santi Apostoli, Orvieto, and Pinacoteca Comunale, Città di Castello (21 April–26 August 2012); 'The Ladies of the Pollaiuolo Brothers: Works from a Great Renaissance Workshop', Museo Poldi Pezzoli, Milan (7 November 2014–16 February 2015); 'Mantegna and Bellini', National Gallery, London (1 October 2018–27 January 2019); 'Andrea Mantegna: Making Antiquity Modern', Palazzo Madama, Turin (12 December 2019–4 May 2020).

of ‘gothic atrocities’ to ‘household names’ in Britain.³⁷¹ So, it is curious to observe that as late as 1907 — when, as previously discussed, the reign of ‘scientific art criticism’ was well underway and specialist art journals such as the *Burlington Magazine* had been established for some years — Cruttwell’s publication of the very first book in any language on Antonio del Pollaiuolo was met with a decidedly lukewarm response from the respected art scholar Laurence Binyon (1869–1943). This entirely new addition to art historical scholarship was not hailed as a welcome contribution addressing a long-standing gap, or even as an enterprising coup for English art history over its continental rivals. Instead its singular focus was dismissed rather snidely by Binyon as ‘unsurprising’, considering that ‘Pollaiuolo is not and never will be a popular artist, nor has he left any single work which wholly captivates or impresses the imagination’.³⁷²

It is my intention to show that, through the production of such books, these women’s selection of artist subject was a tactical choice to distinguish their voice in an already over-crowded market. Their choices in turn succeeded in pushing the boundaries of late Victorian and Edwardian artistic taste. As Elizabeth Prettejohn has shown, this was a period that witnessed a huge expansion of the canon and a disruption to the idea of a fixed standard of taste.³⁷³ The active role played by women, in relation to the reputations and reception of artists then deemed unpalatable, is a lacuna in the discipline’s historiography that this chapter seeks to highlight and address.

³⁷¹ Carly Collier, ‘From “Gothic Atrocities” to Objects of Aesthetic Appreciation: The Transition from Marginal to Mainstream of Early Italian Art in British Taste During the Long Eighteenth Century’, in *The Centre and the Margins in Eighteenth-Century British and Italian Cultures*, ed. by Frank O’Gorman and Lia Guerra (Newcastle upon Tyne, UK: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2013), pp. 117–30; Review of *Life of Beato Angelico da Fiesole*, *Athenaeum*, 29 July 1865, pp. 153–54 (p. 153), quoted in Robyn Cooper, ‘British Attitudes towards the Italian Primitives, 1815–1865, with Special Reference to the Mid-Nineteenth-Century Fashion’, unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Plymouth, 1976, p. vi.

³⁷² Laurence Binyon, ‘Two Realists’, *Saturday Review* (14 September 1907), 328–29 (p. 328).

³⁷³ Elizabeth Prettejohn, *Modern Painters, Old Masters: The Art of Imitation from the Pre-Raphaelites to the First World War* (London: Paul Mellon Centre, Yale University Press, 2017), p. 39.

2.2 Countering the ‘mistaken criticism of Mantegna’: Julia Cartwright’s Challenge to Late Victorian Taste

At the turn of the twentieth century, Andrea Mantegna formed the subject of no fewer than four separate biographies published in quick succession between 1897 and 1901.³⁷⁴ Concerted interest in Mantegna at this moment, demonstrated by other key publications such as Mary Berenson’s *Guide to the Pictures at Hampton Court* (1894) and Roger Fry’s seminal *Burlington Magazine* article ‘Mantegna as Mystic’ (1905), has been well documented in the historiography of the artist.³⁷⁵ Yet what has been little noticed, particularly in relation to Mantegna’s reception in England, is that this was in fact a remarkable turn-around in fortune for an artist who just over fifty years previously had been deemed by Jameson to be ‘quite opposed to all our conceptions of beauty and greatness of style’.³⁷⁶

Vasari’s dismissive labelling of Mantegna as a pedantic classicist had certainly plagued the latter’s critical reception from the start. The artist was given little respite from this characterisation, particularly in his later critical reception where, as noted by Elizabeth Prettejohn, exceptions such as Dante Gabriel Rossetti’s sonnet ‘A Dance of Nymphs’ (1849) and Fry’s previously mentioned article, were few and far between.³⁷⁷ However, in 1881 — almost at the exact mid-point between Rossetti and Fry’s interventions — an important monograph appeared that remains unacknowledged in the scholarship concerning the historiography of the artist: Julia Cartwright’s *Mantegna and*

³⁷⁴ Henry Thode, *Mantegna* (Bielefeld; Leipzig: Velhagen and Klasing, 1897); Paul Kristeller, *Andrea Mantegna*, trans. S. Arthur Strong (London: Longmans, 1901); Charles Yriarte, *Mantegna: sa vie, sa maison, son tombeau, ses oeuvres dans les musées et les collections* (Paris: Rothschild, 1901); Maud Cruttwell, *Andrea Mantegna* (London: George Bell and Sons, 1901).

³⁷⁵ Mary Logan, *The Guide to the Pictures at Hampton Court with short studies of the artists*, Kyrle Pamphlets No. 2 (London: A.D. Innes and Co., 1894); Roger Fry, ‘Mantegna as Mystic’, *Burlington Magazine* 8:32 (November 1905), 87–98.

³⁷⁶ Anna Jameson, ‘Essays on the Lives of Remarkable Painters — Andrea Mantegna’, *Penny Magazine* (28 October 1843), 409–12 (p. 412).

³⁷⁷ Prettejohn, *Modern Painters, Old Masters*, p. 170.

Francia.³⁷⁸ Contesting the persistent consensus on Mantegna, Cartwright influenced decisively the reception of the artist in late nineteenth-century England. Her monograph anticipated important questions concerning Mantegna's style and artistic production that not only informed the height of the debate at the turn of the century, but can still be traced in scholarship on Mantegna to this day.

As Jameson had celebrated in her *Penny Magazine* article on Mantegna of 1845, quoted in the previous chapter, innovations in both image reproduction technology and the press had enabled a democratic diffusion of the fine arts to a much wider public. Yet despite singling out this artist in particular as the recipient of the gaze of fifty thousand readers, it would take almost forty years before Mantegna came into the spotlight in the form of a dedicated study in English art criticism, with the publication of Cartwright's monograph in 1881.

Mantegna and Francia was Cartwright's first monograph and formed part of the 'Illustrated Biographies of the Great Artists' series published by Sampson Low. In fact it was one of several double monographs to appear in the series, a format the publisher employed to co-join artists about whom little had been written in English.³⁷⁹ Indeed, *Mantegna and Francia* presented the first separate monographic study in the English language of both title artists. In comparison to Mantegna, however, the Bolognese artist Francesco Francia was perceived by English viewers as far more aesthetically appealing, particularly on account of his *Pietà* lunette as discussed in Chapter One. As Cartwright attests, this work was 'stamped' on British minds and lauded as 'the highest ideal representation of the subject in the whole range of art' (p. 89). The writer and Dante scholar Edmund Gardner (1869–1935) also commented that 'the lunette, with which we English lovers of painting have grown up since our childhood, the *Pietà*, has no equal in the whole range of Italian art'.³⁸⁰ The

³⁷⁸ Julia Cartwright, *Mantegna and Francia*, 'Illustrated Biographies of the Great Artists' (London: Sampson Low, 1881). Further references to this volume will be provided in parentheses in the text.

³⁷⁹ Other examples from the same series include Leader Scott, *Ghiberti and Donatello* (1882) and Janet E. Ruutz-Rees, *Horace Vernet and Paul Delaroche* (1894). Both authors preface their books noting the relative scarcity of English-language literature on their title subjects.

³⁸⁰ Edmund Gardner, *The Painters of the School of Ferrara* (London: Duckworth, 1911), p. 108.

status of this work as a national treasure was commemorated in Charles Compton's (1828–84) *A Study in the National Gallery* (1855) (**fig. 2.1**).

Therefore, the appearance of the names of Mantegna and Francia side-by-side on the cover of Cartwright's monograph would have appeared as a startling juxtaposition to her contemporary readers, a contrast of which Cartwright was cognizant. The former's works, as she acknowledged, 'have never been, perhaps they will never become, the enthusiastic object of general worship' (p. 62). By including Mantegna alongside the painter of a much-admired work on proud public display, Cartwright was hoping to engage a new readership and encourage wider appreciation of his works, aided by the accessible monograph format. Indeed, in her preface, Cartwright took pains to highlight the ambitious nature of her efforts — 'no separate biography of Mantegna has been published in English' — while explaining to her readers why such an undertaking was relevant: '[Mantegna's] life and works have been the subject of much study in other countries during recent years' (p. v). Emphasising this evident gap in English publishing that her volume intended to address, Cartwright demonstrates her awareness of recent developments in continental art historical scholarship and positions herself as an able mediator and translator of this new knowledge to the largely monoglot English-speaking world.³⁸¹

Since his death, Mantegna has always retained a reputation as a 'great' artist and did not suffer posthumous oblivion like that experienced by Botticelli.³⁸² Since 1629, the royal collection has housed one of his most esteemed works, *The Triumphs of Julius Caesar* (c.1484–92), purchased by Charles I (1600–49) from a bankrupt Vincenzo II Gonzaga, Duke of Mantua (1594–1627). Described by Vasari as Mantegna's greatest achievement, the *Triumphs* continued to hold sway throughout the

³⁸¹ Mantegna had been treated in German art criticism in J. W. von Goethe, 'Triumphzug von Mantegna', in *Werke*, 60 vols (Stuttgart: Cotta, 1827–42), vol. 39 (1830); Gustav Waagen, 'Über Leben, Wirken und Werke der Maler Andrea Mantegna und Luca Signorelli', *Historisches Taschenbuch*, 3:1 (1850), 471–594 (repr. in Waagen, *Kleine Schriften*, ed. by Alfred Woltmann (Stuttgart: Ebner and Seubert, 1875), pp. 80–144; and Alfred Woltmann, 'Andrea Mantegna', *Kunst und Künstler des Mittelalters und der Neuzeit*, 51 (1878), 3–30.

³⁸² Ronald Lightbown, *Mantegna: With a Complete Catalogue of the Paintings, Drawings and Prints* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986), p. 1.

seventeenth century, having being engraved numerous times. Yet after their arrival at Hampton Court, their artistic value waned.³⁸³ As recently discussed by Barbara Furlotti and Guido Rebecchini, they held little appeal for contemporary British artists and, removed from their original context, were viewed as an ‘exotic masterpiece, cold and distant, and difficult to assimilate and appropriate’.³⁸⁴ During the rebuilding of the royal apartments in the reign of William III (1650–1702), the new ‘Kings Gallery’ was designed not for Mantegna’s canvases but for the cartoons of Raphael. Consequently, the *Triumphs* were relegated for the next 150 years to the Queen’s Apartments and, in the reign of George I (1660–1727), they were moved once again to make way for the tapestries of Charles Le Brun (1619–90).³⁸⁵

In 1842 Jameson drew attention to the *Triumphs* in her seminal *Handbook to the Public Galleries of Art in and near London*. Singling them out as ‘not only [Mantegna’s] finest work’, she insisted they were also notable for marking ‘an epoch in the history of art’, asserting them to be the most important series of historical painting before the appearance of Michelangelo’s celebrated fresco cycles in the Sistine chapel (1508–12), and those of Raphael in the Stanze of the Vatican (1508–24).³⁸⁶ The following year, in her *Penny Magazine* article, Jameson again asserted that Mantegna was ‘particularly interesting to English readers’ due to the presence of ‘his most celebrated work’ in the royal collection.³⁸⁷ Jameson insisted Mantegna’s canvases were in special need of greater attention and appreciation:

³⁸³ Andrew Martindale, *The Triumphs of Caesar by Andrea Mantegna in the Collection of Her Majesty the Queen at Hampton Court* (London: Harvey Miller Publishers, 1979), p. 106.

³⁸⁴ Barbara Furlotti and Guido Rebecchini, “‘Rare and Unique in This World’”: Mantegna’s ‘Triumph and the Gonzaga Collection’, in *Charles I: King and Collector*, exhibition catalogue (London: Royal Academy of Arts, 2018), pp. 54–59 (p. 59).

³⁸⁵ Martindale, *Triumphs of Caesar*, pp. 111–12. For an account of the changing displays at Hampton Court between 1830 and 1880, see Brett Dolman, ‘Curating the Royal Collection at Hampton Court Palace in the Nineteenth Century’, *Journal of the History of Collections*, 29:2 (2017), 271–90.

³⁸⁶ Anna Jameson, *A Handbook to the Public Galleries of Art in and near London* (London: John Murray, 1842), p. 371.

³⁸⁷ Jameson, ‘Essays—Mantegna’, p. 409.

In their present faded and dilapidated condition, hurried and uninformed visitors will probably pass them over with a cursory glance, yet, if we except the Cartoons of Raphael, Hampton Court contains nothing so curious and valuable as this old frieze of Andrea Mantegna.³⁸⁸

However, Jameson's description of the *Triumphs* as a 'curious and valuable [...] old frieze' suggests esteem for their value as objects of historical importance rather than as epitomes of aesthetic achievement. Admiring their 'classical elegance of form' and the 'inexpressible richness of detail in the accessories and ornaments', Jameson's praise of Mantegna is undermined when she identifies the *Triumphs* as an *exception* in the master's work.³⁸⁹ She summarises Mantegna's 'taste for the forms and effects of sculpture' as usually 'misplaced and unpleasing', resulting in 'a certain hardness, meagreness, and formality of outline'.³⁹⁰

Jameson's interpretation of Mantegna draws heavily on Vasari's life of the artist, which coloured the general consensus of his style in nineteenth-century criticism. Vasari detailed how Mantegna cultivated his fascination with ancient Rome while engaging in the classical revival amongst the humanist and intellectual circles of mid-fifteenth-century Padua. His master Francesco Squarcione (1394–1468) encouraged his students to study the fragments of ancient sculpture that filled his studio. As Vasari recounts, Squarcione was so offended by Mantegna marrying Nicolosia Bellini (dates untraced), daughter of his rival Jacopo Bellini (c.1400–1470), that he publicly denounced Mantegna's art, claiming that his human figures appeared to be made more of marble than flesh. Jameson concluded her article on this supposed 'Remarkable Painter' in a less than remarkable fashion: 'in general his religious pictures are not pleasing; and many of his classical

³⁸⁸ Ibid., p. 411

³⁸⁹ Jameson, *Handbook to the Public Galleries*, p. 372.

³⁹⁰ Jameson, 'Essays—Mantegna', p. 411.

subjects have a tasteless meagreness in the forms, which is quite opposed to all our conceptions of beauty and greatness of style'.³⁹¹

Public visibility of Mantegna's works improved in 1855 with the acquisition of the National Gallery's first painting by the artist, *The Virgin and Child with Saints* (**fig. 2.2**). It was purchased in the first year of the inaugural directorship of Charles Eastlake and formed part of his plan, already noted in the Introduction, to transform the national collection into a comprehensive survey of the history of western European painting. Indeed, Mantegna's *Virgin and Child* was among the first eighteen pictures purchased by Eastlake under the new constitution and at £1,125 12s it was the second most expensive picture purchased during his first year in office.³⁹² The presence of several German and Italian volumes on Mantegna in Eastlake's personal art library demonstrates his concerted interest in the artist.³⁹³ His choice of painting — the familiar subject of the Virgin and Child, as opposed to one of Mantegna's more esoteric antique subject pictures — suggests that Eastlake was well aware of the necessity to balance his informed appreciation with the expectations of the public and critics in the press, whose knowledge was not so advanced as his. Of course, what was available on the art market necessarily affected Eastlake's acquisition choices too.

The interest raised by this first example of the Paduan School in the National Gallery is attested to by the fact that the *Illustrated London News* reported on the acquisition, accompanying its

³⁹¹ Ibid., p. 412.

³⁹² Report of the Director of the National Gallery to the Lords Commissioners, 5 March 1856, London, Annual Reports 1855–1873, Appendix No. 5, p. 26, NG17/2, NGA. The most expensive of Eastlake's purchases in 1855 was Paolo Veronese's (1528–88) *Adoration of the Kings* (NG268), for which he paid £1, 977.

³⁹³ Susanna Avery-Quash, 'The Eastlake Library: Origins, History and Importance', *Studi di Memofonte*, 10 (2013), 3–45 lists the following texts: G. A. Moschini, *Della origine e delle vicende della Pittura in Padova* (Padua: Tipografia Crescini, 1826); Giuseppe Gennari, *Poche parole intorno alla patria di A. Mantegna* (Padua: Seminario, 1837); P. Selvatico, ed., 'Vita di A. Mantegna scritta da G. Vasari' (extract from Le Monnier Vasari, 1849); Gustav Waagen, 'Über Leben, Wirke und Werken der Maler Andrea Mantegna und Luca Signorelli' (extract from Ramner's *Hist. Taschenbuch*, 1850); Carlo d'Arco, 'Studi ed osservazioni intorno alla vita di Andrea Mantegna', extracted from the *Gazzetta di Mantova* (Firenze: La Monnier, 1855).

text with a full-page engraving (**fig. 2.3**).³⁹⁴ Describing the work as ‘a picture of a high and rare class’, the reporter affirmed that it was ‘worthy to be placed beside our Peruginos, our Francias and our Correggios’.³⁹⁵ Through this association with acknowledged favourites, the Mantegna was presented to the readers of the *Illustrated London News* as a work that should elicit their admiration.³⁹⁶ Yet, there is still an echo of Jameson’s framing of Mantegna as a historically significant, but not necessarily visually appealing artist, as the reporter concluded: ‘we look upon it as a most important and interesting addition to our national collection’.³⁹⁷

Several further acquisitions soon followed: in 1856, an oil sketch by Peter Paul Rubens (1577–1640) was purchased from the Samuel Rogers sale of *A Roman Triumph* (NG278), based on Mantegna’s *Triumphs*, and in 1873, during the tenure of the Gallery’s second director, William Boxall, the Vivian family’s *Introduction of the Cult of Cybele at Rome* (NG902). In relation to the latter, the trustees considered the initial asking price of £1, 500 as much too high, but its owner Ralph Vivian insisted that he would not take less and so interventions were made to secure the work for the nation, through the use of a special purchase grant.³⁹⁸ The successful acquisition resulted in a flurry of articles in the press.³⁹⁹ Frederic Burton, who would become the Gallery’s third director in 1874, summarised precisely what seemed to irk the Victorian eye about Mantegna:

³⁹⁴ [Anon.], ‘The New Mantegna at the National Gallery’, *Illustrated London News* (1 November 1856), 451–52.

³⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 451.

³⁹⁶ As suggested by Annabel Thomas, the perception of a painting’s merit as an object of admiration for visitors was informed by its place of display and the works surrounding it: Annabel Thomas, ‘The National Gallery’s First 50 Years: “Cut the Cloth to Suit the Purse”’, in *Academies, Museums and Canons of Art*, ed. by Gill Perry and Colin Cunningham (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 1999), pp. 207–37 (p. 213).

³⁹⁷ ‘The New Mantegna’, p. 451.

³⁹⁸ Captain Ralph Vivian to Sir William Boxall, May 1873 [NG5/466/6], NGA; Note by R. N. Wornum, 5 May 1873 [NGA1/1/69/8], NGA.

³⁹⁹ Frederic Burton, ‘Mantegna’s “Triumph of Scipio”’, *Portfolio*, 5 (1874), 4–7; J. W. Comyns Carr, ‘The New Mantegna at the National Gallery’, *Art Journal* (March 1874), 78–9; J. A. Crowe, ‘The New Mantegna’, *Academy* (15 November 1873), 427; [Anon.], ‘The New Mantegna’, *Athenaeum* (18 October 1873), 502.

No thought of pleasing *us* seems to have guided his creative pencil [...]. There are, doubtless, many [...] who are repelled from the first by the dryness of Mantegna's manner, and who [...] find in his generally austere mode of conception no sympathetic bond.⁴⁰⁰

Even the esteemed art historians J. A. Crowe and G. B. Cavalcaselle toed the Vasarian line. In their seminal *History of Painting in North Italy* (1871) they extolled the virtues of Mantegna's brother-in-law Giovanni Bellini (c.1435–1516) through comparison of both artists' versions of *The Agony in the Garden* (figs. 2.4; 2.5). Bellini's *Agony* (NG726) had been acquired by the National Gallery in 1863 from the Davenport-Bromley collection, while Mantegna's version (NG1417) resided in the collection of Thomas Baring and would be finally purchased for the nation in 1894.⁴⁰¹ Crowe and Cavalcaselle saw a comparison of the two works as neatly demonstrating 'that contempt for which [Mantegna] is so well known, of everything tender or charming in nature', concluding that Mantegna's *Agony* gave 'the impression of a potent bitter'.⁴⁰² The negative light cast on Mantegna through such comparisons with his brother-in-law can only have been further exacerbated in the wake of Ruskin's own championing of Bellini. In 1877, Ruskin famously proclaimed two of the artist's altarpieces located in Venice — the *Madonna and Child with Saints* (1488) in the Basilica di Santa Maria Gloriosa dei Frari and his *San Zaccaria Altarpiece* (1505) for the church of the same name — as 'the two best pictures in the world'.⁴⁰³ Appearing just four years later, Cartwright's monograph directly engaged with, and contested, the opinions of some of the most visible and powerful voices in art criticism of her time.

Cartwright set out to challenge the received opinion of Mantegna and to encourage wider appreciation of his works. As she stated boldly: 'the old reproach that he neglected the study of real

⁴⁰⁰ Burton, 'Mantegna's "Triumph of Scipio"', p. 4. Emphasis in original.

⁴⁰¹ This was purchased as a Mantegna and reattributed the following year to Bellini.

⁴⁰² J. A. Crowe and G. B. Cavalcaselle, *A History of Painting in North Italy: Venice, Padua, Vincenza, Verona, Ferrara, Milan, Friuli, Brescia, from the Fourteenth to the Sixteenth Century*, 2 vols (London: John Murray, 1871), vol. 1, pp. 141, 383.

⁴⁰³ John Ruskin, *St Mark's Rest: The History of Venice*, first supplement 'The Shrine of the Slaves' (Kent: George Allen, 1877), p. 38.

life to copy statues has been repeated till it has grown wearisome' (p. 61). Her reappraisal begins with a strong claim for the importance of the Paduan School above any other northern Italian school active during the fifteenth century. Describing it as 'independent of Byzantine traditions and strikingly peculiar in its characteristics', she insisted it 'even surpassed the Venetian school in the vigour and individuality of its art' (p. 1).

Cartwright then reassessed the contemporary consensus on Mantegna himself, observing the negative reception of his style as a response to the 'occasional antagonism between the ideal form after which he strove and the actual fact present before his eyes'; it is this 'sense of conflicting elements [...] which has given rise to so much mistaken criticism of Mantegna's work'. Cartwright argued instead that 'no man had ever a more thorough knowledge of nature, or was more keenly alive to the minutest details of everyday life around him' (p. 61).

To illustrate this point, Cartwright dispensed with the Vasarian anecdote that Squarcione's insults had provoked Mantegna to embark on a more naturalistic rendering of the human form. This change of style was traditionally noted by historians to occur in Mantegna's commission for the Ovetari Chapel in the Church of the Eremitani in Padua, with the frescoes of *Saint James on his Way to Martyrdom* and *The Martyrdom of Saint Christopher* (1453–55) pinpointed as the striking turning point in the artist's development.⁴⁰⁴ Cartwright attributed this change instead to the 'new influence' of Jacopo and Giovanni Bellini on Mantegna's work, brought about by his marriage to Nicolosia, describing this event as 'an important fact in art history as strengthening the ties between these distinguished artists' (pp. 8–9).

Here Cartwright departed from her contemporaries Crowe and Cavalcaselle and aligned herself with the opinions of the German critic and museum director Gustav Waagen. In his important

⁴⁰⁴ Mantegna's frescoes at Padua had received an early mention in Maria Callcott's *Description of the Chapel of the Annunziata dell'Arena; or, Giotto's Chapel, in Padua* (London: privately printed, 1835), in which she included a page on the Eremitani. Callcott recounts being 'attracted by the frescoes, by Andrea Mantegna. These evince extraordinary talents for composition, and particularly the Martyrdom of St. Christopher', also commenting that these frescoes included portraits of Squarcione and Mantegna himself (p. 15).

survey *Galleries and Cabinets of Art in Great Britain* (1857), Waagen corrected the assumption of his earlier 1850 treatise on Mantegna where he ‘erroneously ascribed the change to Squarcione’s criticism on the misapplied imitation of sculpture apparent in Mantegna’s earlier pictures’; he now affirmed that ‘the great development of the picturesque and realistic feeling in most of Mantegna’s later works may now without question be ascribed to his connection with Jacopo Bellini’.⁴⁰⁵ Crowe and Cavalcaselle remained hesitant on this point, and only ‘assume[d]’ the ‘force of the Bellinesque influence’ was present, suggesting that ‘the general softening of his style [...] may have been the fruit of some transient but powerful expression of Bellinesque opinion in Mantegna, when stung by the criticism of Squarcione’.⁴⁰⁶

Cartwright incorporated and expanded on Waagen’s observation by drawing out the ‘great and lasting’ *mutual* influence between Mantegna and the Bellini: from Giovanni, Mantegna gained ‘the softer colouring and delicate feeling that impart so pure a charm to those well-known Madonnas which fill the churches of Venice’, while Giovanni benefited from his brother-in-law’s ‘knowledge of classical architecture and perspective, as well as the sculptural cast of drapery’ (p. 9). Putting this theory into practice, Cartwright highlighted the ‘life-like’ figures and ‘striking [...] close attention to natural objects’ to be found in the Eremitani’s *Martyrdom of Saint James*. Such elements demonstrated that, despite Mantegna’s ‘love of antique statuary’, it was in these ‘faithful reproductions of Italian landscape and streets, with red roofs, arched loggias’, and ‘every detail’ of the ‘furrows and wrinkles of old age, the ragged coat or torn shoe’ rendered with ‘an accuracy that is almost painful’, that proved beyond doubt ‘how strongly realistic’ Mantegna was (p. 9). Devoting a chapter to the *Triumphs*, Cartwright reanimated Mantegna’s petrified procession into a *tableau vivant* of the antique world, arguing:

⁴⁰⁵ Gustav Waagen, *Galleries and Cabinets of Art in Great Britain*, trans. Elizabeth Rigby [Eastlake] (London: John Murray, 1857), pp. 29–30.

⁴⁰⁶ Crowe and Cavalcaselle, *A History of Painting in North Italy*, vol. 1, pp. 339–40.

for all its sculptured tendencies and likenesses to a classical frieze, this great series is no procession of marble statues, cold and rigid in their antique beauty. The forms which pass before us in the long array are animated with life and warmth, their faces glow with the fire of human passion in all its endless varieties (p. 42).

As she concluded, forcefully: ‘to say that Mantegna was alike destitute of feeling for beauty and of spiritual perception appears to us simple blindness’ (p. 61).

While Cartwright’s monograph challenged the overwhelming critical appraisal of Mantegna held by her fellow Anglophone art critics, it also presented a concerted effort to encourage a new interest in and appreciation of his work among a non-expert readership. Describing her book as ‘a guide for the use of those who have not the opportunity of studying the master’s works for themselves’, she assured such readers that she herself had ‘carefully examined’ the works of art detailed and had written her descriptions ‘on the spot’ (p. v). Here Cartwright emphasised her direct looking as a means of proving her first-hand knowledge of Mantegna’s oeuvre, positioning herself as a trustworthy mediator for readers unfamiliar with his works.

Cartwright had first visited Mantua in September 1880 as part of her honeymoon with her husband Henry Ady, going with the specific aim to undertake research for her monograph. Her diary records both the dilapidated state of the town and her surprise at the notable absence of work by Mantegna in the place where he had reigned as court painter to the powerful Gonzaga family:

Such a desolate place it is with empty streets & big squares where the grass grows. Only under the arcades of the Piazza Erbe was there any signs of trade whatever. Found Andrea’s tomb & bust in a bare chapel of S. Andrea with the very door whi[ch] he made bricked up. All over the Palace [Palazzo Ducale] endless halls with marble floors. Giulio Romano’s frescoes & gorgeous ceilings, perfect miles of them & we went thro[ugh] court after court, found scanty remnants of Andrea’s work [...] We studied Mantegna’s room [Camera degli Sposi] a long time and most interesting the groups are. The heads v[er]y striking & the children & the Marquis & his wife are exactly similar to the engraving whi[ch] Mr Colvin

attributes to Mantegna.⁴⁰⁷ It was well worth going there & a thousand times better than all the Giulio Romanos the custode w[oul]d implore us to admire! Had g[rea]t difficulty to get into the Museo but at last hunted out a woman who woke up an old Librarian. Saw the antiques whi[ch] are v[er]y fine [...] I found what is I hope Andrea's own Faustina, a fine h[ea]d with aquiline features, beautifully modelled neck & brow but no one seemed to know anyt[hin]g about it & all thro[ugh] Mantua it was quite hard to find out anyt[hin]g about Mantegna.⁴⁰⁸

The extended description Cartwright devotes to Mantua records both the impression that the town made on her during her visit, as well as the extent of the background research she had conducted on Mantegna's activities at Mantua prior to her trip. As Cartwright's experience demonstrates, Mantua in 1880 was 'off the beaten track' for visitors and the main draw resided in the works of Mantegna's successor, the sixteenth-century Mannerist artist Giulio Romano (1499–1546).⁴⁰⁹

This first-hand experience of Mantegna's neglect was translated in her monograph into an emphasis on discussing those extant works still *in situ*, as she observes of the Camera:

All the frescoes have been much damaged, and those on two of the walls completely obliterated; but the groups which remain and the decorations of the ceiling are of the highest interest, and, if we except the Hampton Court Triumphs, form the most important series that we have from Mantegna's hand (p. 25).

Providing details as to their physical condition, Cartwright emphasised her minute observation of these works. In a similar fashion, she recorded of the frescoes of the Ovetari Chapel in Padua that they had suffered 'from the damp of the walls' and that 'a great part of the subjects in the apse, as

⁴⁰⁷ This is likely a reference to the print of *Portraits of Lodovico Gonzaga and his wife Barbara of Hohenzollern, half-length separated by a column*, acquired by the British Museum in 1863 (1863,1114.746).

⁴⁰⁸ Friday 10 September 1880 [Diary CE364], CENA. Partially transcribed in Angela Emanuel, ed., *A Bright Remembrance: The Diaries of Julia Cartwright, 1851–1924* (London: Wiedenfeld and Nicholson, 1989), p. 115.

⁴⁰⁹ Patricia Rubin notes Vasari's evident preference for the achievements of Giulio Romano in Mantua, devoting twelve pages to his life opposed to just five for Mantegna: Patricia Rubin, *Giorgio Vasari: Art and History* (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 1995), p. 134.

well as several figures in the martyrdom and burial of St Christopher, are completely destroyed' (pp. 3, 4). Despite their deteriorated state, she observed that other 'portions are still in good preservation', highlighting them as key 'to form a correct idea of Mantegna's powers' during his early career, going as far as to describe the chapel as the equivalent 'for the schools of North Italy what the Brancacci Chapel had been for Florence' (p. 4).

Her interest in these issues, and her even-handed assessment of the on-going art historical value of Mantegna's work in the Ovetari Chapel despite their sustained damage, was particularly advanced for her time. For example, these very frescoes had been copied and reproduced as chromolithograph prints for the Arundel Society. Despite the legitimate concerns regarding the risks to Italy's extant cultural heritage at this time, the rhetoric found in the Society's publications propagated the idea that any injury was evidence of neglect by 'incompetent' Italian authorities who did not appreciate their cultural inheritance.⁴¹⁰ As a result, the wholesale purchase and transportation of such frescoes to England was argued for vociferously, particularly by Ruskin and Layard, two of the Society's leading members.⁴¹¹ Ruskin's despair on this matter even prompted Henry Cole (1808–82), director of the South Kensington museum, to suggest that the Arena Chapel should be moved in its entirety from Padua to London.⁴¹² Cartwright's frank assessment of the damage sustained by these works demonstrates her keen awareness of the importance that such factors played in their history, drawing attention to their material nature, and not only to their aesthetic or stylistic importance for the history of art.

Reviews of *Mantegna and Francia* demonstrated the wide appeal and success of Cartwright's approach. The *Academy* review began with the assertion that 'Mantegna is not a popular favourite among Italian masters, nor is the history of his life particularly interesting', but continued:

⁴¹⁰ Lucina Ward, 'A Translation of a Translation: Dissemination of the Arundel Society's Chromolithographs', unpublished doctoral thesis, Australian National University, 2016, p. 142.

⁴¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 145.

⁴¹² Robin Simon, 'A Giotto conviene far ritorno': The Arena Chapel, the British, a Futurist, and the Reputation of Giotto (c.1267–1337), *British Art Journal*, 16:2 (Autumn 2015), 3–19 (p. 7).

great credit, therefore, is due to Miss Julia Cartwright for having made such a pleasant little sketch out of the dry materials at her command [...]. [She] appears to have studied all the latest sources of information regarding this irritable artist, and evidently speaks of many of his works from personal knowledge.⁴¹³

Referring to Crowe and Cavalcaselle, the reviewer commended Cartwright's ability to 'translat[e] the dry and somewhat involved style of writing peculiar to these learned historians into easy readable English, free from technical terms'.⁴¹⁴ Beyond simple compilation, her writing was recognised for its distinctive blending of informed knowledge of current critical opinion, written up in a felicitous prose style. In the *Athenaeum*, the reviewer commended the way in which 'the facts have been carefully fused into a continuous and homogeneous narrative' and the 'unusual care and discretion' used in drawing on foreign secondary sources.⁴¹⁵ The *Academy* concluded: '[Miss Cartwright's] powers of pleasant description, artistic perception, and lucid criticism' are 'as valuable in [their] way as scientific criticism'.⁴¹⁶ Cartwright's distinctive brand of art history combined the familiar, widely appealing biographical narrative with her own personal observations and the most recent research from respected foreign scholars. It ensured her regular and prolific publishing commissions; in her diary, she records meetings with publishers who were 'keen to have literary criticism not technical'.⁴¹⁷ Cartwright was not only well read in modern foreign art history, but knowledgeable and aware of the implications of its publishing both at home and abroad.

Immediately following Cartwright's publication, several paintings attributed to Mantegna entered the National Gallery's collection. From the major sales in 1882 and 1883 from Hamilton Palace and from the Sunderland collection, the gallery acquired the companion pieces *The Vestal*

⁴¹³ [Anon.], 'Review of Julia Cartwright, *Mantegna and Francia*', *Academy* (26 November 1881), 408–09 (p. 408).

⁴¹⁴ *Ibid.*

⁴¹⁵ [Anon.], 'Fine Arts', *Athenaeum* (25 February 1882), 256–57 (p. 257).

⁴¹⁶ 'Review of *Mantegna and Francia*', *Academy*, p. 409.

⁴¹⁷ 13 November 1901 [Diary CE385], CENA. Emphasis in original.

Virgin Tuccia with a Sieve (NG1125.1) and *A Woman Drinking* (NG1125.2), together with *Samson and Delilah* (NG1145). All three works were purchased under the directorship of Burton, who, as noted, had previously deemed Mantegna's 'austere manner' incompatible with wider public taste. While the Hamilton Palace pictures had been noticed by Waagen in 1854, *Samson and Delilah* was recorded for the first time in the Sunderland sale.⁴¹⁸ The price paid for it (£2,362) caused a furore in the House of Commons. As reported by the writer and painter Henry Wallis (1830–1916) in the *Art Journal*, objections were made on the grounds that 'the actualities of modern Art' were more valuable than 'the remoter themes of the great Paduan master'.⁴¹⁹ However, Wallis noted that there now existed 'a large and influential class' with 'a very considerable interest in the art of Mantegna', concluding that 'if the Gallery had missed the Mantegna the authorities would have been blamed now, and more severely in the future'.⁴²⁰ Wallis himself was part of this 'influential class', as the artist responsible for producing a set of nine photographs after the *Triumphs* in 1875.⁴²¹ The same year as the purchase from the Sutherland sale, the gallery was given a plaster cast taken from the bust of Mantegna in his chapel in Sant'Andrea, Mantua (**fig. 2.6**).⁴²² Though not an original painting, this gift of 1883 and the trustees' willingness to accept it demonstrates the rise of Mantegna's artistic profile in the public eye, for which Cartwright's well-received monograph arguably played no small part.⁴²³

Together with works in public collections in Britain and *in situ* in Italy, Cartwright frequently drew attention in her publications to prominent old master paintings housed in British private

⁴¹⁸ Waagen, *Treasures of Art*, vol. 1, pp. 304–05; Hamilton Palace Sale, 24 June 1882, lot 398, *The Hamilton Palace Collection: Illustrated Priced Catalogue* (London: Remington, 1882), p. 56; Sunderland Sale, 15 June 1882, lot 82, quoted in Lightbown, *Mantegna*, cat. no. 40, p. 449.

⁴¹⁹ Henry Wallis, 'The National Gallery — Recent Acquisitions', *Art Journal* (November 1883), 370–72 (p. 372).

⁴²⁰ *Ibid.*

⁴²¹ [Anon.], 'Mantegna's Triumph of Julius Caesar', *Saturday Review* (11 December 1875), 741–42.

⁴²² Donated by Henry Vaughan, NG2250.

⁴²³ Meeting of the Trustees, 13 February 1883, NG1/5, p. 231, NGA. The Victoria and Albert Museum acquired a similar plaster cast of the bust in 1893; see <<http://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O347773/roundel/>>.

collections. The year following the publication of her monograph, Mantegna's *Adoration of the Shepherds* (after 1450), then in the Boughton-Knight collection at Downton Castle, Herefordshire, was exhibited for the first time as a loan at the Burlington House Winter Exhibition of Old Masters (fig. 2.7).⁴²⁴ The work's provenance, traceable directly to the Gonzaga dynasty, and its excellent state of preservation, drew much attention. Cartwright did not hesitate to be the first to reproduce it in print, drawing once again on her periodical network to include it in a thematic article on 'The Nativity in Art', published the following year in the *Magazine of Art*.⁴²⁵ Cartwright's reputation was evidently enough to secure the opportunity of requesting that the work be engraved for the first time, acknowledging the permission obtained from Charles Boughton-Knight to do so for her article. Alongside the full-page reproduction, Cartwright described the work as 'fresh and brilliant as a Limoges enamel' and 'a tiny masterpiece of colour and invention and drawing — a little window opened for us on a remote and beautiful world'.⁴²⁶

Continental critics joined British ones in acknowledging Cartwright's authoritative knowledge of Mantegna and her efforts to publicise his lesser-known works. The French writer Charles Yriarte (1832–98) visited England as part of his research for his own (posthumously published) 1901 monograph on the painter, and included the names of Cartwright and Ffoulkes in his list of acknowledgements.⁴²⁷ Claude Phillips had informed Cartwright that Yriarte 'talked a lot of my Mantegna and the Boughton Knight picture which he admires greatly'.⁴²⁸ Yriarte described the

⁴²⁴ Several other prominent works by Mantegna from British private collections received greater exposure at the end of the nineteenth century as exhibition loans. For example, *The Madonna and Child with Seraphim and Cherubim* (c.1454) from the collection of Charles Butler (now Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, inv. 32.100.97), *Judith with the Head of Holofernes* (c.1495–1500) in the Earl of Pembroke's collection (now National Gallery of Art, Washington, inv. 1942.9.42) and *The Adoration of the Magi* (c.1495–1505) from Castle Ashby, Northamptonshire (now J. Paul Getty Museum of Art, inv. 85.PA.417) were all displayed in the seminal 'Exhibition of Venetian Art' at the New Gallery in 1894.

⁴²⁵ Julia Cartwright, 'The Nativity in Art', *Magazine of Art*, 6 (1883), 74–82.

⁴²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 78.

⁴²⁷ Yriarte, *Mantegna*, p. vi.

⁴²⁸ 10 March 1897 [Diary CE381], CENA.

picture as one of the least known but most beautiful works by Mantegna, actually directing his readers towards Cartwright's *Magazine of Art* article and praising her first-hand knowledge of the painting and competency on the subject.⁴²⁹ The German scholar Paul Kristeller (1905–99), author of a monumental monograph on Mantegna, listed it as 'attributed' and doubted it was an autograph work, but nevertheless still acknowledged having seen it only in reproduction in Cartwright's article.⁴³⁰ This article clearly helped to raise interest in the work and its value. Indeed, when Boughton-Knight later offered it for sale in 1913 to the National Gallery, he wrote to the then director Charles Holroyd (1861–1917), 'I shall be only too anxious to do anything that I personally can do to keep these fine works in England'.⁴³¹ Unfortunately, the trustees felt unable to reciprocate, responding that there was no prospect of raising the £70, 000 requested, so the offer was declined.⁴³²

By the latter decades of the century the term 'Mantegnesque' had come into common usage among English-speaking art critics. It was understood as an umbrella term to describe the appearance of a range of northern Italian quattrocento paintings, such as when Mary Berenson used it in her 1894 pamphlet on Hampton Court to describe Mantegna's pervasive influence throughout northern Italy in the second half of the fifteenth century: 'hence the whole age has been called "Mantegnesque"'.⁴³³ Its prevalence among art historians caused Morelli to rail against it in exasperation, castigating any critic using it as rendering 'a superficial and shallow interpretation of art history'.⁴³⁴ Whether we agree with Morelli or not, what is more important in the current

⁴²⁹ Yriarte, *Mantegna*, p. 218.

⁴³⁰ Kristeller, *Andrea Mantegna*, p. 453.

⁴³¹ Letter from C. A. Boughton-Knight, 16 July 1913 [NG7/429/1], NGA.

⁴³² Boughton-Knight offered the Mantegna together with Rembrandt's *The Cradle*. See letters NG7/429/2–5; and Meeting of the Trustees, Tuesday 5 August 1913 and Tuesday 11 November 1913, Board Minutes 1910–1918, pp. 15–155 [NG1/8], NGA.

⁴³³ Mary Logan, *The Guide to the Italian Pictures at Hampton Court*, Kyrle Pamphlets, 2 (London: Innes, 1894), p. 46.

⁴³⁴ Giovanni Morelli, *Italian Masters in German Galleries: A Critical Essay on the Italian Pictures in the Galleries of Munich, Dresden, Berlin*, trans. Mrs Louise M. Richter (London: George Bell and Sons, 1883), p. 103.

discussion is the dramatic turnaround that Morelli's intervention represents in the estimation of an artist, who, only a few decades earlier, had been deemed antithetical to Victorian conceptions of beauty. From a 'curious old frieze', the *Triumphs* came to be lauded by the likes of Mary Berenson as 'the most magnificent single work by an Italian master in any gallery'.⁴³⁵

The influence of Cartwright's work was extended through the writings of the next generation of critics on the artist. In July 1900, Maud Cruttwell visited London in preparation for her own monograph on the artist and arranged a meeting with Cartwright where they 'talked of Mantegna and of Mr Berenson'.⁴³⁶ Though brief, Cruttwell recorded the inspiration she had taken away from this encounter:

I am so glad I came for I've learnt much about [Mantegna] from my studies & my book will be truer & better. Also I've been spurred on to harder work — to be less of a dilettante by a meeting with a woman I liked so much — who herself is one of the cleverest & hardest working of the art critics — Mrs Adye [*sic*] — I wish I had a chance of seeing more of her — It was only for an hour, but it stimulated & helped me & put a different & higher standard of work before me.⁴³⁷

Cartwright was later informed through a mutual friend that 'Miss Cruttwell tells her that it was *I* who first made her take up art as a serious study (!)'.⁴³⁸ In her monograph, Cartwright had suggested it was 'the very greatness of Mantegna's genius, its immense strength and power', which 'may in itself be the cause that he is not strictly speaking a popular artist' (62). For Cruttwell, this gave her the launching pad from which she could build on Cartwright's work, transmuting the viewing of this 'immense strength' from a difficulty to one of 'ennobling influence'.⁴³⁹

⁴³⁵ For a discussion of this pamphlet, see Ilaria Della Monica, 'Mary Berenson and *The Guide to the Italian Pictures at Hampton Court*', 19, DOI: <<http://doi.org/10.16995/ntn.827>>.

⁴³⁶ Emanuel, *A Bright Remembrance*, p. 252 (16 July 1900).

⁴³⁷ Maud Cruttwell to Ottoline Morrell, [July 1900] [8/12], BBVIT. Cruttwell here misspells Cartwright's married name, Ady.

⁴³⁸ Emanuel, *A Bright Remembrance*, p. 252 (12 October 1900). Emphasis in original.

⁴³⁹ Cruttwell to Morrell, [6 June 1899] [2/12], BBVIT.

In relation to Roger Fry, as Caroline Elam has discussed, his most significant contribution to the reassessment of Mantegna was his *Burlington Magazine* article, ‘Mantegna as Mystic’, while his earlier important monograph *Giovanni Bellini* (1899) discussed the relationship between Mantegna and Bellini.⁴⁴⁰ In Fry’s own discussion of the *Agony* paintings, we see a completely different impression to that given by Crowe and Cavalcaselle. From a ‘bitter’ contrast, Fry sees an ‘affinity’ even suggestive of ‘collusion’ between the two artists, while the comparison provides a means to trace ‘the mutual alteration of two bodies in process of formation’.⁴⁴¹ Fry’s interest in the ‘Mantegnesque’ aspect of Bellini’s early work was highlighted by Cartwright in her review of his book, which she described as ‘a model of its kind’.⁴⁴² Acknowledging his debt to Berenson, she nevertheless made an argument for Fry as ‘an independent and original thinker’ and commended his work as ‘a valuable contribution’, promoting him as she had done Berenson.⁴⁴³ Fry wrote to Cartwright appreciatively: ‘it was awfully good of you to get [the review] put in and I have no doubt it will help the book much. It has I think been well received [...]’.⁴⁴⁴ In Fry’s own review of Charles Yriatre’s monograph, he had criticised the French critic for failing to acknowledge the influence of Jacopo Bellini on Mantegna’s early style, an observation aired by Cartwright as early as 1881.⁴⁴⁵ Though Fry made no direct acknowledgement of Cartwright’s earlier work, it is necessary here to

⁴⁴⁰ Caroline Elam, *Roger Fry and Italian Art* (London: Ad Illisum; Burlington Magazine, 2019), pp. 317, 336–41. Fry devoted three articles to Mantegna, see: Caroline Elam, ed., *Roger Fry: Mantegna*, trans. Rossella Rizzo (Milan: Abscondita, 2006).

⁴⁴¹ Roger Fry, *Giovanni Bellini*, ‘The Artist’s Library’ (London: At the Sign of the Unicorn, 1899), pp. 20–21. Fry’s monograph was written for ‘The Artist’s Library’, edited by Laurence Binyon. It is worth noting that in 1894, Cartwright had proposed a monograph on the artist to Richard Seeley, proprietor of the *Portfolio*, for the first issue of that periodical’s new series of special monograph editions, but was told that Bellini was ‘not quite suitable for a January number, which should appeal to a wider circle’ and that ‘some old master whose name is a household word’ was preferable. Cartwright’s alternative suggestion of Raphael was eagerly accepted: Richard Seeley to Julia Cartwright, 18 September 1894, [CE 110/2], CENA.

⁴⁴² Anon., [Julia Cartwright], ‘Giovanni Bellini’, *Literature* (18 November 1899), 482.

⁴⁴³ *Ibid.*

⁴⁴⁴ Fry to Cartwright, 19 December 1899 [MSS ENG 86 HH Box IV (X) / MSL/1978/121/1], NAL. These letters are incorrectly catalogued as addressed to Cecilia Ady, Julia’s daughter.

⁴⁴⁵ Anon., [Roger Fry], ‘Mantegna’, *Athenaeum* (23 March 1901), 375–76.

emphasise the fact that her monograph was the first by an English art critic to reframe understanding of the Mantegna-Bellini relationship and in particular the mutual influence of each artist on the other.

Finally, Fry's 'Mantegna as Mystic' article can also be seen to display in its arguments traces of ideas that Cartwright had started to articulate a quarter of a century earlier. Turning to 'consider certain aspects of [Mantegna's] genius which have been somewhat overlooked by critics', Fry insists that there is a 'vein of deep Christian mysticism' in Mantegna's work, not least in several of his small Madonna pictures, a radical association for an artist whose crystalline compositions had traditionally been read as the antithesis to Bellini's elusive suggestions of divine presence in the material world.⁴⁴⁶ Fry's willingness to look beyond the persistent framing of the 'pedant and doctrinaire' to Mantegna's capacity for the 'purest emotions of humanity' and 'profound contemplation of the mystical'⁴⁴⁷ was the fulfilment of Cartwright's wish in 1881 for her contemporary critics and readers to abandon their 'simple blindness' and open their eyes to Mantegna's 'feeling for beauty and of spiritual perception'.

At the National Gallery, six authenticated works by the master could be seen on permanent display by the end of the century, with a seventh — *The Holy Family with Saint John* (NG5641) — to arrive as part of the Mond Bequest in 1924. These works were displayed prominently, in a room designated for the 'Paduan School'.⁴⁴⁸ Cartwright's challenge to Vasari's long-held narrative departed from the opinions of her contemporaries. It was these very ideas that were to occupy debates on Mantegna at the beginning of the twentieth century as well as the most recent interest in the artist today. Her engagement with these ideas, drawn from her own informed awareness of the critical literature and first-hand observation of Mantegna's works, underscores Cartwright as a significant and forgotten voice in the long-standing debate on the merits of the artist.

⁴⁴⁶ Roger Fry, 'Mantegna as Mystic', p. 88.

⁴⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 91–92.

⁴⁴⁸ Works by Carlo Crivelli, Marco Marziale, Niccolò Giolfino, Gregorio Schiavone, and Bartolommeo Vivarini were also displayed in this room.

Neville Rowley has recently discussed the ongoing ‘wax’ and ‘wane’ approach to Bellini over Mantegna, notably reignited by the Italian art historian and curator Roberto Longhi (1890–1970) in 1914.⁴⁴⁹ Longhi’s argument relied on ‘strongly minimis[ing]’ the influence of Mantegna on Bellini and can be seen as symptomatic of an early twentieth-century moment that was ‘no longer attuned to Mantegna’s line’.⁴⁵⁰ However, a challenge to that negative appraisal was precisely what Cartwright had put into the equation in 1881 and what Cruttwell and Fry took up in varying degrees in the early 1900s, paving the way for further scholarship.

Cartwright’s own fresh line of enquiry into Mantegna for modern audiences can be traced today to two major exhibitions on the artist, both of which focus on topics that Cartwright had begun articulating in 1881: the National Gallery’s recent *Mantegna and Bellini* exhibition (1 October 2018–27 January 2019) and *Andrea Mantegna: Making Antiquity Modern* at the Palazzo Madama, Turin (21 December 2019–4 May 2020). Sadly, Cartwright’s contribution remains out of the frame as neither catalogue makes mention of her work, even in their bibliographies. As with her work on Lotto, incorporating ‘popular’ and ‘Victorian’ texts into the scope of our historiographic sources is an outcome that this thesis advocates. Reassessing overlooked commentaries by British women writers brings a multitude of new voices to public attention. By drawing out the fresh and fruitful angles they offered their readership to think about various artists’ work, we can uncover subtle and surprising shifts in our understanding of the critical fortunes of the old masters and their reception, both in the nineteenth century and today.

⁴⁴⁹ Neville Rowley, “‘Bellini stands higher ... than Mantegna’”, in *Mantegna and Bellini*, ed. by Caroline Campbell, Dagmar Korbacher, Neville Rowley and Sarah Vowles, exhibition catalogue (London: National Gallery Company London and Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, 2018), pp. 41–9.

⁴⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 49.

2.3 Making Space for Secondary Masters: Ethel Halsey's Contribution to George Bell and Sons' 'Great Masters' Series

One of the most popular and widely published artist monograph series at the turn of the century was George Bell and Sons' 'Great Masters of Painting and Sculpture'. Not everyone viewed Bell's success so favourably. Fry, for example, wrote to Berenson that England was being 'flooded' by the series, which espoused 'a new and heartless phraseology for art which is sickening'.⁴⁵¹ However, in the opinion of the British press, the publisher was laudable for their role as 'early pioneers in this popularisation-of-art movement' and their 'Great Masters' praised for 'both respond[ing] to and reflect[ing] the average English cultivated taste better than does any of the rival series of handbooks'.⁴⁵² Bell's series was readily adaptive and flexible to informing this taste, incorporating monographs on artists not then viewed as notable masters. This section will examine one such example, Ethel Halsey's *Gaudenzio Ferrari* (1904).⁴⁵³ While Cartwright's work on Mantegna reframed an acknowledged old master for contemporary audiences, here I will examine how Halsey produced a study of an artist deemed secondary both in reputation and style.

Halsey's *Gaudenzio Ferrari* remains the only dedicated English-language study of the artist. She observed: 'it is a curious fact that the works of an artist of such magnitude as Gaudenzio Ferrari should in these days of universal research be little known to students, and practically unknown to the world at large' (p. vii). Indeed, the name of Gaudenzio today is still for the most part an obscure one and Halsey herself is virtually unknown to the twenty-first century as a writer on art. *Gaudenzio Ferrari* is Halsey's only published monograph. Yet, in her day, she was in regular correspondence with established Italian scholars like Corrado Ricci and Adolfo Venturi, and counted Herbert Cook, Robert Hobart Cust (1861–1940) and Constance Jocelyn Ffoulkes as colleagues.

⁴⁵¹ Denys Sutton, ed., *Letters of Roger Fry*, 2 vols (London: Chatto and Windus, 1972), vol. 1, p. 184.

⁴⁵² [Anon.], 'Various Art Series', *Speaker* (27 February 1904), 532.

⁴⁵³ Ethel Halsey, *Gaudenzio Ferrari*, 'Great Masters in Painting and Sculpture' (London: George Bell and Sons, 1904). Further references to this volume will be provided in parentheses in the text.

Born in Wimbledon, Surrey, Halsey was the daughter of a Bengal civil servant and granddaughter of James Wilson (1805–60), founder of *The Economist*.⁴⁵⁴ Her sister, the celebrated interior designer and socialite Sibyl Colefax (1874–1950), claimed a close friendship with Bernard Berenson and it is likely Halsey came into contact with the Berenson circle in Florence through her younger sibling, although both the Berenson archive and Colefax’s own memoirs are sparse in references to the elder Halsey sister.⁴⁵⁵ Halsey was also part of Cartwright’s circle of friends. Furthermore, she frequented the same social meeting-places as other women art writers, such as the Sesame Club. The Sesame, together with several other women’s clubs such as the Pioneer and Empress, proliferated in London during the 1890s as a place for professional women to network, exchange ideas, hear lectures, and find support.⁴⁵⁶ An example of one such meeting at the Sesame is recalled in Cartwright’s diary, where those who gathered ‘talked “High Art”, Berenson and Florence, and the latest new theories. Miss Halsey asked me to see her photos. She has been all over Italy and is planning new towns, Urbino, Ravenna [...]’.⁴⁵⁷

Unpublished letters between Halsey and Venturi reveal that she had travelled extensively through the central and northern regions of Italy for at least five years prior to the publication of her

⁴⁵⁴ [Anon.], ‘Obituary of Miss Ethel Halsey’, *The Times*, 12 April 1947, p. 1.

⁴⁵⁵ Colefax acknowledged Berenson as a major influence on her interest in the decorative arts, and asserted they remained ‘delightful fast friends our entire lives’: John Elmo, *Designing Women: Dialogues with Pioneering Women Designers, 1850–1950* (Fort St., Canada: Friesen Press, 2015), p. 119. See also, Siân Evans, *Queen Bees: Six Brilliant and Extraordinary Society Hostesses Between the Wars* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 2016), p. 16. However, at least between themselves, Mary and Bernard Berenson did not share such a cordial view of their friendship. Their letters to each other and Mary’s diaries, dated 1896–1902, contain frequent references to their social encounters with the younger Halsey daughter and her mother and are generally condescending in tone. Mary was also disdainful of Mrs Halsey’s attempts to secure a marriage between Sibyl and Herbert Cook. I am very grateful to Michael Gorman for providing me with transcripts of the relevant letters from which this information has been derived.

⁴⁵⁶ The Sesame Club was founded in 1895 and was in fact open to both men and women; its particular focus was literature and education. Meaghan Clarke discusses the importance of women’s clubs specifically in relation to women art critics, see: *Critical Voices*, pp. 31–33. For a discussion of contemporary attitudes towards women’s innate lack of ‘clubbability’ and the perceived dangers of allowing women their own clubs, see: Barbara Black, *A Room of His Own: A Literary-Cultural Study of Victorian Clubland* (Ohio: Ohio University Press, 2012), pp. 219–36.

⁴⁵⁷ Emanuel, *A Bright Remembrance*, p. 224 (10 February 1898).

monograph. For example, in her earliest extant letter to Venturi, dated March 1899, she thanks him for providing introductions for her upcoming trip through Umbria and requests information on how to go about gaining access to private collections.⁴⁵⁸ As will be discussed further on, Venturi remained an important contact for Halsey in her search for authenticated works by Gaudenzio.

While preparing for her monograph, Halsey gave lectures from 1901 to 1902 at the Society of Arts at the Adelphi in London on the topic of Italian art and history.⁴⁵⁹ By this time, Halsey must have already established her name to some extent and secured connections to gain her this right; the Society's own journal acknowledged that it was 'rather unusual, although not unprecedented, for a lady to read a paper there'.⁴⁶⁰ For one of these lectures, titled 'Some Unfamiliar Masterpieces of Italian Art', Halsey discussed 'a sort of pot-pourri of pictures to be seen in small towns and villages', drawing on her personal knowledge of paintings '*unfamiliar* to the large majority of travellers'.⁴⁶¹ It is important to note that her lecture was praised as 'a very clear and interesting account of a number of works of Italian masters scattered about in several districts of Italy, and little known except to those who have made a special study of Italian art'. In fact, her performance won her a Silver Medal from the Society.⁴⁶² Halsey's interest in illuminating unfamiliar works of art in locations outside major cities is shared with other aspiring women art historians of the time. Lucy Olcott, for example, intended in 1903 to publish a book on 'Unknown Masterpieces of Italian Painting in Italy', which would 'reproduce masterpieces of little-known (to the public) artists, and also a few works that are almost inaccessible'.⁴⁶³ As previously noted, this emphasis on seeing works of art in person and

⁴⁵⁸ Halsey to Venturi, 30 March 1899 [AV. Cart. XVIII, 1299], AVCA.

⁴⁵⁹ The *Journal of the Society of Arts* records the following lectures given by Halsey: 'Some Unfamiliar Masterpieces of Italian Art', 48:2476 (4 May 1900), 490–500; 'Some Unfamiliar Masterpieces of the Italian School', 49:2529 (16 May 1901), 504; 'Rimini under the Malatestas', 50:2583 (29 May 1902), 600.

⁴⁶⁰ Halsey, 'Some Unfamiliar Masterpieces of Italian Art', p. 500. I have not yet found evidence that any of the other women discussed in this thesis spoke at the Society of Arts in London.

⁴⁶¹ *Ibid.*, p. 490. Emphasis in original.

⁴⁶² 'Report of Council', *Journal of the Society of Arts*, 48:2484 (29 June 1900), 621–36 (pp. 624, 627).

⁴⁶³ Lucy Olcott to Mary Berenson, 13 August 1903 [88.31], BBVIT, quoted in Tedbury, 'Re-examining the Writings of Lucy Olcott Perkins', 19.

conveying awareness of their existence to the wider public continued the tradition found in earlier women's art writing. In the later nineteenth century, it took on a new aspect as the hunt for unknown masterpieces became a means by which women could find a niche for themselves. As Maud Cruttwell had expressed, in relation to her identification of several Della Robbia sculptures that had 'passed unnoticed', she was in a position to travel freely, unlike fellow Della Robbia scholars Wilhelm von Bode, Marcel Reymond (1849–1915) and Allan Marquand (1853–1924), whose curatorial responsibilities meant they could 'only pay occasional visits to Florence where all Luca's work is'.⁴⁶⁴

Using a map to explain to her audience where such 'unfamiliar masterpieces' were to be found, Halsey's lectures exemplified her approach, in that she was interested in 'only showing works of art *in Italy itself*', because 'it is only when one visits their native town or province that we can realise how great these artists really were'.⁴⁶⁵ Employing a succession of slides to show an array of works of art from the schools of Florence, Lombardy, Umbria, and Venice, Halsey focused on those artists little represented in the National Gallery, to this end devoting the final section of her talk to 'the great Lombard' Gaudenzio Ferrari.⁴⁶⁶ For Halsey, Gaudenzio Ferrari presented an ideal subject to illustrate her method. Halsey situates Gaudenzio within the first of 'two distinct schools' of artists working at Milan during the late fifteenth and early sixteenth century: the 'old school as represented by Foppa, Civerchio, Borgognone, Zenale' and the 'new school which rose from the influence of Leonardo da Vinci'.⁴⁶⁷ Halsey's interest in the filiations of the former school and her emphasis on artists whose work had been overshadowed by the reputation of Leonardo was part of a contemporary reassessment of Lombard artistic production.

⁴⁶⁴ Cruttwell to Morrell, [7 November 1901] [5/12], BBVIT.

⁴⁶⁵ 'Some Unfamiliar Masterpieces of Italian Art', pp. 495, 490. Emphasis in original.

⁴⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 496. The use of slide projections in art history lectures in the early 1900s will be discussed in greater depth in Chapter Four.

⁴⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 497.

Interest in this region had grown in the second half of the nineteenth century thanks to the efforts of Charles Eastlake to furnish the national collection with works of this school. As Susanna Avery-Quash and Silvia Davoli have established in their account of the fortunes of the Lombard school in Britain, prior to Eastlake's influence the art of this region was little appreciated.⁴⁶⁸ Eastlake's impetus for collecting paintings by Lombard artists was driven by his vision to create a representative and scholastic display of Italian painting, while also appeasing the demands of the trustees and the public that the national collection should house works by 'great' masters. Pressure for the National Gallery to acquire its own work by Leonardo da Vinci (1452–1519) was exacerbated by the small number of extant works available to purchase and the fact that the Louvre could boast five authenticated masterpieces.⁴⁶⁹ Eastlake and Müндler concentrated their attentions on Milan, where Leonardo had exerted a lasting influence on artistic production during his time there.

Consequently, by the end of Eastlake's directorship, the gallery had successfully amassed a comprehensive representation of the work of Leonardo's pupils and associated artists. This included works such as Ambrogio Borgognone's *The Virgin and Child with Saint Catherine of Alexandria and Catherine of Siena* bought in 1857 (NG298) and Vincenzo Foppa's *Adoration of the Kings* in 1863 (NG729), together with paintings by Leonardo's direct pupils such as Giovanni Antonio Boltraffio's *Virgin and Child* (NG728). Eastlake's successors, Boxall and Burton, continued the Gallery's acquisition of Lombard art. Under Boxall, the national collection gained a significant array of works from the satellite Cremonese school.⁴⁷⁰ Burton was responsible for finally acquiring the first work by Leonardo himself, *The Virgin of the Rocks*, purchased in 1880 (NG1093). However, as

⁴⁶⁸ Susanna Avery-Quash and Silvia Davoli, 'The National Gallery Searching For Leonardo: Acquisitions and Contributions to Knowledge About the Lombard School', in *Leonardo in Britain: Collections and Historical Reception*, ed. by Susanna Avery-Quash and Juliana Barone (Florence: Leo S. Olschki, 2019), pp. 141–63.

⁴⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 143.

⁴⁷⁰ For a detailed account of Boxall's Cremonese collecting see Susanna Avery-Quash and Silvia Davoli, "'Boxall is interested only in the Great Masters... Well, we'll see about that!'; William Boxall, Federico Sacchi and Cremonese Art at the National Gallery', *Journal of the History of Collections*, 28:2 (July 2016), 225–41.

Avery-Quash and Davoli point out, the popularity of the fresco technique among Lombard artists limited the selection of acquirable works, as collecting examples of this medium was not seen as a priority for the national collection.⁴⁷¹ In relation to an artist such as Gaudenzio, the majority of whose output throughout the towns of Valsesia was in the form of fresco production, this proved especially restrictive.

Gaudenzio's reputation suffered relative obscurity after his death, in no small measure due to Vasari's paltry treatment of him in the *Vite*. In the first half of the nineteenth century, the artist's Milanese works exerted the greatest influence on critical opinion, being the most accessible and easily visible.⁴⁷² The German critic Carl Friedrich von Rumohr's (1785–1843) surprise at the Pinacoteca di Brera's acquisition in 1829 of *The Martyrdom of Saint Catherine* (1543), a panel painting he considered gaudy, is characteristic of the artist's critical fortune at that time (**fig. 2.8**).⁴⁷³ In relation to Gaudenzio's fresco productions, the most accessible were those in the chapel of Santa Corona in Santa Maria delle Grazie, Milan (given that those he painted for Santa Maria della Pace in 1545 were moved to the Brera at the end of 1808). Passavant thought these were 'affected and superficial', a negative judgement inherited from Vasari.⁴⁷⁴

By comparison, outside Italy, Gaudenzio remained under the radar. He does not appear in Alexis-François Rio's *De L'Art Chrétien* until the 1861 edition, where Rio praised Gaudenzio's strong pious sentiment, but criticised his mature work for becoming increasingly grandiose and bordering on the decadent.⁴⁷⁵ For those who did travel outside Milan, interest in the artist centred on his works in the small towns of Novara, Varallo, and Vercelli, in the province of Valsesia. In particular, the pilgrimage site of Sacro Monte at Varallo (founded 1491) was the focus of debate on

⁴⁷¹ Avery-Quash and Davoli, 'The National Gallery Searching For Leonardo', p. 147.

⁴⁷² Rossana Sacchi, *Gaudenzio a Milano* (Milano: Officina Libraria, 2015), pp. 15–16.

⁴⁷³ Chiara Battezzati, ed., 'Carl Friedrich von Rumohr e l'Arte nell'Italia Settentrionale', *Concorso: Arti e Lettere*, 3 (2009), p. 40.

⁴⁷⁴ Sacchi, *Gaudenzio a Milano*, p. 17.

⁴⁷⁵ Alexis-François Rio, *De L'Art Chrétien*, 4 vols (Paris: Hachette, 1861–67), vol. 3, pp. 234–46.

Ferrari's merits as an artist, as discussed in Chapter One. In England, one painting in particular that attracted admiration was a *Holy Family with a Donor* (c.1520–25) then in the possession of Captain Holford at his London residence, Dorchester House (fig. 2.9). It had gained early exposure at the all-important Manchester Art Treasures exhibition in 1857 and continued to be loaned to key shows: at the Burlington House Old Masters exhibition of 1887 and the New Gallery's seminal 'Early Italian Art' exhibition in 1894.

Morelli's *Italian Masters in German Galleries* (1883) departed significantly from the received opinion on Gaudenzio, arguing for the artist to be considered as an equal representative of the Lombard-Milanese school alongside the Victorian favourite Bernardino Luini (c.1480–1532).⁴⁷⁶ This latter artist was already a firm Victorian favourite.⁴⁷⁷ Furthermore, Morelli had praised the collection of Austen Henry and Enid Layard for its two panels depicting the Angel Gabriel and the Virgin Annunciate (NG3068.1–2) by Gaudenzio, which would enter the Gallery's collection through the Layard Bequest of 1916, representing its first examples of the artist's work. Together with a small, but increasingly visible selection of Gaudenzio's panel paintings in British collections, the artist's inclusion in the Burlington Fine Arts Club's major *Masters of the Milanese and Allied Schools of Lombardy* exhibition of 1898 represented a definite new wave of interest in Gaudenzio's works.

However, the *Milanese* exhibition catalogue made clear that the selection of works had eschewed 'geographical or historical considerations' in favour of the committee's more subjective attention to the 'affinities, natural and elective, of the art of this wide region'.⁴⁷⁸ The inclusion of the Piemontese Gaudenzio therefore was justified on the basis of the 'intimacy between the Piemontese and Milan', and he was given the conciliatory attribute of being 'essentially Lombard'.⁴⁷⁹ Halsey's

⁴⁷⁶ Morelli, *Italian Masters in German Galleries*, pp. 435–41.

⁴⁷⁷ Avery-Quash and Davoli, 'The National Gallery Searching For Leonardo', p. 160.

⁴⁷⁸ Burlington Fine Arts Club, *Catalogue of Pictures by Masters of the Milanese and Allied Schools of Lombardy* (London: Burlington Fine Arts Club, 1898), p. vi.

⁴⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, p. x.

interest in Gaudenzio, who she would argue merited acknowledgement as the ‘Michel Angelo of the Lombard school’, responded to and interrogated the political implications of the Italian Unification for contemporary conceptions of such artistic regional affiliations. During Gaudenzio’s lifetime, Valduggia, his birthplace, and Valsesia, where he undertook his first works, were part of the Duchy of Milan. Indeed, Luigi Lanzi (1732–1810) had praised Gaudenzio as the natural champion of the Milanese school, an inheritance that Gaudenzio would lose posthumously with the separation and annexation of the Duchy of Savoy and Kingdom of Lombardy–Venetia, after the formation of the unified Kingdom of Italy.⁴⁸⁰ Dislodged to the ‘peripheral’ Piemonte, as Stephen Campbell explains, Gaudenzio was perceived as ‘unaffiliated’, and thus, ‘with little obviously to do with art history’s narratives of modernisation’, ‘consigned’ to the ‘so-called periphery’. The association between the artist and the Sacro Monte of Varallo was therefore significant precisely because it was not a main city, as Campbell observes.⁴⁸¹ One cannot help but notice the resonance here of Campbell’s words, with the very same process affecting the critical fortunes of women such as Halsey who built their reputations on such artists. Though precise information as to her reasons for choosing to work on Gaudenzio are still uncertain, perhaps it is not too much of a leap to suggest that a ‘peripheral’ artist may have suggested an empathetic subject for a writer operating on the margins.

In embarking on the research for her monograph, Halsey had to visit those peripheral areas of the Piedmont region. Halsey began her research in Varallo, writing to Venturi from there in November 1901 to inform him of her return to Italy in order to undertake research for her new commission with George Bell and Sons.⁴⁸² She then travelled through the valleys of Valsesia, the other provinces and towns of Vercelli and Novara, as well as Milan, while her assessment of works

⁴⁸⁰ Giovanni Agosti, ‘Gaudenzio, per adesso’, in *Il Rinascimento di Gaudenzio Ferrari*, ed. by Giovanni Agosti and Jacopo Stoppa (Milan: Officina Libraria, 2018), pp. 27–56 (p. 27).

⁴⁸¹ Stephen J. Campbell, *The Endless Periphery: Towards a Geopolitics of Art in Lorenzo Lotto’s Italy* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2019), p. 103.

⁴⁸² Halsey to Venturi, 27 November 1901 [AV. Cart. XVIII, 1299], AVCA.

by Gaudenzio in the valley of Valtellina was unprecedented.⁴⁸³ Halsey utilised her connection with Venturi to gain access to works by Gaudenzio in other Italian collections, such as requesting an introduction to Alessandro Baudi di Vesme (1854–1923), the director of the gallery at Turin.⁴⁸⁴ During a later trip to Lombardy in 1902, Halsey contacted the museum director Corrado Ricci, who she had first met the previous winter, requesting his verification regarding a supposed work by Gaudenzio that she had been informed was to be found in the village of Cressa Fontenata. During this trip, she had also paid a visit to the Milanese collector Giovanni Battista Vittadini (1855/6–1904), such contacts demonstrating the extensive range of Halsey’s network among northern Italian scholars, museum officials, and collectors on which she could draw for her work.⁴⁸⁵

Halsey’s intention was to establish Gaudenzio as ‘undoubtedly the most powerful and the most original artist that th[e] [Lombard] school produced’ (p. vii). She chose to make the focus of her monograph, as emphasised in her Society of Arts lecture, the work of the artist still *in situ*, which remained overlooked by other critics. The Sacro Monte of Varallo remained a key site for her argument, being still much contested as deserving of aesthetic admiration. In the late nineteenth century, it drew greater interest from the British traveller. Following Cartwright’s own published articles about it, discussed in Chapter One, easier access to the site was facilitated with the completion of a railway line in 1886, and evidently encouraged an influx of visitors. Consequently, several other articles on Varallo appeared in the 1880s and 1890s, as well as the publication of the novelist and critic Samuel Butler’s (1835–1902) significant account *Ex Voto* (1888).⁴⁸⁶ In addition, the first major monograph on Gaudenzio by Giuseppe Colombo (1838–84) in 1881 sparked the

⁴⁸³ Erica Bernardi, ‘Gaudenzio Ferrari secondo Bernard e Mary Berenson’, *Arte lombarda*, 167 (2013), 110–16 (fn. 8, p. 111).

⁴⁸⁴ Halsey to Venturi, 27 November 1901 [AV. Cart. XVIII, 1299], AVCA.

⁴⁸⁵ Halsey to Ricci, 21 October 1902, [17986/2.2.94], CRBC.

⁴⁸⁶ Samuel Butler, *Ex Voto: An Account of the Sacro Monte or New Jerusalem at Varallo-Sesia* (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1888). Of the numerous articles published about Varallo in these decades, see for example: G. E. Thompson, ‘Varallo and its Sacred Mountain’, *Graphic* (16 April 1892), 499; and the poem by E. C. C., ‘On the Sacro Monte at Varallo’, *Art Journal* (April 1894), 122.

emergence of a new wave of specialist studies on the artist among Italian scholars.⁴⁸⁷ Despite this increased attention, the Burlington Fine Arts Club's exhibition of Milanese art gave little attention to the artist's works in Italy; indeed, the Sacro Monte itself is not mentioned at all in the entry on the artist.⁴⁸⁸ This oversight can be understood in the light of Mary and Bernard Berenson's comments, following their visit to the Sacro Monte in 1892. They came away veritably horrified at what they saw, Mary recording in her diary that they were 'disgusted with the tawdry images', while Bernard was so disturbed he advanced the hypothesis that nothing there remained of Gaudenzio's hand.⁴⁸⁹

Halsey's source for her work drew extensively on Italian scholarship, and also acknowledged the work of Cartwright, whose 1880 *Portfolio* article she cited in the bibliography of her monograph. While Cartwright had focused on the emotive impact for the viewer, witnessing the stations of the Cross recreated in sixteenth-century terracotta form, Halsey developed understanding of the technical and material aspects of this type of artistic production. Where previous viewers such as the Eastlakes and Berensons deemed the chapels an aesthetic affront, particularly in relation to the terracotta figures, Halsey underlines Gaudenzio's innovative artistic achievement in his work as a '*plasticatore*', asserting the presence of terracotta figures in numerous shrines throughout Northern Italy and emphasising it as an important 'form of art indigenous to this part of the country' (p. 32).

Unlike Berenson, Halsey attributed many of the terracotta figures to Gaudenzio's hand, suggesting that the chapels housing the 'Holy Family' and 'Adoration of the Shepherds' were the only two of Gaudenzio's early period still untouched by the interference of restoration (pp. 31–32). Her treatment of the specificities of Gaudenzio's technique, in particular his application of gesso to

⁴⁸⁷ Luigi Malle, 'Fortuna di Gaudenzio', in *Mostra di Gaudenzio Ferrari*, ed. by Anna Maria Brizio et al (Milan: Silvana, 1956), pp. 43–62 (pp. 52–3); Giuseppe Colombo, *Vite ed opere di Gaudenzio Ferrari* (Turin: Fratelli Bocca Librai di S. M., 1881). It was followed by a collection of transcribed archival material: Giuseppe Colombo, *Documenti e notizie intorno gli artisti vercellesi* (Vercelli: Tip. E. Lit. Guidetti Francesco, 1883).

⁴⁸⁸ Burlington Fine Arts Club, *Milanese*, p. lxxix.

⁴⁸⁹ Diary of Mary Berenson, 18 September 1892, BBVIT, quoted in Bernardi, 'Gaudenzio Ferrari secondo Bernard e Mary Berenson', p. 116.

the surface of his frescoes to give a modelled relief-like effect to elements such as armour and horse bridles, demonstrates a more objective understanding of Gaudenzio's use of mixed-media than that of some of her male contemporaries. For example, Berenson had described Gaudenzio's use of gesso in this manner as unpleasant and provincial in character, linking the aesthetic characteristics of the work with his personal dislike of the Lombard artist. Berenson had in fact followed Walter Pater in this regard.⁴⁹⁰ In his article 'Art Notes in North Italy', Pater had expressed his preference for Gaudenzio's later work to be found in the cities of Novara and Vercelli, describing his use of raised gesso in his early frescoes as 'a somewhat barbaric hankering after solid form'.⁴⁹¹ Halsey instead perceives Gaudenzio's use of gesso as 'very effectiv[e] to represent metal in armour and trappings', and characteristic enough of the artist to be used as evidence to identify his autograph work (p. 32). For example, in the Chapel of the Pietà, Halsey observed that the existing fresco had 'unfortunately, been restored to such an extent that any primitive charm the figures may have possessed is lost [...] while its only technical interest lies in the use of gesso in the armour and the trappings' (p. 29).

The absence of many signed and dated paintings led her to group Gaudenzio's artistic production according to three principles: around the few signed pictures which did exist, those mentioned in archival sources, and those which demonstrated a similar stage of technical development (p. 22). This required a comprehensive grasp of both extant archival documentation and careful personal inspection of the pictures themselves. Halsey's understanding of Gaudenzio's artistic development had evidently deepened since her Society lecture. Whereas there she had spoken of three periods in Gaudenzio's life as a painter, by the time of her monograph she was able to chart five different stages (p. 21).⁴⁹²

⁴⁹⁰ Bernardi, 'Gaudenzio Ferrari secondo Bernard e Mary Berenson', pp. 114–15.

⁴⁹¹ Walter Pater, 'Art Notes in North Italy', *New Review*, 11 (1890), 393–403, republished in Walter Pater, *Miscellaneous Studies: A Series of Essays* (London: Macmillan, 1910), p. 94, quoted in Bernardi, *ibid.*, p. 115.

⁴⁹² Halsey, 'Some Unfamiliar Masterpieces of Italian Art', p. 497.

Halsey's careful study of Gaudenzio's entire career enabled her to make informed changes to the received opinion, not least regarding his early training and influences. For example, Halsey questioned Morelli's belief that Gaudenzio began his training at Vercelli, before arriving in Milan.⁴⁹³ Halsey noted the absence of evidence to prove Gaudenzio had done so and observed in his early works the influence instead of Milanese artists such as Stefano Scotto (documented 1485–1520) and Luini, further asserting that Gaudenzio's work at Vercelli was already greatly developed beyond what was then being produced by other artists working in the city.⁴⁹⁴ Halsey was commended for this original observation by a fellow female art writer and scholar of Lombard art, the Italian Lisetta Ciaccio (dates untraced), who in her review of Halsey's monograph for *L'Arte*, praised her contribution to defining and solidifying existing knowledge of Gaudenzio's early training.⁴⁹⁵ The fruits of her scholarship continue to influence current thinking about Gaudenzio; for instance, the National Gallery's *Complete Illustrated Catalogue* (2001) notes in its concise biographical entry for Gaudenzio that '[h]e may have been a pupil with Luini of Stefano Scotto'.⁴⁹⁶

With her intimate knowledge of Gaudenzio's work both in public art collections and in their original settings, Halsey also ventured her own attributions, in several cases going against received opinion. One example involved a *Saint Jerome* (1546) in the church of San Giorgio al Palazzo in Milan, which was then firmly attributed to Gaudenzio.⁴⁹⁷ Halsey had held suspicions about this work since December 1902, when she wrote to Ricci to gauge his opinion on whether he agreed it could possibly be a much later work of the artist.⁴⁹⁸ As she later stated in her monograph:

It is extremely doubtful that this coarsely painted picture was [Gaudenzio's] work. His

⁴⁹³ Morelli, *Italian Masters in German Galleries*, pp. 438–39.

⁴⁹⁴ Halsey, *Gaudenzio Ferrari*, p. 21.

⁴⁹⁵ Lisetta Ciaccio, 'Review of Ethel Halsey, *Gaudenzio Ferrari* (1904)', *L'Arte*, 8:3 (1905), 232–34 (p. 232).

⁴⁹⁶ Christopher Baker and Tom Henry, *The National Gallery: Complete Illustrated Catalogue* (London: National Gallery Company, 2001), p. 247.

⁴⁹⁷ Gaudenzio Ferrari with Giovanni Battista della Cerva, *Saint Jerome with Paolo della Croce*, 1546, San Giorgio al Palazzo, Milan.

⁴⁹⁸ Halsey to Ricci, 11 December 1902, [17987/2.2.94], CRBC.

special characteristics are lacking in the drawing, though his favourite red is used for the cloak of the saint, and the general impression given by the picture makes me think that it belongs to a slightly later period (p. 119).

Halsey included the work in her catalogue, dating it 'L' for late but categorising it as 'doubtful' (p. 138). We now know that this work remained incomplete at the time of Gaudenzio's death and was hastily finished by his pupil Giovanni Battista della Cerva (c.1515–80).⁴⁹⁹ Halsey had observed evidence to suggest the hand of another, that led her to believe the *Saint Jerome* could not be the autograph work of Gaudenzio, while still able to date it accurately thanks to her comprehensive knowledge of the range of his oeuvre.

In another instance, Halsey was the first to recognize that a *Madonna and Child* (c.1550) acquired in 1890 by the Poldi Pezzoli Gallery, Milan, was in fact 'a fine panel painting by [Bernardino] Lanino', a pupil of Gaudenzio (p. 28).⁵⁰⁰ She arrived at this conclusion by close study of the figure types, acknowledging that the 'beautiful face' of the Madonna was the same as that found in Gaudenzio's Madonnas, but the depiction of the Christ child was not consistent with the master's work. Instead, she recognised its similarity, together with the painting's 'general brown tone of colouring', to another *Madonna and Child* which she had seen in the gallery at Turin, there attributed to Lanino (p. 28). Halsey's attribution was accepted by Berenson, making its way into his *North Italian Painters* (1907) though without reference to Halsey; it still holds today.⁵⁰¹

As a final, significant example of Halsey's sound scholarly methods, we may cite her reattribution of a painting then catalogued as by Gaudenzio, a downgrading which provoked the ire of the work's owner. This was Henry Willett (1823–1905), a collector based in Brighton and a

⁴⁹⁹ Campbell attributes this work to Gaudenzio and Della Cerva and dates it to 1546, the year of Gaudenzio's death; Campbell, *Endless Periphery*, p. 178.

⁵⁰⁰ Bernardino Lanino (c.1512–83), *Madonna and Child with Two Angels*, c.1550, Museo Poldi Pezzoli, Milan (inv. 1615).

⁵⁰¹ Bernard Berenson, *North Italian Painters of the Renaissance* (London; New York: G. P. Putnam, 1907), p. 243.

member of the Burlington Fine Arts Club. He had exhibited his *Virgin and Child* at both the New Gallery's seminal *Early Italian* show in 1894 and the Club's *Milanese* exhibition of 1898.⁵⁰² In the *Milanese* show catalogue, the work was described as an 'under life-size half-length figure of the Virgin turned to right, holding the Infant Christ in her arms, who plays with the veil which falls from her head' and grouped, together with the Holford *Adoration* as 'the only other picture known in England which has any claim to be considered a genuine example of Gaudenzio's art'.⁵⁰³ Halsey had visited Brighton to view this painting in person in Willett's collection, but was not so enthusiastic in her appraisal of it. Describing it as 'a charming work full of tender feeling', she conceded 'it has much that reminds us of Gaudenzio' but found it 'difficult to place it among his works'. Her conclusion was that 'all that can be safely said is that it is a very good picture of the Valsesian School', hence her listing of it as 'doubtful' (p. 74).

Willett took insult upon discovering Halsey's attribution. As Stacey Pierson observes, private collectors viewed the public display of their works as a means of authenticating their attribution and provenance. Particularly at the Burlington Fine Art Club, which derived all of its exhibited works from private collections, the public exposure and inclusion in a catalogue acted to certify the work and increase its value, which was always useful if an owner then decided to sell it.⁵⁰⁴ Willett sought to remedy the threat which Halsey's new research posed to his work's authenticity by attempting to show it at the most public and authoritative of British institutions for the display of Old Master paintings — the National Gallery. Writing to the then director, Edward Poynter (1836–1919), Willett explained:

My dear Mr Edward, I enclose an extract from today's 'Daily Graphic' — Miss Halsey by

⁵⁰² Willett donated his collection to the Brighton Museum of Art, but I have not been able to identify a painting matching the *Virgin and Child*.

⁵⁰³ Burlington Fine Arts Club, *Milanese*, pp. lxxix, 15.

⁵⁰⁴ Stacey J. Pierson, *Private Collecting, Exhibitions, and the Shaping of Art History in London: The Burlington Fine Arts Club* (London; New York: Routledge, 2017), p. 13.

invitation paid a brief visit to me here & in her small book on the artist refers to my picture as ‘Questionable’ — as opposed to her opinions, I can refer to Signore Morelli, Signore Frizzoni & Dr. Richter.⁵⁰⁵

Claiming that Halsey had dismissed the National Gallery’s own *Christ Rising from the Tomb* (NG1465) as an ‘inferior’ work (she had suggested that it was executed for the most part by Della Cerva), Willett offered his own work on loan to the gallery as a better example of Gaudenzio’s output.⁵⁰⁶ A receipt in the Gallery’s archives shows that Willett sent his painting to Trafalgar Square for inspection.⁵⁰⁷ Both his letter and painting were topics raised at a meeting of the trustees of 26 April 1904. Unfortunately, the minutes recorded for this meeting do not provide any contextual detail of the discussion held or mention if Halsey’s book was in fact consulted. However, the decision of the Board is telling: ‘it was resolved that this offer be declined with the thanks of the Board to Mr Willett’.⁵⁰⁸ Though we lack any record of the basis on which Poynter and the board made their decision, they clearly chose not to act on the opinion of Frizzoni, Morelli, Richter and the testament of the Burlington Fine Arts Club (this is notable considering that J. P. Heseltine (1843–1929), a Trustee of the gallery and present at this meeting, was also a Burlington Fine Arts Club member), and instead decided, in keeping with Halsey, that Willett’s ‘Gaudenzio’ was not a work worthy of display in the national collection.

Halsey’s monograph evidently succeeded in raising awareness of Gaudenzio, as the Gallery’s director Holroyd later attempted, unsuccessfully, to purchase the Holford painting of *The Holy Family with a Donor* in 1909. There is also evidence of Ffoulkes lending her expertise to influence the acquisition of another work by the artist. In 1909, Holroyd reported that he had received from Ffoulkes ‘a tentative offer of a picture by Gaudenzio Ferrari [...] in a Villa near Monza [...] the

⁵⁰⁵ Henry Willett to Edward Poynter, 7 April 1904 [NG7/281/1], NGA.

⁵⁰⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁰⁷ Receipt for a picture, 18 April 1904 [NG7/281/2], NGA.

⁵⁰⁸ Meeting of the Trustees, 26 April 1904 [NG1/7], p. 203, NGA.

property of a Lady of Milan, for sale at a suggested price of £3, 000'.⁵⁰⁹ Here we have another instance of a female art critic using her knowledge and presence in Italy to influence public acquisitions in London. Ffoulkes cautioned that it might prove difficult to export the work from Italy. Nonetheless, after examining a photograph, 'it was resolved that the Director should be authorised to make further enquiries as to this picture'.⁵¹⁰ Subsequent minutes of the Board Meetings do not refer to the work near Monza again; however, at the meeting of 8 February 1910, a letter was read from Captain Holford, thanking the board for their interest in his *Adoration* but informing them of having no wish to part with it.⁵¹¹ Presumably Holroyd, after receiving unsatisfactory responses to his enquiries, deemed the painting in Monza too difficult to obtain and looked for a Gaudenzio closer to home, though he was ultimately unsuccessful in this particular case. It was not until 1924 that the gallery added two further Gaudenzio works to its collection, a *Christ Rising from the Tomb* (NG1465) and a *Saint Andrew(?)* (NG3925), acquired in 1924 through the important bequest of the German-born chemical industrialist Ludwig Mond.

Gaudenzio remains today, unlike Mantegna, little known outside of scholars of Italian painting. Halsey's monograph is evidence of the flexibility of the nineteenth-century British art press, in publishing a volume on an obscure artist such as Gaudenzio, whose works were not easily accessible for many readers. It is also testament to the flexibility of art history in Britain that a writer such as Halsey could publish her highly specialised knowledge in an affordable and widely-published format. This is all the more remarkable considering her monograph remains the only English-language study of the artist today. In recent years Gaudenzio's reputation has experienced a resurgence in his homeland, as the work of Rossana Sacchi attests, who credits both Cartwright and Halsey with helping to revive the artist's reputation in England. Recently, Gaudenzio has been the

⁵⁰⁹ Meeting of the Trustees, 14 December 1909 [NG1/7], p. 404, NGA.

⁵¹⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹¹ Letter from the Marquess of Lansdowne to the trustees of the National Gallery, 22 December 1909 [NG7/370/4/i-ii], NGA.

subject of a major retrospective exhibition, *Il Rinascimento di Gaudenzio Ferrari* (24 March–16 September 2018), mounted across the three main sites of his activity in Novara, Varallo, and Vercelli, with the aim of showcasing the artist in the locations in which he worked. In the exhibition's catalogue, Giovanni Agosti, as Sacchi had already done, acknowledges the work of earlier women writers responsible for reviving the artist, among them Cartwright and Halsey.⁵¹² Encouraging visitors to travel around and witness a range of the artist's production in the very sites for which they were made, the 2018 exhibition refused the easy, 'comprehensive' display of the single gallery space and as such very much reflects Halsey's own belief that sometimes you have to be 'in' Italy, to really see.

2.4 From Vasarian Hero to 'busy craftsman': Maud Cruttwell and Antonio del Pollaiuolo

Soon after her establishment within the intellectual and art historical circles congregating around Villas I Tatti and Il Palmerino, the Florentine homes of the Berensons and Vernon Lee respectively, Maud Cruttwell was making a name for herself as a dedicated scholar of Italian art. As recalled by the painter and art writer Sir William Rothenstein (1872–1945), the 'armed camps and fierce rivalries' of Florence were now 'concerned [...] with attribution rather than with Ducal thrones. Berenson, Horne, Loeser, Vernon Lee, Maud Cruttwell – all had their mercenaries – and their artillery'.⁵¹³

Cruttwell's own art historical artillery consisted of six monographs published between 1899 and 1907, focusing on artists of the late quattrocento: beginning with a monograph on *Luca*

⁵¹² In addition to Cartwright and Halsey, Gaudenzio was the focus of study in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries by women who wrote in languages other than English: the art critic and fiction author Anna Banti (born Lucia Lopresti, 1895–1985), art historian and professor of art history at the University of Milan, Anna Maria Brizio (1902–82), art historian Lisetta Ciaccio (dates untraced), and the Russian princess Maria Ouroussow (1844–1904).

⁵¹³ Sir William Rothenstein, *Men and Memories: A History of the Arts, 1872–1922* (New York: Tudor Publishing Company, 1931), p. 122, quoted in Ben Downing, *Queen Bee of Tuscany: The Redoubtable Janet Ross* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2013), pp. 230–31.

Signorelli in 1899, this was followed by books on *Andrea Mantegna* (1901), *Luca and Andrea Della Robbia* (1902), *Verrocchio* (1904), and *Antonio Pollaiuolo* (1907), culminating with a final publication on *Donatello* (1911). Cruttwell's choice was determined both by practical and personal reasons. Unpublished letters at I Tatti from Cruttwell to her confidante and love interest Lady Ottoline Morrell (1873–1938) provide an insight into Cruttwell's ambitions to become recognised as a professional in the field of art history and the compromises she understood were necessary for doing so. As a resident of Florence, she had immediate access to a good deal of the principal works of these artists and the facility to travel further afield to towns in Tuscany and other regions to seek out others. As discussed in Chapter One, Cruttwell's familiarity with Florentine archives enabled her to discover several previously unpublished documents that significantly aided her research. Finally, she was motivated by her own aesthetic preference for artists belonging to what she termed the 'Realistic School'.⁵¹⁴

In the early 1900s, Florentine artists like the Pollaiuolo brothers and Andrea Verrocchio (c.1435–88) became a topic of keen interest among critics and connoisseurs. This focus marked a distinct shift away from the earlier nineteenth-century cult of the Italian Primitives, towards artists of the later fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries. It also expanded the scope of discussion to incorporate a newly emerging concern with Italian Renaissance artists whose work encompassed the practices of engraving, goldsmithing and painting. As discussed in relation to Mantegna, such artists generated little widespread aesthetic appeal. This disparaging of later Renaissance masters in contrast to the earlier medieval was an attitude propagated by Ruskin, whose belief that aesthetic beauty was intrinsically connected to Christian ethics promoted the connection of naivety in artistic conception with greater spirituality. By contrast, the innovations of later artists in the pursuit of scientific accuracy, perfect imitation and the emulation of the classical tradition, were seen to signal

⁵¹⁴ Maud Cruttwell, *Verrocchio*, 'New Library of Art' (London: Duckworth, 1904), p. 10.

the advent of an era of moral corruption and a departure from God.⁵¹⁵ Through her series of monographs, Cruttwell formed a significant voice in this turn towards the ‘realists’, who had yet to acquire the label of canonical masters. Cruttwell’s work therefore made an active intervention into the concept of the artistic canon, still very much in flux.

It is encouraging to see therefore that Cruttwell has been praised justly in recent scholarship for her rigorous research and original use of primary archival material. As noted at the start of this chapter, Cruttwell’s *Antonio Pollaiuolo* was the first book on the artist to appear in any language.⁵¹⁶ In her own landmark volume on the Pollaiuolo brothers, Alison Wright describes her predecessor’s monograph of 1907 as a ‘polemical and compelling [...] exception’ in the early literature on the Pollaiuolo brothers, highlighting Cruttwell’s efforts to ‘systematically examin[e] across the complex intersecting fields of the brothers’ work as a whole’, and her ‘vital compilation’ of archival documentation.⁵¹⁷ Wright’s open acknowledgement of Cruttwell’s originality here is a welcome and significant departure from the conventional posthumous reception of her work, which has tended to undermine, and even deride, her reputation. For example, in his own book on the Pollaiuoli of 1948, the Italian critic Sergio Ortolani (1896–1949) offers a single line summarising Cruttwell’s work, describing it as a mere compilation of the previous work of male critics, and implying derisively that Cruttwell’s lesbian identity and unmarried status was reason for her poor connoisseurship.⁵¹⁸

More recently, Aldo Galli has claimed that Cruttwell ‘completely accepted Berenson’s teachings’.⁵¹⁹ Certainly, Cruttwell had a methodological indebtedness to both the Berensons and

⁵¹⁵ Lynne Walhout Hinojosa, *The Renaissance, English Cultural Nationalism, and Modernism, 1860–1920* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), pp. 49–50.

⁵¹⁶ Maud Cruttwell, *Antonio Pollaiuolo*, ‘New Library of Art’ (London: Duckworth, 1907). Further references to this volume will be provided in parentheses in the text.

⁵¹⁷ Alison Wright, *The Pollaiuolo Brothers: The Arts of Florence and Rome* (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 2005), p. 4.

⁵¹⁸ Sergio Ortolani, *Il Pollaiuolo* (Milan: Urico Hoepli, 1948), pp. 140–41.

⁵¹⁹ Aldo Galli, ‘The Fortune of the Pollaiuolo Brothers’, in *Antonio and Piero Pollaiuolo: Silver and Gold, Painting and Bronze*, ed. by Andrea Di Lorenzo and Aldo Galli (Milan: Skira Editore, 2014), pp. 25–77 (p. 45).

Vernon Lee, as discussed in recent work by Tiffany Johnston and Francesco Ventrella.⁵²⁰ However, casting Cruttwell predominantly as a ‘disciple’ neglects the innovation of her approach. Furthermore, the label of follower or student in relation to women writers has historically conveyed negative connotations. Berenson, who owed a clear debt to Morelli for his intellectual formation, has never been negatively characterised as a ‘follower of Morelli’, even though this was a charge he brought against Ffoulkes to disparage her work.⁵²¹ As Berenice Carroll describes, this is the process of the ‘system of patriarchal inheritance of property in ideas’.⁵²² While male intellectuals with clear predecessors are often credited positively for promoting and clarifying innovations, women in the same position are deprecated as ‘retailers, popularisers and systematisers’.⁵²³ In examining *Antonio Pollaiuolo*, I argue that it was through Cruttwell’s use of documentary evidence and the assuredness of her own observations that she made independent and innovative judgements, and that both her approach to the interpretation of art and her attributions remain of great relevance today.

Unlike a writer such as Cartwright, who built her reputation via long-term loyalty to her editors and publishers, Cruttwell was more opportunistic. George Bell and Sons first contracted Cruttwell to write *Luca Signorelli*, a book that she saw as a stepping-stone to ‘get her a hearing’.⁵²⁴ Frustrated by the limited format — ‘I can’t say much, as it has to be short — & popular’,⁵²⁵ Cruttwell conceded to Morrell that she had ‘learnt so much from it’ and had ‘been able to screw into it a little of [her] views of the ennobling influence of Art and pave the way for future

⁵²⁰ Tiffany Johnston, ‘Maud Cruttwell and the Berensons: “A preliminary canter to an independent career”’, *19*, DOI: <<http://doi.org/10.16995/ntn.821>>; Francesco Ventrella, ‘Writing Under Pressure: Maud Cruttwell and the Old Master Monograph’, *19*, DOI: <<http://doi.org/10.16995/ntn.831>>.

⁵²¹ As Cartwright recalled: ‘[Berenson] reviled Cona Ffoulkes as a slave to Morelli’, Emanuel, *A Bright Remembrance*, p. 88 (30 July 1894). On Berenson’s transformation of Morelli’s ideas into a ‘full prescriptive method of connoisseurship’, see Carol Gibson-Wood, *Studies in the Theory of Connoisseurship from Vasari to Morelli* (New York; London: Garland Publishing, 1988), pp. 237–47.

⁵²² Berenice A. Carroll, ‘The Politics of “Originality”’: Women and the Class System of Intellect’, *Journal of Women’s History*, 2:2 (Autumn 1990), 136–63 (p. 150).

⁵²³ *Ibid.*, p. 146.

⁵²⁴ Maud Cruttwell to Ottoline Morrell, 19 April 1899 [2/12], BBVIT.

⁵²⁵ Cruttwell to Morrell, 20 May 1899 [2/12], BBVIT.

development'.⁵²⁶ Despite her doubts, the success of *Luca Signorelli* encouraged Cruttwell to propose her next volume on Andrea Mantegna directly to George Charles Williamson (1858–1942), the editor of Bell's 'Great Masters' series. Cruttwell was by now making a name for herself, as she was approached by a second publisher, Joseph Malaby (J. M.) Dent (1849–1926), from whom she accepted a commission for an extensive, *de-luxe* volume covering the Della Robbia family of sculptors, which appeared in 1902 selling for 25s.⁵²⁷ Two years later, Cruttwell was approached by the publisher Gerald Duckworth (1870–1937) to publish *Andrea Verrocchio* and *Antonio Pollaiuolo* as part of Duckworth's 'New Library of Art' series, the more expensive and scholarly sister series to that same publisher's 'Popular Library'.⁵²⁸ Her final monograph, *Donatello*, was published as part of Methuen's 'Classics of Art', which also advertised itself at the upper-end of the artist monograph market.⁵²⁹

This trajectory demonstrates not only the rise of Cruttwell's reputation as an authoritative art critic, but also her own active shaping of that reputation through her selection of artist subjects and the series with which she chose to associate her name. In her preface to *Andrea Mantegna*, Cruttwell had lamented the limitations imposed by George Bell and Sons on the size of the volume, preventing her inclusion of key transcriptions of archival documents.⁵³⁰ The more expensive format and critical aim of the Duckworth and Methuen series allowed the inclusion of material such as appendices and a greater number of photographic reproductions, and this must surely have acted as motivation for her to work with such publishers.

⁵²⁶ Cruttwell to Morrell, 8 June 1899 [2/12], BBVIT.

⁵²⁷ This particular commission stepped on the toes of Cartwright, who Dent had originally approached: 'It appears Dent came out to Florence this spring and engaged Miss Cruttwell to write on Luca (very shabby of him after going so far with me!)': Emanuel, *A Bright Remembrance*, p. 258 (17 July 1901). See Ventrella, 'Writing Under Pressure' for a detailed account of Cruttwell's work on the Della Robbia.

⁵²⁸ Duckworth's 'New Library' volumes sold for 7s 6d each, while the 'Popular Library' were 2s each.

⁵²⁹ This series also featured Evelyn March Phillipps' *Tintoretto*, published the same year. Both sold for 15s, two of the most expensive books in the series after Edward Dillon's *Rubens* (25s, with over 500 plates).

⁵³⁰ Maud Cruttwell, *Andrea Mantegna*, 'Great Masters in Painting and Sculpture' (London: George Bell and Sons, 1901), Preface.

Cruttwell's focus on the 'Realistic School' placed her among a group of turn-of-the-century English critics favouring artists who pushed the boundaries of anatomical depiction and realism. For Cruttwell, artists like Mantegna, the Pollaiuolo brothers and Signorelli were 'strong spirits' whose work 'raises one by presenting to one the noblest human possibilities'; in contrast, artists such as Fra Angelico and Botticelli represented: 'a kind of little aristocracy of the soul — very simple & very charming but too dainty, too pink & white, too doll-like' and had 'never known the austere savage efforts of the soul to progress'.⁵³¹ Fry articulated similar opinions to Cruttwell, as detailed in a *Quarterly Review* article where he distinguished between the 'two opposite tendencies in quattrocentist [*sic*] art'.⁵³² On the one hand, there were those artists who appealed through 'seduction and charm', while on the other were those who 'exert upon us a stronger and more ineffaceable impression'. In this latter group, Fry includes the Pollaiuolo and Signorelli, while Mantegna's art represented the 'completest self-expression' that 'attune[s] the mind to a mood of strenuous resistance and stoical self-reliance'.⁵³³

It is unclear whether Cruttwell came into contact with Fry at this time. She was not in London when he gave his Pollaiuolo lecture in 1901, but a letter of 1907 records that she had met him once at I Tatti and 'liked him very much — he seemed to [her] so different to most of the art critics & to be so honest & generous'.⁵³⁴ Cruttwell certainly shared many similar ideas with Fry, and this correlation between their thinking speaks of the undercurrents of interest fomented through lectures, meetings, discussions and publications, that brought about what can be seen as a 'second-wave' in the tides of taste for the Italian old masters across the Victorian and Edwardian divide. As the Italian Primitives were now seen to be 'little aristocrac[ies] of the soul', so too these late-quattrocento and early-cinquecento northern 'realists' were reframed from unpleasing anatomists and

⁵³¹ Cruttwell to Morrell, 20 May 1899 [2/12], BBVIT.

⁵³² Anon. [Roger Fry], 'Andrea Mantegna', *Quarterly Review* (January 1902), 139–58 (p. 158).

⁵³³ *Ibid.*, pp. 157–58.

⁵³⁴ Cruttwell to Morrell, 25 August 1907 [10/12], BBVIT.

obscure classicists, to esteemed innovators capable of ‘strick[ing] a strong note on the soul’.⁵³⁵

Cruttwell’s *Pollaiuolo* not only drew on those prominent philosophies circulating at the time, but anticipated later art historical approaches, which would focus on the social history of artistic production and cross-media influences.

The debate that has most divided and occupied scholars of the Pollaiuolo to this day is that of the relationship between Antonio and his younger brother Piero (c.1441–96), and the nature of their collaborative work. Galli has traced the origins of this debate, which historically cast Antonio as the multi-talented genius and Piero as the inferior assistant, to two texts: Vasari’s *Vite* and Berenson’s *Drawings of the Florentine Painters* (1903). Despite archival evidence in which Antonio is constantly referred to as *orafo* — goldsmith — and the fact that he practised both painting and metalwork throughout his entire career, this did not fit the ideological aims of the *Vite*.⁵³⁶ As Galli explains, Vasari creatively reinterpreted the life of the Pollaiuolo brothers to cast Antonio as the protagonist who abandoned goldsmith work for the greater glory of painting. This fitted Vasari’s ideal trajectory of an artist’s rise to greatness, at the expense of Piero, who was rendered as purely instrumental.⁵³⁷ Consequently, Vasari’s pervasively influential account,

[exemplifies] the passage from the conditions of a fifteenth-century master, still substantially linked to the mechanical aspects of his calling, to the new dimension of social respectability and financial reward, suitable for the modern courtier artist.⁵³⁸

Vasari’s liberal twisting of the truth drastically impacted the reception of both brothers in later centuries, culminating in the widespread dismissal of Piero in favour of Antonio among art critics of the nineteenth century. In *Drawings of the Florentine Painters*, Berenson presented the

⁵³⁵ Cruttwell to Morrell, 20 May 1899 [2/12], BBVIT.

⁵³⁶ Galli, ‘The Fortune of the Pollaiuolo Brothers’, p. 25.

⁵³⁷ *Ibid.*

⁵³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 39.

issue of attribution between the brothers as a ‘real difficulty’, and in line with Vasari, assigned the pictures he deemed of higher quality to Antonio, while disparaging the merits of Piero’s work, thereby cementing the brothers’ Vasarian casting.⁵³⁹

Certainly, as Galli notes, Cruttwell’s decision to title her monograph to favour one brother — Antonio — is significant.⁵⁴⁰ Cruttwell’s reading of Piero is taken throughout her book to almost caustic levels of dislike. In her first chapter, she describes Vasari’s statement that Antonio began to learn the art of painting from his younger brother as ‘astonishing’, retaliating that: ‘it is perhaps hardly necessary to deny so preposterous an assertion in these days of scientific criticism’ (p. 6). For Cruttwell, Antonio ‘next to Donatello, occupies the position of Chief and Pioneer of the Florentine realistic school, [while] Piero, but for his influence and assistance would probably be as little known as any of the nameless imitators of Botticelli [...]’ (p. 7).

However, Cruttwell did not ‘completely accept’ Berenson’s interpretation. Her argument diverges distinctly from his in acknowledging the importance of Antonio’s role as a metalworker. Investigating the archival evidence of Antonio’s training, glossed over by Vasari, Cruttwell directly challenges the account given in the *Vite* on this point. Citing correctly the historical documentation in which Antonio consistently signs himself as *orafo*, Cruttwell affirms that the artist was ‘throughout his life first and foremost a worker in metal’ (p. 7). She is also careful to break down any Vasarian aggrandising attached to the Pollaiuolo name. On the very first page, she introduces Antonio to her reader as ‘merely [...] the busy craftsman’ who ‘cannot certainly be reckoned among those artists who, clad in purple and fine linen, aspired to the luxury of princes’ (p. 1).

Cruttwell begins her discussion with an account of the Florentine goldsmith’s *bottega*, noting that, as with other workshops of the day, this was a shared training-ground for the painter, metalworker and sculptor (p. 7). Pointing to documented dates to demonstrate that Antonio worked

⁵³⁹ Bernard Berenson, *The Drawings of the Florentine Painters*, 2 vols (London: John Murray, 1903), vol. 1, p. 18; Galli, ‘The Fortune of the Pollaiuolo Brothers’, p. 43.

⁵⁴⁰ Galli, ‘The Fortune of the Pollaiuolo Brothers’, p. 45.

simultaneously on painting and metalwork commissions, Cruttwell describes the nature of the *bottega* for her reader, to underscore the importance of this fluent shifting between media in the artistic milieu of quattrocento Florence:

The bottega of Antonio, like that of Verrocchio, united the crafts of sculptor, painter, portraitist, goldsmith, jeweller, architect, decorative designer, and bronze founder, and in each of these different branches of art we have record of work executed by [Antonio] (p. 9).

Berenson had acknowledged that the Florentines ‘left no form of expression untried’ and admitted that a sole focus on painting ‘offers but a partial, and not always the most adequate manifestation of their personality’.⁵⁴¹ However, the specification of ‘*Painters*’ in his own monograph dedicated to the school shows that the range of other media practised by the Florentine artists was not to him of primary concern. Following Vasari, Berenson elevates Florentine production in painting above other media.

Cruttwell, however, sought to illuminate the interweaving of the arts in Florence in this historical moment. For her, the confusion of attribution between the two Pollaiuolo brothers was due to the fact that works solely by Antonio’s hand and typical of his style, were much less known than the large paintings he produced together with Piero. She identifies Antonio’s most characteristic work as being in metal: the reliefs of the *Silver Cross of San Giovanni* (1457–59) and the *Tomb of Sixtus IV* (1493).⁵⁴² Cruttwell’s monograph presents a comprehensive account of the Pollaiuolo brothers’ production, devoting chapters equally to painting, metalwork and embroidery. Cruttwell’s dismantling of Vasari’s anachronistically placed hierarchy of ‘major’ and ‘minor’ arts onto artistic production in late quattrocento Florence allowed her to trace distinctive paths of influence between artists across different practices. For example, Wright notes that Cruttwell ‘acutely observed’ that the

⁵⁴¹ Bernard Berenson, *Florentine Painters of the Renaissance* (London: G. P. Putnam’s Sons, 1896), pp. 1–2.

⁵⁴² Antonio del Pollaiuolo, *Silver Cross of San Giovanni*, 1457–59, Museo dell’Opera del Duomo, Florence; *Tomb of Sixtus IV*, 1493, Saint Peter’s, Rome.

pose of the foremost figure entering the scene from the right in Antonio's sculpted relief depicting *The Birth of the Baptist* (1477–80) prefigures that of Botticelli's Flora in the *Primavera* (c.1480).⁵⁴³ Cruttwell had identified this figure as the Virgin, describing her as 'exquisite stag-like' and 'recall[ing] [Flora] so strongly [...] as to suggest that [Botticelli] had it in mind in painting her' (p. 172).

One of the principal issues of the Antonio/Piero divide concerned the authorship of three quattrocento female profile portraits. These three panel paintings housed in the Museo Poldi Pezzoli in Milan, the Gemäldegalerie Berlin, and the Uffizi in Florence, were the subject of much discussion in the mid to late nineteenth century (figs. 2.10; 2.11; 2.12). The Poldi Pezzoli portrait in particular became an icon in its own right. Virtually unknown before the 1870s, it rose to fame after its acquisition by Gian Giacomo Poldi Pezzoli (1822–79) for the museum of the same name, which opened to the public in 1881.⁵⁴⁴ Cruttwell had in fact offered a theory on the authorship of these portraits several years prior to the appearance of her monograph, in an article titled 'Three Mysterious Profiles of the Fifteenth Century' for the *Art Journal* in 1897.⁵⁴⁵ At the time of writing her article, all three portraits were attributed to Piero della Francesca (c.1415/20–92). The frequency with which such profile portraits were attributed to this artist during the nineteenth century was likely due, as Luciano Cheles suggests, to the prominent stylistic association and fame of Piero's Uffizi Diptych (c.1473–75).⁵⁴⁶ For example, the National Gallery's *Portrait of a Lady in Red* (NG585, purchased 1857) and Alessio Baldovinetti's *Portrait of a Lady* (NG758, purchased 1866)

⁵⁴³ Wright, *The Pollaiuolo Brothers*, p. 292; Antonio del Pollaiuolo, *The Birth of the Baptist*, 1477–80, Museo dell'Opera del Duomo, Florence; Sandro Botticelli, *Primavera*, c.1480, Uffizi, Florence (inv. 1890 no. 8360).

⁵⁴⁴ Andrea Di Lorenzo, 'The Collecting History: Oblivion and Fortune of the *Portrait of a Young Woman* by Piero Pollaiuolo in the Museo Poldi Pezzoli in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries' in *Antonio and Piero Pollaiuolo*, pp. 79–91.

⁵⁴⁵ Maud Cruttwell, 'Three Mysterious Profiles of the Fifteenth Century', *Art Journal* (October 1897), 312–16.

⁵⁴⁶ Luciano Cheles, 'Piero Della Francesca in Nineteenth-Century Britain', *The Italianist*, 14 (1994), 218–60 (p. 241); Piero Della Francesca, *The Duke and Duchess of Urbino*, c.1473–75, Uffizi, Florence (inv. 1890 no. 1615, 3342).

were acquired as works by Piero della Francesca.

Cruttwell's fascination with discerning cross-media influence among quattrocento Florentine art is demonstrated in her earlier article, where she ambitiously attempted to attribute the Poldi-Pezzoli, Uffizi and Berlin portraits to the sculptor Desiderio da Settignano (c.1430–64). Though this was not an argument she would repeat in her monograph, her article is a demonstration of her willingness to be outspoken in her ideas and think broadly about stylistic influence between various artists. As shown in her monograph, Cruttwell was interested in the social and economic conditions of quattrocento Florentine artists and made her hypothesis on the basis that artists of different crafts and media intermingled and worked together within a *bottega*, not as isolated geniuses of just one medium. Like Cartwright, Cruttwell also anticipated current scholarly interests, specifically the 'cross-fertilization of techniques and objects' as Christina Neilson has explored recently in relation to the workshops at the Uffizi.⁵⁴⁷

By the time of writing her monograph, Cruttwell had modified her attributions. Though she retained the attribution of the Berlin portrait to Piero della Francesca, she attributed both the Milan and Uffizi portraits definitively to Antonio del Pollaiuolo. Cruttwell's thinking here in fact aligns more with Fry than Berenson. Berenson used the Poldi-Pezzoli portrait as the frontispiece to his *Florentine Painters of the Renaissance* (1896) where he attributed it to Verrocchio, retaining this for the 1900 and 1909 editions. As recently established by Caroline Elam, following a visit by Fry to the museum in 1901, he also believed the Poldi Pezzoli portrait to be by a Pollaiuolo brother, giving it to the younger Piero, to whom the painting remains attributed today.⁵⁴⁸

In contrast, the Uffizi portrait, being heavily overpainted, had been the subject of ongoing disregard for its clumsy appearance in comparison to its more refined counterparts in Berlin and

⁵⁴⁷ Christina Neilson, 'Demonstrating Ingenuity: The Display and Concealment of Knowledge in Renaissance Artists' Workshops', *I Tatti Studies in the Italian Renaissance*, 19:1 (2016), 63–91 (p. 72). I am grateful to Amanda Hilliam for her pertinent suggestions on this point, and for drawing my attention to Neilson's article.

⁵⁴⁸ Elam, *Roger Fry*, pp. 131, 177. Both Fry and Cruttwell seem to have been unaware of Gustavo Frizzoni's earlier suggestion of this attribution, made in 1900.

Milan. Despite the universal acknowledgement of the panel's poor condition, only Cruttwell 'as long ago as 1907 [...] seemed fully to have understood the situation', as Galli rightly notes.⁵⁴⁹ From her careful analysis of the portrait, Cruttwell observed that 'only a very close examination reveals the excellence of such parts of the original work as have escaped the brush of the repainter' (p. 180). Noting the 'crude blue of the background', 'heavily stippled red of the cheek' and the 'coarsened and modernised' nose, Cruttwell distinguished areas of the throat, neck and parts of the ear where 'the repaint, being less thick, allows the original lines to appear' (p. 180). She observed that the sleeve and bodice were in an 'excellent state of preservation', and the 'carefully painted embroidery' and 'amethyst-coloured velvet' had 'everything in common with Antonio's work' (p. 181). Cruttwell's attribution has stood the test of time, as following restoration of the portrait in 2008, it has been reattributed to Antonio.⁵⁵⁰

Cruttwell's contributions to this heated debate were little-heeded by her male contemporaries. Berenson continued to attribute the Poldi Pezzoli portrait to Verrocchio. Wilhelm von Bode, was convinced, by contrast, that all three portraits were by Domenico Veneziano (active 1438; died 1461), an attribution he had retained since 1884.⁵⁵¹ Cruttwell's monograph inevitably provoked a vicious review penned by Bode in the *Burlington Magazine*.⁵⁵² Bode referred to Cruttwell's presentation of original, vital documentation as merely demonstrating 'diligence and care', and disparaged her discussion of the profile portraits as evidence for her 'deplorably deficient critical sense and a defective eye', dismissing her attributions entirely and insisting the portraits were 'beyond doubt' by Veneziano.⁵⁵³ Per Rumberg describes the broader implications of this controversy as the result of 'fundamentally different approaches to art history: connoisseurship (Bode) versus

⁵⁴⁹ Galli, *Antonio and Piero Pollaiuolo*, p. 250.

⁵⁵⁰ Gloria Fossi, *The Uffizi Gallery: Art, History and Collections* (Florence: Giunti Editore, 2011), p. 121.

⁵⁵¹ Lorenzo, 'Oblivion and Fortune', p. 87.

⁵⁵² William Bode, 'A New Book on the Pollaiuoli', *Burlington Magazine*, 11:51 (June 1907), 181–82.

⁵⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. 181.

contextual art history (Cruttwell)'.⁵⁵⁴ Cruttwell's assured placing of her 'contextual' art history into a discussion dominated by the 'singular verdict of the connoisseur' did not occur without risk and retaliation.⁵⁵⁵ It exposed a push-back mentality, particularly directed at women, for whom those very same methodological tools which had enabled them to assert themselves in the field in the first place — direct observation and use of historical documentation — became the reasons to undermine the validity and authority of their work.

Bode insisted that the books 'written by *dilettanti* of both sexes who wish to demonstrate their love of art' should be 'left unwritten', yet it is in these very books that women such as Cartwright, Halsey and Cruttwell offered original and independent interventions into the art historical canon.⁵⁵⁶ Not simply a follower of Berenson, Cruttwell cultivated her expertise in the field of late-quattrocento Florentine masters who worked across media. Her comprehensive first-hand knowledge of the works of art and meticulous archival research enabled her to make informed, accurate attributions which have outlasted those of her male contemporaries in institutional positions and which continue to inform art historical debate today.

Following a visit to the Uffizi in September 1904, Julia Cartwright commented on the fluctuating and sometimes surprising changes of taste for the Italian old masters:

It is interesting to see how one's first impressions are changed & modified by the lapse of years. I am glad to find I like Botticelli as well as ever [...] What a gulf there is between him & his followers! Angelico is as g[oo]d as ever & more esp[ecially] the frescoes, but I have lost interest in Perugino, L[orenzo] di Credi & Filippino & a few others but admire Pollaiuolo far more than I did esp[ecially] the g[rea]t S[ain]ts in the Uffizi. Verrocchio appeals to me too with new force & Castagno & Paolo Uccello whose fresco in the Duomo is wonderfully fine.⁵⁵⁷

⁵⁵⁴ Per Rumberg, 'Andrea del Verrocchio's *Doubting Thomas*: Three Encounters', unpublished doctoral thesis, Courtauld Institute of Art, University of London, 2016, p. 80.

⁵⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 83.

⁵⁵⁶ Bode, 'A New Book on the Pollaiuoli', p. 182. Emphasis in original.

⁵⁵⁷ 17 September 1904 [Diary CE382], CENA.

Working in the wake of the ‘primitive’ reappraisal, late nineteenth-century women writers made their own interventions into the canon. The artists they focused on straddled that tricky ‘1500 divide’; they were overshadowed by more famous celebrities of their school or had been downgraded to Vasarian seconds. The women writers discussed in this chapter acknowledged the marginal nature of their monographic subjects and emphasised their aim to encourage an appreciation that was not based solely on factors of ‘greatness’ or objective ‘beauty’, but sought to push public interest in the Italian Renaissance into areas other than painting alone, working on artists who were often productive across the fields of sculpture, metalwork and engraving. Though they could not engage directly in the acquisition of these artists’ works, they nonetheless could enact a form of monographic patronage. Cartwright reinvigorated the reputation of an artist well represented on home ground, emphasising Andrea Mantegna’s historical importance in Italy to illuminate the wealth of British collections. Halsey turned an artist’s scarcity in Britain into a strength, underscoring the importance of seeing works by Gaudenzio *in situ*, to understand fully the style and aesthetic impact of his artistic production. Cruttwell dismantled the inherited Vasarian narrative of Antonio del Pollaiuolo, incorporating a holistic view of his artistic production that informed her reliable attributions.

These women drew on an extended network of colleagues, art writers and museum officials to conduct their research. As demonstrated by the unpublished material cited here, art history’s early formation was a period of intense collaboration and fervent discovery as well as of some antagonism and rivalry. Though their monographs for the most part go unacknowledged today, it is significant that many of the artists they first promoted are now names which headline blockbuster exhibitions and receive widespread public appreciation. The case of Cartwright, Halsey and Cruttwell not only demonstrates their original and independent contributions, but also shows how, despite the lack of affiliation or formal professional role, they prevailed in the face of conventional taste to bring

something new to the table. As this chapter shows, the work of these women merits our close attention, offering a means of looking at art history as well as art historiography afresh.

CHAPTER THREE
DAUGHTERS OF CORINNE: ART HISTORICAL TOURISM AND WOMEN’S
GUIDEBOOKS TO ITALY

By the second half of the nineteenth century, travel was recognised as an essential activity for writers wanting to be taken seriously as authorities on art. Writing in 1873, the editor of the *Portfolio* Philip Hamerton asserted that ‘people who stay at home’ could not ‘become art critics’.⁵⁵⁸ Almost thirty years earlier, Elizabeth Rigby (the future Lady Eastlake), had articulated the particular merits of travel in regard to women writers in her frequently cited *Quarterly Review* article, ‘Lady Travellers’ (1845). Writing anonymously and under the implicit guise of a man, Rigby insisted that the true potential of women’s ‘power of observation’ was lost when it ‘remain[ed] at home counting canvas stitches by the fireside’. However, ‘once removed from the familiar scene [...] [it] seldom fail[ed] to prove its superiority’.⁵⁵⁹

Despite the wealth of existing scholarship on nineteenth-century women, their travel and travel writing, critical attention has focused principally on the trope of the female adventurer or explorer.⁵⁶⁰ As noted in the Introduction, the recent work of Isabelle Baudino and Caroline Palmer attends to the importance of travel writing as a pathway to art history and connoisseurship in the work of early women art writers.⁵⁶¹ Since the late eighteenth century, women’s travel to Italy drew on the model of the Grand Tour, which — though in practice the preserve of wealthy young men —

⁵⁵⁸ Philip Gilbert Hamerton, *Thoughts About Art* (London: Macmillan, 1873), p. 160, quoted in Meaghan Clarke, ‘Critical Mediators: Locating the Art Press’, *Visual Resources*, 26:3 (2010), 226–41 (p. 227).

⁵⁵⁹ Anon. [Elizabeth Rigby], ‘Lady Travellers’, *Quarterly Review* (June 1845), 98–136 (p. 98).

⁵⁶⁰ Clarke, ‘Critical Mediators’, p. 228. For example: Mary Russell, *The Blessings of a Good Thick Skirt: Women Travellers and Their World* (London: Collins, 1986); D. Birkett, *Spinsters Abroad: Victorian Lady Explorers* (London: Routledge, 1991).

⁵⁶¹ Caroline Palmer, “‘I Will Tell Nothing That I Did Not See’”: British Women’s Travel Writing, Art and the Science of Connoisseurship, 1776–1860’, *Forum for Modern Language Studies*, 51:3 (2015), 248–68; Isabel Baudino, “‘Nothing seems to have escaped her’”: British Women Travellers as Art Critics and Connoisseurs, 1775–1825’, *19: Interdisciplinary Studies in the Long Nineteenth Century*, 28 (2019), DOI: <<http://doi.org/10.16995/ntn.820>>.

cemented the correlation between travel and educational improvement, and crucially, placed Italy at the heart of the art-seeking traveller's itinerary.⁵⁶² An especially influential model of the empowered, independent woman in Italy was established at the beginning of the century with the publication of Germaine de Staël's *Corinne, Or Italy* (1807). Presented as a freely mobile, linguistically confident, and intellectually indomitable cultural interpreter, the example of de Stael's protagonist Corinne resonated with many women writers of the time, including Anna Jameson.⁵⁶³

A second important publication defining the figure of the informed, culturally competent visitor to Italy was provided by the Swiss cultural historian Jacob Burckhardt's (1818–97) *Der Cicerone* (1855).⁵⁶⁴ Based on Burckhardt's own extensive travel to the country, *Der Cicerone* operated at the nexus of the travel guide and history of art. Organised according to genre and school, rather than itinerary, it was intended for those who had recently returned from Italy and could recall the works of art which Burckhardt discussed, or who were about to embark on a journey there.⁵⁶⁵ The burgeoning interest for art historical travel was signalled with the first English translation of *Der Cicerone* by Blanche Smith Clough (1828–1904) in 1873.⁵⁶⁶ Clough focused her translation on the painting section of Burckhardt's volume, so as to provide a 'portable companion' and 'practical Guide to the Traveller and lover of art in studying on the spot the works of painting [...]'.⁵⁶⁷ Thanks

⁵⁶² Lynne Withey, *Grand Tours and Cook's Tours: A History of Leisure Travel, 1750–1915* (New York: W. Morrow, 1997), pp. 7–8.

⁵⁶³ Clarissa Campbell Orr, 'The Corinne Complex: Gender, Genius and National Character', in *Women in the Victorian Art World*, ed. by Clarissa Campbell Orr (Manchester; New York: Manchester University Press, 1995), pp. 89–106; Adele M. Ernstom, 'Entering Art History in the Mid-Nineteenth Century: Félicie d'Ayzac, Anna Jameson and the Legacy of Mme De Staël', *RACAR: revue d'art canadienne / Canadian Art Review*, 28 (2001–2003), 29–49.

⁵⁶⁴ Jacob Burckhardt, *Der Cicerone: Eine Anleitung zum Genuss der Kunstwerke italiens* (Basel: Schweighausersche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1855).

⁵⁶⁵ Lionel Gossman, 'Jacob Burckhardt as Art Historian', *Oxford Art Journal*, 11:1 (1988), 25–32 (p. 29).

⁵⁶⁶ Born Blanche Mary Shore Smith of Combe Hall, Surrey, Clough was a cousin of Florence Nightingale (1820–1910). She married the British poet Arthur Hugh Clough (1819–61) in 1852 and they embarked on a tour of Italy in 1861. See Anthony Kenny, 'Clough, Arthur Hugh', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (4 October 2007) <<https://www.oxforddnb.com/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-5711>>.

⁵⁶⁷ Jacob Burckhardt, *The Cicerone: An Art Guide to Painting in Italy for the Use of Travellers and Students*,

to improvements in travel and tourist infrastructure, and increasing social and geographic mobility in the second half of the nineteenth century, the role of *cicerone* became a viable identity for women to take up in their own writing, where their authority was underscored by the long tradition of women writing travel literature.

This chapter will examine a selection of guidebooks written by women around the turn of the twentieth century. The first section, ‘Destination Italy: Guidebooks and Travel in the Nineteenth Century’, sets out the background of British travel to Italy and the use of guidebooks in the mid- to late-nineteenth century. In the second section, ‘Art Historical Tourism in Florence’, I will examine Lucy Baxter’s *Castle of Vincigliata* (1898), Julia Cartwright’s *Painters of Florence* (1901) and Maud Cruttwell’s *Florentine Churches* (1908) and the impact these books, produced and informed by their authors’ experiences of travelling and residing in Italy, had on the burgeoning interest in art history among culture-loving audiences. This focus on Florence provides a framework with which to explore other areas which have been little attended to in secondary scholarship to date. The third section of this chapter will, consequently, veer ‘off the beaten track’ to look at female-authored guidebooks about Perugia. In ‘Putting Other Italian Towns on the Map: Perugia as Case-Study’ I explore Lina Duff Gordon and Margaret Symonds’ (1869–1925) *The Story of Perugia* (1898) and Jean Carlyle Graham’s *The Problem of Fiorenzo di Lorenzo* (1904), which both utilised travel experiences to write about this Umbrian hilltop town in novel, yet very different, ways. Although deliberately avoiding the use of conventional art criticism, Gordon and Symonds nonetheless intended to encourage wider appreciation of Perugia’s artistic culture, while Graham’s personal acquaintance with Perugia enabled her to question the conclusions reached by established connoisseurs like Bernard Berenson.

trans. Blanche Smith Clough (London: John Murray, 1873), p. v.

3.1 Destination Italy: Guidebooks and Travel in the Nineteenth Century

The concept of nineteenth-century British travellers abroad calls to mind the ubiquitous guidebooks produced by the publishing houses of Karl Baedeker and John Murray.⁵⁶⁸ These titans of tourism had their precedents in Grand Tour literature, where guidebooks first assumed a didactic role and became arbiters of taste.⁵⁶⁹ The guidebook not only determined what should be seen, but as Stephanie Malia Hom has explored, ‘schooled [tourists] in the art of travel’, or ‘*Ars apodemica*’.⁵⁷⁰ The modern travel guide made its first appearance in the 1820s pioneered by Mariana Starke (1762–1838), who is credited by Lynne Withey as ‘probably the first person who could be called a professional guidebook writer’.⁵⁷¹ The nine editions of Starke’s *Letters from Italy*, published between 1800 and 1839, together with her revised *Travels on the Continent: Written for the Use and Particular Information of Travellers* (1820), provided the model for Murray’s famed red *Handbooks*.⁵⁷² Notably, Starke employed a system of exclamation marks to rank the aesthetic and cultural merit of works of art and historic sites, effectively inventing the system of guidebook grading still in use today.⁵⁷³

While these guidebooks had a pervasive presence in nineteenth-century British tourist culture, one must be wary of assuming that they were among the most widely read or accessible of the genre. For example, while Murray’s *Handbooks* certainly commanded authority and prestige, they were printed in small runs of between 1, 500 to 3, 000 copies and priced between 8s and 16s, and therefore costly to purchase.⁵⁷⁴ This early example of the modern tourist guide intended to

⁵⁶⁸ For a comprehensive study of the roots of ‘anti-tourist’ sentiment and the formation of the modern tourist industry in Britain, see: James Buzard, *The Beaten Track: European Tourism, Literature and the Ways to Culture, 1800–1918* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993).

⁵⁶⁹ Stephanie Malia Hom, *The Beautiful Country: Tourism and the Impossible State of Destination Italy* (Toronto; Buffalo; London: University of Toronto Press, 2015), p. 32.

⁵⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 37.

⁵⁷¹ Withey, *Grand Tours*, p. 69.

⁵⁷² *Ibid.*

⁵⁷³ Barbara Dawes, *La rivoluzione turistica: Thomas Cook e il turismo inglese in Italia nel XIX secolo* (Naples: Edizione Scientifiche Italiane, 2003), p. 40.

⁵⁷⁴ Elsa Damien, ‘Ruskin vs. Murray: Battles for Tourist Guidance in Italy’, *Nineteenth-Century Contexts*, 32 (2010), 19–30 (fn. 7, p. 20). Damien states that production runs did not significantly rise throughout the

convey ‘an encyclopaedic ideal of completeness, objectivity and scientific spirit’ and ‘mediate the behaviour of tourists in situ’.⁵⁷⁵ Murray aimed not at originality, but consistency in the provision of concise, essential information, supplemented by relevant secondary accounts to highlight not what ‘*may be seen*’ but what ‘*ought to be seen*’.⁵⁷⁶ Despite the numerous revised editions of both Baedeker and Murray guidebooks over the course of the nineteenth century, they remained for the most part largely unchanged. For example, the 1891 edition of Murray’s *Handbook to Northern Italy* retained much the same structure as the original 1847 version. Though supplemented with new information, this principally related to improved methods of travel, rather than reflecting the latest research on historical sites, artistic itineraries or the contemporary political situation.⁵⁷⁷

While the success of such guidebooks ‘lay in taking the uncertainty out of travel’,⁵⁷⁸ the diversification of this type of publication at the end of the century brought new voices into a thriving arena. Murray’s *Handbooks* had perfected the synthesis of the advice of numerous authors into a homogeneous neutral blend,⁵⁷⁹ but a host of turn-of-the-century guidebooks sold on the individual reputation of an author and their unique, informed view of a place. In the wake of the explosion of interest in the artistic culture of Italy and the increasing accessibility of travel, publishers were keen to seize on the concurrent demand for guidebooks providing accurate information from the pen of a trusted writer. While art periodicals provided a regular, concise source of the latest developments and the monograph engaged with an extended biographical and historical examination of an

century. Simon Eliot’s approximate pricing structure for books places Murray’s *Handbooks* at the upper end of the market: low (up to 3s 6d); average (between 3s 7d and 10s) and high (over 10s). See: Simon Eliot, ‘Some Trends in British Book Production, 1800–1919’, in *Literature in the Marketplace: Nineteenth-Century British Publishing and Reading Practices*, ed. by John O. Jordan and Robert L. Patten (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), pp. 19–43 (p. 35).

⁵⁷⁵ Damien, ‘Ruskin vs. Murray’, p. 19; Hom, *The Beautiful Country*, p. 31.

⁵⁷⁶ John Murray, *A Hand-Book of Travellers to the Continent* (London: John Murray, 1836), p. iii, quoted in Withey, *Grand Tours*, p. 70. Emphasis in original.

⁵⁷⁷ Hom, *Beautiful Country*, p. 44.

⁵⁷⁸ Withey, *Grand Tours*, p. 71.

⁵⁷⁹ Damien, ‘Ruskin vs. Murray’, p. 22.

individual master, the guidebook acted as a conduit for the personal encounter with art *in situ*, the very process that women art writers had drawn on throughout the century to underscore the veracity of their opinions.

Meaghan Clarke notes how after 1870, art historians travelled abroad far more frequently, as the expansion of the Victorian art world brought with it new opportunities to broaden their journalistic ventures.⁵⁸⁰ Moreover, the later generations of women art writers had a markedly different experience of travel than women like Lady Eastlake and Jameson, as the result of two key developments: the rapid construction of travel infrastructure throughout Europe and increasingly relaxed social attitudes towards women's independent mobility. Emerging around the 1870s and flourishing until the end of the Second World War, these decades around the turn of the twentieth century marked the 'golden age' of travel, witnessing the transformation of travel from an expensive aristocratic privilege to an aspirational leisure activity, increasingly affordable to the middle classes.⁵⁸¹

This 'golden age' was facilitated by a vast European-wide programme of railroad expansion, cutting the time and cost of travel across the continent.⁵⁸² The advent of English businessman Thomas Cook's (1808–92) tours in 1864 'stabilised Italy as a prime destination for tourist masses', enabling ever-increasing numbers of British people to experience the artistic heritage of Italy for themselves.⁵⁸³ Travel was promoted as an accessible and essential part of cultural education, and the latter decades of the century saw a swell in numbers of British visitors to Italy, replicating the similar surge following the end of the Napoleonic invasion. This consequently increased the primary readership for guidebooks to Italy and facilitated a booming of publishing opportunities for art

⁵⁸⁰ Clarke, 'Critical Mediators', pp. 227–28.

⁵⁸¹ Withey, *Grand Tours*, p. viii.

⁵⁸² For example, the opening of the Moncenisio tunnel in 1871 made direct travel from Paris to Turin possible for the first time. This development drastically reduced the time needed to travel between the UK and Italy, with Rome now accessible from London in only 55 hours: Dawes, *La rivoluzione turistica*, pp. 48, 53.

⁵⁸³ Hom, *Beautiful Country*, p. 217.

historians who travelled abroad. Consequently, in comparison to their ‘less mobile sisters’, later women art writers could draw on a greater ‘sense of liberty to be themselves, to be independent, to go out into the world and report on what they saw’.⁵⁸⁴

With a key function of mediating the experience of seeing works of art *in situ*, the guidebook provided women a means to capitalise on their travel and residency in Italy. The neglect of such forms of writing, considered ‘low status’ in art historiography, has pushed out of the frame an interesting and representative swathe of research by women, which enabled them to ‘explore prohibited territory under cover and to find an authoritative voice’.⁵⁸⁵ It was not only writers who travelled, but a whole range of cultural producers involved in the creation of this branch of turn-of-the-century art historical literature — publishers, illustrators, photographers. Indeed, works of art themselves also ‘travelled’, through reviewing, redisplay, and rediscovery. In writing these guidebooks, women contributed to the development of what I will term ‘art historical tourism’, drawing on Nicola J. Watson’s description of ‘literary tourism’ — a phenomenon of ‘interconnected practices of visiting and marking sites associated with writers and their work’.⁵⁸⁶ Literary tourism expanded in the nineteenth century both socially and geographically, and a new genre of writing emerged to cater for this activity which encompassed the ‘literary guidebook’, walking tours and itineraries.⁵⁸⁷ In a similar fashion, art historians too could become associated with particular locations, especially through authoring dedicated guidebooks about these sites, which put them on the map for the visitor’s itinerary. The longstanding tradition of travel writing as a suitably feminine genre, and women’s increasing ability to travel independently, contributed to the development of the guidebook as a significant platform for women’s art historical writing at the turn of the century.

⁵⁸⁴ Judith Johnston, *Victorian Women and the Economies of Travel, Translation and Culture, 1830–1870* (Farnham, UK: Ashgate, 2013), p. 31.

⁵⁸⁵ Hilary Fraser, *Women Writing Art History in the Nineteenth Century: Looking Like a Woman* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), p. 63.

⁵⁸⁶ Nicola J. Watson, ‘Introduction’, in *Literary Tourism and Nineteenth-Century Culture*, ed. by Nicola J. Watson (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), pp. 1–9 (p. 3).

⁵⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

3.2 Art Historical Tourism in Florence

With its high concentration of art-filled museums, churches and historical buildings, and with the writers, collectors, and connoisseurs there to engage with and publish on them, Florence was a centre where debate and discussion of art thrived. As discussed in Chapter One, in the nineteenth century the city was a principal site for women's cultural and aesthetic engagement with Italy. In particular, women's salons formed an essential social element of Florence's expatriate literary culture, rising to prominence with British female poets in the 1840s and 1850s. Characterised as 'informal, fluid and heterogeneous', the notable salons of Elizabeth Barrett Browning (1806–61) at Casa Guidi and Isa Blagden (1816–73) at Villa Brichieri, functioned as 'distinct and yet interrelated social, political and literary spaces, mediating Italy for the community within and beyond the city'.⁵⁸⁸ By the late nineteenth century, the 'vita in villa' was firmly entrenched in Anglo-American expatriate life, and a visit to Florence was not complete without stopping by 'Charles Loeser's La Gattaia, Berenson at I Tatti, Vernon Lee at Maiano [...] [for] gatherings where literary and aesthetic problems were debated as earnestly as at the Platonic Academy of the Medici'.⁵⁸⁹

Together with her work reporting on the city's cultural scene to readers in London, Lucy Baxter helped promote the artistic endeavours of the Anglo-Florentine community to visitors. One of Baxter's close friends in Florence was the collector and restorer John Temple Leader (1810–1903). In 1844, Temple Leader had left his burgeoning Whig political career in London and moved to Florence, where he purchased several historic properties.⁵⁹⁰ These were a building in the Piazza dei

⁵⁸⁸ Alison Chapman, *Networking the Nation: British and American Women's Poetry and Italy, 1840–1870* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), p. xxxix.

⁵⁸⁹ Grazia Gobbia Sica, *The Florentine Villa: Architecture, History, Society*, trans. Ursula Creigh (London: Routledge, 2007), p. 97; Harold Acton, *More Memoirs of an Aesthete* (London: Faber and Faber, 1970), pp. 363–64, quoted in Sica, p. 102. Charles Loeser (1864–1928) was an American art historian and collector, who resided in Florence at the Villa Torri Gattaia.

⁵⁹⁰ Sidney Lee and H. C. G. Matthew, 'Leader, John Temple (1810–1903), politician and connoisseur of the arts', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (23 September 2004) <<https://www.oxforddnb.com/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-34453>>.

Pitti in Florence's Oltrarno, the Villa Pazzi and Catanzaro in Maiano and, most ambitiously, the ruined medieval Castle of Vincigliata. Reflecting contemporary attitudes towards restoration and the revival of an 'imagined' Renaissance, all these properties underwent major renovation under Temple Leader's direction.⁵⁹¹ The Castle of Vincigliata, also located in the hillside town of Maiano, was the most ambitious part of Temple Leader's project, reflecting a far more personal, imaginative 'recreation' than faithful restoration.⁵⁹²

Vincigliata represented the nineteenth-century Anglo-Florentine community's vision where 'people lived cheek by jowl with masterpieces of the past'.⁵⁹³ Furnished with both original and reproduction antiquities and works of art, it was opened to the public for free for part of the year. The castle became such an attraction that Queen Victoria (1819–1901) was given a tour on 15 April 1888.⁵⁹⁴ The attentions of such a distinguished guest brought even greater numbers of British visitors to Vincigliata. However, of the several guides to the history of the castle then in existence, none detailed or described its collections in English.⁵⁹⁵

Baxter's reputation, garnered through her numerous art historical publications, meant that she often acted as a personal guide to British visitors around Florence, what she called 'doing cicerone'.⁵⁹⁶ For instance, when the English novelist Thomas Hardy (1840–1928), a friend of Baxter's father, visited Florence, it was she who acted as his guide around Vincigliata.⁵⁹⁷ Consequently, it was to Baxter that Temple Leader turned as the best authority to write an English

⁵⁹¹ For full details, see: Francesca Baldry, *John Temple Leader e il Castello di Vincigliata* (Florence: Olschki, 1997).

⁵⁹² Katie Campbell, 'Paradise of Exiles: The Anglo-Florentine Garden', unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Bristol, 2007, p. 118.

⁵⁹³ Sica, *Florentine Villa*, pp. 98–9.

⁵⁹⁴ Lee and Matthew, 'Leader, John Temple', *ODNB*.

⁵⁹⁵ Such as Alessandro Papini, *Majano Vincigliata, Settignano* (Florence: G. Barbèra, 1876); Giuseppe Marcotti, *Vincigliata* (Florence: G. Barbèra, 1879).

⁵⁹⁶ Lucy Baxter to Luigi Barbèra, 5 May 1892 [Raccolta: Barbera, Cassetta: 3, Numero: 10, 1], BNF.

⁵⁹⁷ Edward Chaney, *The Evolution of the Grand Tour: Anglo-Italian Cultural Relations since the Renaissance* (New York: Routledge, 1998), p. 313.

guidebook to the castle. Published in 1891 with the Florentine publishing house Barbèra, Baxter's *Vincigliata and Maiano* addressed the 'want of an historical guide to Vincigliata [which] has often been deplored by English-speaking visitors'.⁵⁹⁸ Baxter updated the guide in 1897 as *The Castle of Vincigliata*, focusing specifically on the castle's collection, supplemented with photographs of the 'most noteworthy rooms'.⁵⁹⁹ With its 'portable size' and lavish illustrations, Baxter's revised version was intended to be a 'more practical and useful guide'.⁶⁰⁰

Directing her reader in the tones of a *cicerone*, Baxter's guide points to easily missed rooms and aids her reader in distinguishing the original objects from reproductions. For example, when approaching the Guard Room, Baxter suggests the visitor should 'give way to [their] love of seeking after the unknown', pointing out a 'tempting little lobby' to the left, leading to the chapel (**fig. 3.1**).⁶⁰¹ Baxter directs her viewer towards the altar of carved Fiesole stone, noting this is a copy of the one in the Rucellai Chapel at Santa Maria Novella, above which was displayed a 'beautiful glazed' *Annunciation* by the school of Della Robbia (**fig. 3.2**). Baxter's emphasis is on the provenance and historical background of this sculpture, the 'secretive' placement of this work suggestive of its value and authenticity above the more immediately visible objects on display. Baxter's work as a guide to Vincigliata — both in person and via publication — helped to immortalise this example of the Victorian re-vision of Florentine medieval life in the early 1900s. It was these Della Robbias that the American author Henry James (1843–1916) recalled, after being shown round the castle by Baxter, describing Vincigliata in *Italian Hours* (1909) as: 'a triumph of aesthetic culture [...] belong[ing] to the heroics of dilettantism' with 'mid-hued Luca della Robbias fastened unevenly into the walls'.⁶⁰²

⁵⁹⁸ Leader Scott, *Vincigliata and Maiano* (Florence: G. Barbèra, 1891), p. viii.

⁵⁹⁹ Leader Scott, *Castle of Vincigliata* (Florence: G. Barbèra, 1897), p. ix.

⁶⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, p. ix.

⁶⁰¹ *Ibid.*, p. 113.

⁶⁰² Henry James, *Italian Hours* (London: William Heinemann, 1909), pp. 282–86. James does not mention Baxter in his account.

Other publishers looked to established women writers in London to be the voice of their publications. One such example is Cartwright's *Painters of Florence from the Thirteenth to the Sixteenth Century* published in 1901 with John Murray. One of the most prestigious and long-standing British publishers, the firm of Murray published many of the pioneering and most important art historical books through the Victorian period, collaborating, for instance, with the leading early women writers Eastlake, Jameson and Merrifield.⁶⁰³ Cartwright's work for Murray therefore attests to the value and renown attached to her name, while the publisher's imprimatur indicates the positive impression her books would have made on the reading public.

Cartwright had already provided Murray with art-focused travel writing when the publisher approached her to write the introduction to 'Italian Painting in Rome' for the 1898 edition of the firm's *Handbook to Rome*.⁶⁰⁴ In keeping with the *Handbook*'s usual offering, this was intended as a brief and factual overview, published in the introductory section of the *Handbook* alongside equivalent sections on Roman architecture (written by architect Richard Phené Spiers, 1838–1916) and sculpture (by archaeologist Alexander Stuart Murray, 1841–1904).⁶⁰⁵ In this regard, Cartwright did not offer her own opinion, propose any new attributions or drastically depart from the existing narrative of the history of painting in Rome.⁶⁰⁶ However, a key selling point of Murray's *Handbooks*

⁶⁰³ For example, Murray oversaw the publication of several books by Charles and Elizabeth Eastlake, all of Crowe and Cavalcaselle's books in English, the various editions of Kugler's *Handbook*, Jameson's *A Handbook to the Public Galleries of Art in and near London* (1842) and Mary Philadelphia Merrifield's *Original Treatises Dating from the XIIth to XVIIIth Centuries on the Arts of Painting* (1849), among many others.

⁶⁰⁴ Hallam Murray to Cartwright, 17 May 1898 [CE112/81], CENA.

⁶⁰⁵ I have been unable to obtain a copy of the first 1898 edition, but Cartwright's introduction is retained in the *Handbook* until at least the 1908 edition: Julia Cartwright, 'Italian Painting in Rome', in *Murray's Handbook of Rome and the Campagna*, ed. by Norwood Young, 17th edn (London: Edward Stanford, 1908), pp. 93–97.

⁶⁰⁶ Cartwright does make one concession to a personal opinion, and this is to name the 'one Roman master' who presents an exception to the 'low ebb' in contemporary Roman painting, Giovanni Costa (1826–1903). Cartwright was a close friend of the artist and actively promoted his painting and exhibitions with several articles in the *National Review*, *Portfolio* and *Magazine of Art*. Cartwright's role and influence as a contemporary art critic has yet to receive any in-depth scholarly examination, which is particularly unfortunate considering her connection with and publications on several major British artists, as well as her interest in modern Italian art and the French Barbizon School.

was their employment of noted experts and well-known literary sources to provide textual flourish to the otherwise impersonal format of walking itineraries and practical advice.⁶⁰⁷ Writing for a Murray *Handbook* was therefore a prestigious commission, which validated the authority both of the guide and its authors; Cartwright's name, alongside that of Spiers and Stuart Murray, was acknowledged in the preface. Indeed, Cartwright was so respected by Murray as an authority that she went on to become the firm's general advisor for literature on art.⁶⁰⁸

The publisher was therefore 'very keen' to accept Cartwright's proposal in 1899 for a handbook on Florentine painting. However, as she recorded in her diary, Murray intended to 'make it a regular Guidebook to Florence, which is just what is *not* wanted'.⁶⁰⁹ Aware of the multitude of such books then available, particularly written by those who lived in Florence itself, Cartwright had in mind a different kind of publication for travellers, which she felt especially qualified to offer. Cartwright's plan focused on the principal Florentine painters from Cimabue to Michelangelo, treated individually in twenty-seven chapters and glossed with an informed distillation of current connoisseurial opinion. Rather than a guidebook, Cartwright's *Painters* was more in keeping with the earlier, hugely successful publication by Jameson, *Memoirs of the Early Italian Painters*, which Murray had published in a new and enlarged edition in 1859.

Like Jameson, Cartwright intended her book to provide an informed account of each painter, but her focus on Florentine painters narrowed her predecessor's broad-ranging overview. Jameson's intention for the *Memoirs* had been to act primarily as a 'companion to the young' and to encourage the enjoyment of art 'for its own sake'; as such, she had not 'enter[ed] into disputed points of

⁶⁰⁷ Barbara Schaff, 'John Murray's *Handbooks to Italy*: Making Tourism Literary', in *Literary Tourism*, pp. 106–18 (p. 107).

⁶⁰⁸ Angela Emanuel, 'Julia Cartwright 1851–1924: Art Critic and Historian of Renaissance Italy', unpublished doctoral thesis, University College London, 1985, p. 213. Cartwright's ongoing work for Murray in this regard is proven by the monthly note of payment for 'Reader's Fee from Murray' in her accounts, which she recorded in the back of her diary for each year. Cartwright received 2d, 2s for this each time, approximately £165 today.

⁶⁰⁹ Angela Emanuel, ed., *A Bright Remembrance: The Diaries of Julia Cartwright, 1851–1924* (London: Wiedenfeld and Nicholson, 1989), p. 235 (27 April 1899).

criticism or chronology’, but had drawn her information from her own visits to Italy supplemented by her reading of Vasari.⁶¹⁰ Yet, by the early 1900s, there was both a wealth of general and literary guidebooks to Florence and an equally prolific mass of new critical literature predicated on such ‘disputed points’ of attribution and dating, that long-standing popular books like Jameson’s had not addressed. Cartwright saw a gap in the market for a new book equipping travellers with just those ‘points of criticism or chronology’ which they could use to mediate their own encounter with the painters of Florence. Evidently, Murray saw Cartwright’s idea as a worthwhile investment, as the intention was to roll out a dedicated ‘Painters series’ written by Cartwright, with a second volume on ‘The Venetians’ already under discussion. This follow-on project did not ultimately come to fruition, likely due to the fact that, as Cartwright recorded, Murray sought to lower her royalties for the second volume and she was only willing to agree to such matters ‘on [her] terms’.⁶¹¹

Cartwright situated her *Painters* as a bridge between the ‘increased interest now taken in Italian art by travellers’ and the ‘distinct demand for a book in which the results of these researches are brought together’.⁶¹² The book was intended as a primer to current art criticism for the traveller, and as such in her preface Cartwright provides an overview of the development of study into the Florentine school. Beginning with Ruskin, who ‘first opened our eyes to the wonder and beauty’ of the early Florentines, Cartwright acknowledges the ‘earnest and thoughtful writings’ of Lady Eastlake and Jameson, together with the yet ‘more serious labours’ of Crowe and Cavalcaselle. However, it is the ‘scientific study’ of Giovanni Morelli, the work of ‘distinguished connoisseurs’ such as Gustavo Frizzoni and Bernard Berenson, and the ‘new facts brought to light’ by recent archival discoveries, that her book intends to parse for accessible, on-the-go use.⁶¹³

⁶¹⁰ Anna Jameson, *Memoirs of the Early Italian Painters, and of the Progress of Painting in Italy, from Cimabue to Bassano*, 2 vols (London: Knight, 1845), vol. 1, p. x.

⁶¹¹ Emanuel, *A Bright Remembrance*, p. 256 (7 June 1901).

⁶¹² Julia Cartwright, *The Painters of Florence from the Thirteenth to the Sixteenth Century* (London: John Murray, 1901), p. x.

⁶¹³ *Ibid.*, p. ix

Comprising a synthesis of the latest critical consensus on a given artist, interwoven with a short biography, in each chapter Cartwright provided a list of the artist's principal works to be seen in Florence and other major collections. Her *Painters of Florence* reflected the most pressing critical issues concerning the Florentine school at the time, bringing together both the latest ideas and emerging artists. For example, her inclusion of a chapter on Piero di Cosimo (1462–1522) drew the attention of her readers to a figure only recently brought to light in connoisseurship, particularly through the work of Frizzoni.⁶¹⁴ Since 1862, Piero had been represented in the national painting collection at Trafalgar Square by *A Satyr Mourning Over a Nymph* (NG698), but the artist was still little enough known for the writer George Eliot (1819–80) to weave a fictionalised character around him in her novel *Romola* (1862–63).⁶¹⁵ In 1871, the National Gallery had gone on to acquire a *Portrait of a Man in Armour* (NG895) which Frizzoni had given to Piero in 1879, a fact reflected in Cartwright's account.⁶¹⁶

Unlike with her earlier book *Mantegna and Francia*, Cartwright was acutely aware that she was now entering an area of art historical scholarship that had attracted fervent recent critical attention. Her biggest worry concerned Berenson, who frequently wrote to Cartwright to vent his aggravations over other art critics who he felt were infringing upon his territory, and whose own *Florentine Painters of the Renaissance* had stamped his mark on the area in 1896 (to be followed by *Drawings of the Florentine Painters* in 1903). To avoid any misunderstanding, Cartwright wrote to Berenson in advance to inform him of her current project. He replied wishing her every success,

⁶¹⁴ Caroline Elam, 'Piero di Cosimo and Centaurophilia in Edwardian London', *Burlington Magazine*, 151:1278 (September 2009), 607–15 (p. 607).

⁶¹⁵ Elam, 'Piero di Cosimo', p. 607. Hilary Fraser, 'Titian's Il Bravo and George Eliot's Tito: A Painted Record', *Nineteenth-Century Literature*, 50:2 (September 1995), 210–17 (fn. 3, p. 212). This painting also featured in the volume of poetry *Sight and Song* (1892) by Michael Field (the pseudonym for the poets Katherine Bradley (1846–1914) and Edith Cooper (1862–1913)).

⁶¹⁶ Caroline Elam, 'Attributed to Francesco Granacci, Portrait of a Man in Armour' online catalogue entry for *Building the Picture: Architecture in Italian Renaissance Painting*, 2014, The National Gallery, London: <<http://www.nationalgallery.org.uk/paintings/research/exhibition-catalogues/building-the-picture/place-making/granacci-portrait-of-a-man-in-armour>>; Cartwright, *Painters of Florence*, p. 283.

though this was accompanied by a lengthy attack on the most recent ‘raw, stupid, screaming nonsense’ from fellow art critics Herbert Cook and Robert Langton Douglas (1864–1951), which may have left her more anxious than reassured.⁶¹⁷

Understandably, in her preface Cartwright reserved her acknowledgments for Berenson, while also citing Roger Fry for ‘many valuable suggestions on technical points’. In fact it was not Berenson, but Fry, who wrote to reprimand Cartwright for what he believed was her unfair use of his recent attribution of the *Portrait of a Lady* (NG758) in the National Gallery to Alessio Baldovinetti (1426–99), which he had discussed in a lecture in early 1901.⁶¹⁸ Cartwright was ‘amazed’ at receiving this note from Fry stating that by rights she should have included an acknowledgement of his name on this point, to which she replied that she was: ‘glad to tell him that I had done this already and had only omitted it before, because my chapter was written *before* his lecture, but it does show how suspicious even the nicest *Kunstforscher* are!’⁶¹⁹ The subsequent editions of Cartwright’s book duly include Fry’s name at this point.

As art history followed the path to institutionalisation, conflicts over authority saw the undermining of what came to be seen as ‘outsider scholarship’.⁶²⁰ In the case of Cartwright and her *Painters of Florence*, this can be seen in a review published in *Literature*, where Cartwright’s work of informed dissemination was framed as insufficiently original. Asserting that there were ‘two kinds of good Art-writing’, the reviewer described the best as that which ‘conveys the personal impression, that reveals to us that which appears to be the soul of the particular artist’.⁶²¹ This is evidently a reference to Berenson and his theories of the ‘artistic personality’. The second, with which the

⁶¹⁷ Bernard Berenson to Julia Cartwright, 12 October 1900 [CE 109/9/A], CENA.

⁶¹⁸ Caroline Elam, ‘Baldovinetti’s View Without a Room: E. M. Forster and Roger Fry’, *Burlington Magazine*, 149:1246 (January 2007), 23–31 (fn. 17, p. 26).

⁶¹⁹ Emanuel, *A Bright Remembrance*, p. 255 (8 April 1901). Emphasis in original.

⁶²⁰ Adele M. Ernstrom, ‘Editorial Introduction: Art History Inside and Outside the University’, *RACAR: revue d’art canadienne/Canadian Art Review*, 28 (2001–03), 1–6 (p. 4).

⁶²¹ [Anon.], ‘Review of Julia Cartwright, *The Painters of Florence* (1901)’, *Literature* (23 February 1901), 143–44 (p. 143).

reviewer identified Cartwright's *Painters*, is 'faithful and unprejudiced, correct and explanatory', but in the shadows of the 'poetic interpreter'.⁶²² Classing Cartwright as a 'judicial, even a sympathetic, student', the reviewer assumed, 'it will not be expected that we shall discuss in any detail the opinions she puts forth', as they did 'not differ widely from those of other sensible people'.⁶²³ The reference to Cartwright as a 'student' downplays the authority of a woman who had been building and cultivating her expertise and reputation for over two decades and assisting younger colleagues, both male and female, in the field.

The evaluation of Cartwright's book as nothing more than a distillation of other 'sensible' opinions gives no credence to the expertise needed to conduct such an exercise impartially and comprehensively, yet in a concise span and in understandable prose. Unsurprisingly, the reviewer found it difficult to account for how this 'student' could be 'get[ting] so far on as to be recording the story and achievement of [...] Piero di Cosimo', undermining Cartwright's work with faint praise as a 'worthy performance' that might serve to 'introduce one to the company of those who on their own special subjects have more to say'.⁶²⁴

Fry himself reviewed Cartwright's *Painters* for the *Athenaeum*, noting it to be 'extremely useful'.⁶²⁵ He took issue with several of her aesthetic and attributional judgements, such as her repetition of the 'old story' that Giotto (*c.*1324–57) had painted the Cappella del Sacramento in the Lower Church at Assisi. Fry insisted that they were by Giotto himself or, as Berenson had claimed, by an unknown assistant. On the other hand, he praised Cartwright's 'gift for seizing the social and personal characteristics' of the artists about whom she spoke, through her apposite use of the information that she had gleaned from historical documents.⁶²⁶ Cartwright herself judged the

⁶²² *Ibid.*, p. 144.

⁶²³ *Ibid.*

⁶²⁴ *Ibid.*

⁶²⁵ Anon. [Roger Fry], 'Review of Julia Cartwright *The Painters of Florence* (1901)', *Athenaeum* (9 February 1901), 180–1 (p. 180).

⁶²⁶ *Ibid.*

Athenaeum review ‘on the whole a fair criticism’, but felt the reviewer was ‘rather hasty’ in ‘trot[ting] out all the latest Berenson theories and the Fry ideas on Assisi’.⁶²⁷ Evidently, Cartwright did not simply amass all the latest criticism into her guide, but made a selection from her wide knowledge of the field. This did not necessarily merit the inclusion of the ‘latest’ theories by her male colleagues, if in her opinion, they had yet to prove watertight.

Other female writers adapted the conventional guidebook format, exemplified by the Murray *Handbooks*: an objective, complete account, containing all the information a tourist could need, aimed at maximising pleasure, comfort and efficiency, while diverting from uncertainty and potential obstacles.⁶²⁸ They instead sought to create a hybrid which directed the visitor around works of art through a distinctive, rather than a general viewpoint. One such example is Cruttwell’s *Guide to the Paintings in the Churches and Minor Museums of Florence* of 1908, written as a companion to her earlier *Guide to the Paintings in the Florentine Galleries; the Uffizi, the Pitti, the Accademia* of 1907. Both guides presented a personal and selective account of what Cruttwell considered worthy of attention. In her preface, she stated: ‘the walls of the churches of Florence are a palimpsest’, referring to their continual repainting across the centuries, noting how in the thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries, the churches had been covered with frescoes by painters such as Giotto and his school.⁶²⁹

It is these early frescoes that Cruttwell presents to the traveller as the epitome of great beauty and artistic achievement, lamenting their steady deterioration and the later destruction caused by the addition of ‘dull and heavy grey stone altars’ and the ‘tasteless oil painting’ of the sixteenth century.⁶³⁰ Rather than a comprehensive guide, Cruttwell offers a window on a specific moment in

⁶²⁷ Emanuel, *A Bright Remembrance*, p. 254 (10 February 1901). Cartwright imagined the review had been written by Langton Douglas or Edmund Gardner.

⁶²⁸ Damien, ‘Ruskin vs. Murray’, p. 19.

⁶²⁹ Maud Cruttwell, *A Guide to the Paintings in the Churches and Minor Museums of Florence: A Critical Catalogue with Quotations from Vasari* (London: J. M. Dent, 1908), p. v

⁶³⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. v–vi.

the history of the Florentine churches. While the Murray *Handbooks* employed a host of voices both past and present, Cruttwell draws on only one other voice — that of Vasari and his *Lives of the Artists*. For Cruttwell, Vasari remained the source closest to the Florence she believed to be the most worthy of attention, even if no longer visible in 1908. Supplementing Cruttwell's own assessment of extant frescoes are Vasari's descriptions of those since erased, with his opinions translated by Cruttwell and appearing in italics.

Unlike the conventional tourist guide which 'can give pleasure simply by being read',⁶³¹ it is only by taking Cruttwell's book around Florence with you that its function and the author's intention are fully realised. For example, standing in the church of Santa Croce, Cruttwell ignores the nave with a brief dismissal of the 'ugly altars on the aisles', instead guiding her reader straight to the remaining preserved frescoes in the chapels of the transept and apse.⁶³² Using asterisks, Cruttwell marks paintings worthy of extra attention, such as Sebastiano Mainardi's (1460–1513) *Virgin Giving her Girdle to Saint Thomas* (c.1450–1500) or Giotto's *Scenes from the Life of Saint Francis* (1325–28) in the Bardi Chapel. Her commentary is descriptive, identifying key figures and gestures, referring to dates of restoration or recovery from whitewash and pointing out areas of repainting. Cruttwell's analysis of aesthetic merit is based on an assessment of composition and emotional affect, such as the 'superb grouping' of the figures in the scene of Giotto's *Saint Francis Before the Sultan*, in which the figures have 'great beauty and dignity'.⁶³³ As here, certain scenes are illustrated with small photographic reproductions that are remarkably well rendered (**fig. 3.3**). Cruttwell also directs her viewers to works of art that no longer exist, such as pointing out the Tosinghi-Spinelli Chapel in the transept of the same church, in which the 'frescoes have perished hopelessly' leaving the viewer alone with only Vasari's descriptions as a ghostly ekphrastic trace to imagine works of art

⁶³¹ Damien, 'Ruskin vs. Murray', p. 19.

⁶³² Cruttwell, *Florentine Churches*, p. 88

⁶³³ *Ibid.*, p. 98.

no longer visible. In this way, Cruttwell's *Florentine Churches* promoted a kind of 'art for art history's sake'.

Cruttwell's suggestions for what the viewer should pay attention to attest to the personal nature of the guide. For example, in the Brancacci Chapel of Santa Maria del Carmine, she indicates the scene by Masaccio (1401–28) of *Saint Peter and John Healing the Sick with their Shadow* (1426–27) with two asterisks. Yet instead of citing the well-known anecdote of this scene featuring a possible portrait of the Florentine sculptor Donatello (1386–1466), she draws her viewer's attention to the 'leper on the ground in profile — being of great beauty'.⁶³⁴ Here we have a record of Cruttwell's personal encounter with Florence's churches and her individual engagement with the specifics of place. Moreover, though today this volume is not considered as a standard text of art historical scholarship, and not given the critical attention of her monographs, Cruttwell nonetheless was able to inform and direct her viewers through her own eyes as to what merited attention, albeit in the loose guise of a conventional guidebook. Indeed, as late as 1927, Cruttwell's Florentine volumes were still referred to as the standard works for students and would continue to inform later guidebook productions, even if her distinctive approach was not directly taken forward.⁶³⁵

It is more difficult to find concrete evidence for the impact of guidebooks than it is for articles or monographs, since they are rarely referred to or cited by contemporary scholars. However, the broad appeal of these books and their format as an accessible vehicle to mediate encounters with art, meant that the opinions presented in them were widely diffused and used by a range of different readers, from tourists to students. Overlooking such productions limits our understanding of the range of texts in which art historical knowledge and opinion was disseminated, particularly by women. Actively engaging with such guidebooks, as they were intended to be used, reveals the idiosyncrasies and individual voices of its author 'under cover'. Partaking in our own act of

⁶³⁴ Ibid., p. 72.

⁶³⁵ Herbert Vaughan, *Florence and Her Treasures*, 2nd edn, prepared by M. Mansfield (London: Methuen, 1927), p. 1.

imaginative re-creation, we may find ourselves standing in Santa Croce without a Baedeker, instead looking back to fifteenth-century Florence through the eyes of one of our nineteenth-century female guides.

3.3 Putting Other Italian Towns on the Map: Perugia as Case-Study

While Thomas Cook's 1868 itinerary closely copied the Grand Tour model, by the end of the nineteenth century the routes of British visitors through Italy became interpolated with other less tried and tested destinations.⁶³⁶ Beyond Baedeker and Murray, women art writers authored some of the most popular and successful of the new guidebooks and historical accounts of smaller towns, which, in turn, contributed to British interest in these sites.

Suzanne Hobson points to the publisher J. M. Dent's 'Medieval Towns' (1898–1933) as one example of a turn-of-the-century series that functioned as an 'art-history textbook *and* guidebook' in this period.⁶³⁷ Significantly, several of the lesser-visited towns of Italy selected for inclusion in this series were authored and illustrated by women writers and artists of the Anglo-Italian community. These publications may seem today to lack art historical weight, but I suggest that this perception has more to do with our own hierarchical distinctions and that it is a telling exercise to investigate the way these books were received, and to think about the still unexplored impact they had, at their time of publication.

The success of Dent's 'Medieval Towns' hinged on the fruitful combination of a thriving tourist industry and the existence of close-knit groups of British art historians living and working in Italy. As Hobson argues, the series is a key example of the type of late-century 'new guidebook' intended for the 'reader who saw herself both as tourist and amateur historian'.⁶³⁸ The series

⁶³⁶ Dawes, *La rivoluzione turistica*, p. 53.

⁶³⁷ Suzanne Hobson, "Looking all lost towards a Cook's guide for beauty": The Art of Literature and the Lessons of the Guidebook in Modernist Writing', *Studies in Travel Writing*, 19:1 (2015), 30–47 (p. 39).

⁶³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 39.

developed following Dent's first trip to Italy as a member of the Toynbee Traveller's Club, an initiative set up to provide lower-middle-class travellers with the opportunity of educative cultural experiences through travel to the continent.⁶³⁹ During an organised group tour to Florence and Siena in 1890, Dent alighted on the idea for a series which would treat these current tourist hotspots, now being made accessible to a broader audience than ever before, in a manner that would 'unveil in their stories as much as possible of the distinctive individuality to be found in those wonderful medieval towns'.⁶⁴⁰ The 'Medieval Towns' was therefore born out of an initiative to encourage wider dissemination of Italy and its culture among the British public, linking it to other projects focussed on Italian art such as John Ruskin's work in Sheffield, the 'Florence of the North', or the gallery tours for women of London's East End organised by Vernon Lee and her collaborative partner Clementina Anstruther-Thomson (1857–1921).⁶⁴¹

A notable aspect of this series was that the majority of the volumes dedicated to less-familiar Italian towns were often the result of collaboration between women artists and women writers.⁶⁴² The volumes on Assisi, Bologna, Ferrara, Lucca, Milan, Perugia, Pisa, and Verona were all authored by women, while Dent employed artists including Nelly Erichsen (1862–1918) and Helen M. James

⁶³⁹ On the Toynbee Traveller's Club, see: Joan D. Browne, 'The Toynbee Travellers' Club', *History of Education*, 15:1 (1986), 11–17; Marcella Pellegrino Sutcliffe, 'The Toynbee Travellers' Club and the Transnational Education of Citizens, 1888–90', *History Workshop Journal*, 76:1 (October 2013), 137–59. Diana Maltz notes that Vernon Lee conducted tours for this group in Florence; see Diana Maltz, *British Aestheticism and the Urban Working Classes, 1870–1900* (Hampshire; New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), fn. 49, pp. 237–38.

⁶⁴⁰ J. M. Dent, *The House of Dent, 1888–1938* (London: J. M. Dent and Sons, 1938), p. 58.

⁶⁴¹ On Ruskin in Sheffield, see Robert Hewison, *Art and Society: Ruskin in Sheffield, 1876* (Guild of St George: Brentham Press, London, 1981) and the publication from the conference 'Art for the Nation: John Ruskin, Art Education and Social Change', edited by Susanna Avery-Quash, Janet Barnes and Paul Tucker in the *Journal of Art Historiography*, 22 (June 2020)

<<https://arthistoriography.files.wordpress.com/2020/06/ruskin-introduction.pdf>>. On Lee's gallery tours, see: Susan Lanzoni, 'Practicing Psychology in the Art Gallery: Vernon Lee's Aesthetics of Empathy,' *Journal of the History of the Behavioural Sciences* 45:4 (2009), 330–54, DOI: <10.1002/jhbs.20395>.

⁶⁴² As a point of comparison, the remaining thirty-one volumes of the series, which covered towns from Avignon and Bruges to Cairo and Canterbury, were written by men. Outside Italy, the only volumes authored by women were *The Story of Toledo* (1898) by Irish New Woman writer Hannah Lynch (1859–1904) and *The Story of Coventry* (1911) by local Warwickshire historian Mary Dormer Harris (1867–1936).

([?]-c.1902) to illustrate them.⁶⁴³ Dent did, however, commission male travel writers for those volumes on the Italian locations noted as main stops on the traditional Grand Tour route — Florence, Naples, Rome, and Venice.⁶⁴⁴

Examining such widely disseminated and jointly-produced ventures as the ‘Medieval Towns’ brings new forms of art history writing and new practitioners into consideration, demonstrating the ‘laboratory of the modern discipline’.⁶⁴⁵ For example, in the personal library of the Berensons at I Tatti are several books of the Dent series, among them the volume dedicated to Milan. This was authored and illustrated by two British sisters, Ella Noyes (1863–1949) and Dora Noyes (1864–1960), who worked as writer and artist, respectively.⁶⁴⁶ Still attached to the inside cover of this volume, I found a letter from the authors to Mary Berenson, which had until then gone unnoticed and uncatalogued. Thanking Mary for the introductions she had given them to aid their research in Milan, the Noyes sisters apologise obsequiously for their ‘stupid & rather inadequate book’, which had appeared before Bernard’s *North Italian Painters* was published to give them ‘much needed help on

⁶⁴³ Lina Duff Gordon and Margaret Symonds, *The Story of Perugia*, illus. Helen M. James (London: J. M. Dent, 1898); Lina Duff Gordon, *The Story of Assisi*, illus. Nelly Erichsen and Helen M. James (London: J. M. Dent, 1900); Alethea Wiel, *The Story of Verona*, illus. Nelly Erichsen and Helen M. James (London: J. M. Dent, 1902); Ella Noyes, *The Story of Ferrara*, illus. Dora Noyes (London: J. M. Dent, 1904); Ella Noyes, *The Story of Milan*, illus. Dora Noyes (London: J. M. Dent, 1908); Janet Ross, *The Story of Pisa*, illus. Nelly Erichsen (London: J. M. Dent, 1909); Janet Ross and Nelly Erichsen, *The Story of Lucca*, illus. Nelly Erichsen (London: J. M. Dent, 1912); Alethea Wiel, *The Story of Bologna*, illus. Margarite Janes (London: J. M. Dent, 1923).

⁶⁴⁴ Edmund Gardner, *The Story of Florence*, illus. Nelly Erichsen (London: J. M. Dent, 1900); Norwood Young, *The Story of Rome*, illus. Nelly Erichsen (London: J. M. Dent, 1901); Thomas Oakey, *The Story of Venice*, illus. Nelly Erichsen (London: J. M. Dent, 1905); Cecil Headlam, *The Story of Naples*, illus. Major Benton Fletcher (London: J. M. Dent, 1927).

⁶⁴⁵ Meaghan Clarke and Francesco Ventrella, ‘Introduction’, *Visual Resources*, 33:1–2 (2017), 1–10 (p. 3).

⁶⁴⁶ Dora Noyes exhibited her work at the Royal Academy and the sisters collaborated on several illustrated volumes on Italian art, architecture, and history, including a book on the lives of the saints aimed at children. Their second volume for Dent, *The Story of Ferrara* (1904), earned the sisters a place in the town’s local history. According to the community Facebook group ‘Ferrara e dintori in cartolina e fotografia’, Dora Noyes’ original watercolour illustrations for the volume have been rediscovered and are in the possession of a resident in Ferrara: ‘Paesaggi letterari la Ferrara di Dora Noyes, 1904’ (7 October 2017)

<https://www.facebook.com/media/set/?set=a.1208872955881458&type=3&comment_id=12091454691875>

the Lombard School'.⁶⁴⁷ Evidently, the Noyes sisters were familiar with the Berensons, further populating our existing knowledge of the networks of artists and writers engaging with Italian art at this time and demonstrating how women in particular showed a willingness to experiment, not least with the guidebook format.

Two further volumes of the 'Medieval Towns' in the Berenson library are inscribed to Mary, these being *The Story of Perugia* and *The Story of Assisi* (fig. 3.4). It is on the former that this section will now focus, which formed the first contribution to the 'Medieval Towns' series. Published in 1898, it was co-authored by Lina Duff Gordon, niece of Janet Ross, and Margaret Symonds, daughter of the critic, cultural historian and poet John Addington Symonds (1840–93) (fig. 3.5). Though Margaret Symonds lived in London, she spent extensive periods of time in Italy with Duff Gordon, whose own proximity to primary archival material and historic libraries would prove indispensable in writing their guide.

Dent had initially intended the first volume of the 'Medieval Towns' to focus on Siena, but Symonds only agreed to write for the series on the condition that she could undertake a volume on Perugia jointly written with Duff Gordon.⁶⁴⁸ Their decision to eschew the offer of writing on Siena may have been a deliberate choice on their part to avoid, with their very first publication, encroaching on the territory of a close-knit group known as the 'Sienese Gang', which included Lucy Olcott, Frederic Mason Perkins and William Heywood (1857–1919). The already fervent interest of this trio in Siena and its art would result in a spate of publications on the town around 1900.⁶⁴⁹ Perugia had as yet not been the subject of such intense attention. Furthermore, Symonds already had

⁶⁴⁷ Ella Noyes to Mary Berenson, 6 April [1908], attached to inside cover of Ella Noyes, *The Story of Milan*, illus. Dora Noyes (London: J. M. Dent, 1908) [DG 656.N7 1908], BBVIT.

⁶⁴⁸ Dent, *House of Dent*, pp. 79–80.

⁶⁴⁹ Edward D. English, 'Medieval and Renaissance Siena and Tuscany, c.1900: Civic Life, Religion and the Countryside', in *Victorian and Edwardian Responses to the Italian Renaissance*, ed. by John E. Law and Lene Østermark-Johansen (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005), pp. 281–96; Imogen Tedbury, 'Collaboration and Correction: Re-examining the Writings of Lucy Olcott Perkins, "a lady resident in Siena"', *19: Interdisciplinary Studies in the Long Nineteenth Century*, 28 (2019), DOI: <<http://doi.org/10.16995/ntn.838>>.

a personal connection to draw on when writing on Perugia, as her father had published one of the first sustained historical accounts of the town in English in the third volume of his *Sketches and Studies in Italy and Greece* (1874).⁶⁵⁰

Through the correspondence of the two women, preserved in the British Institute of Florence, Alyson Price has traced a detailed history of their friendship across the course of their literary collaboration.⁶⁵¹ The pair first met in 1891, when Symonds and her father visited Florence. In her memoirs, Duff Gordon recalled how ‘seeing pictures with Madge [Margaret] and her father opened [her] eyes to the excitement of art [...] It then dawned on [her] there was a real art in looking at pictures’.⁶⁵² Recollecting the first of their joint research visits to Perugia, a stay of three months in 1896, Duff Gordon emphasised how this experience was one of unprecedented independence and freedom for them as young women: ‘it is strange now to think of it being unusual for young girls to stay alone in a hotel although accompanied by a trusted maid’.⁶⁵³ Even equipped with letters of introduction and fluency in Italian, their age and sex proved an initial hindrance to their study. The two later learned that, prior to their first arrival in Perugia, ‘various learned citizens’ had convened to decide who would be the first to meet them. It was expected that ‘no woman under sixty would be writing a book’ and they were initially refused help by local professors and museum officials who were ‘sure [they] were only frivolous young women’.⁶⁵⁴

Among the Anglo-Florentine community itself, the news of their commission was met with a rather cynical response. Though Duff Gordon was to form a close and lasting friendship with Berenson and would correspond with him throughout her life, a letter to Symonds reporting one of

⁶⁵⁰ John Addington Symonds, ‘Perugia’, *Sketches in Italy and Greece*, 3 vols (London: Smith, Elder and Co., 1874), vol. 3, pp. 68–94.

⁶⁵¹ Alyson Price, ‘Viaggiatori inglesi: esplorazioni in Umbria dagli archive del British Institute di Firenze’, in *Il viaggio e i viaggiatori in età moderna: gli inglesi in Italia e le avventure dei viaggiatori italiani*, ed. by Attilio Brillì and Elisabetta Federici (Bologna: Edizioni Pendragon, 2009), pp. 165–92 (p. 183). The correspondence covers Duff-Gordon’s letters to Symonds. Symonds’ letters are yet to be recovered.

⁶⁵² Lina Waterfield, *Castle in Italy: An Autobiography* (London: John Murray, 1961), p. 58.

⁶⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. 65.

⁶⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

her first encounters with him at a party hosted by her aunt, is revealing of his prickly and disbelieving attitude towards the capacity of others to write on art, particularly women. Having just embarked on research for *Perugia*, Duff Gordon informed Symonds that:

Mr Berenson then began to talk of you & the book. He was interested [...] [and] asked if we knew of Matarazzo.⁶⁵⁵ “Of course” I answered “who doesn’t”? Then he turned to me with a superior air: “I don’t think you c[oul]d have read one book I read”. “Oh perhaps not” I responded humbly & somewhat quaked in my shoes at the prospect of another book being hurled at us for inspection. “You haven’t read Mariotti?”⁶⁵⁶ & he smiled triumphantly. “Dear me! We know him by heart — the painters, the history & the 3rd vol[ume] on the Popes”. Mr Berenson looked quite disappointed as he said “well you are wonderful people”.⁶⁵⁷

Berenson’s presumption that the pair’s reading would be woefully inadequate not only underlines his own prejudices, but also indicates the quality of intellectual stimulation available to the young women thanks to their connections, upbringing and social networks. J. A. Symonds’ essay ‘Perugia’ drew on the work of the Perugian historian Francesco Matarazzo (c.1443–1518), and in turn influenced Vernon Lee’s rather grim short story set in the same town, entitled *A Wedding Chest* (1904), the style of which is also modelled on Matarazzo. Lee’s close friend Mary Robinson (1857–1944) recalled conversations at Villa Il Palmerino concerning the Perugian chronicler, at which Duff Gordon may well have been present.⁶⁵⁸

Appearing in 1898, Duff Gordon and Symonds’ *Story of Perugia* presented the first full-length account of the town’s history and art in the English language. The pair intended the book

⁶⁵⁵ Francesco Matarazzo, *Cronaca della città di Perugia dal 1492 al 1503 di Francesco Matarazzo* (Florence: G. P. Vieusseux, 1851). This was translated and published into English as *Chronicles of the City of Perugia, 1482–1503*, trans. Edward Strachan Morgan (London: J. M. Dent, 1905).

⁶⁵⁶ Annibale Mariotti, *Saggio di memorie storiche civili ed ecclesiastiche della città di Perugia* (Perugia: C. Baduel, 1806).

⁶⁵⁷ Lina Duff Gordon to Margaret Symonds, 9 Jan [undated, after 1896] [WAT:I:G:59:H7–12], BIF.

⁶⁵⁸ Catherine Maxwell, “‘A Queer Sort of Interest’: Vernon Lee’s Homoerotic Allusion to John Singer Sargent and John Addington Symonds”, in *Writing Women of the Fin de Siècle: Authors of Change*, ed. by Adrienne E. Gavin and Carolyn Oulton (Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), pp. 166–78 (p. 174).

more ‘for the general traveller rather than for the student’ and their treatment of the art to be found in Perugia was written ‘from the point of view of sentiment rather than that of criticism’.⁶⁵⁹ In a later letter discussing her next commission for Dent on Assisi, Duff Gordon expressed her intention ‘not to go into any “art criticism” questions [...] My one object is to help people see things for themselves & draw their own conclusions’.⁶⁶⁰ Unfortunately, of these women’s correspondence only the letters from Duff Gordon survive, so it is difficult to know precisely what perspective Symonds took. However, Duff Gordon’s framing of ‘art criticism’ as overbearingly didactic to the point of hindering an individual’s personal response to art was shared by other art writers at the time. The constant tussles concerning styles and attributions characteristic of turn-of-the-century connoisseurship left Cruttwell, for example,

feel[ing] rather lonely in my ideas — no one who studies Art as a critic thinks of anything but the technique, and what is worse they sneer at any other view and the others go too far and like Art that is didactic, which the greatest Genius never is.⁶⁶¹

Such sentiments echo those of Jameson, who, as long ago as 1848, had ridiculed connoisseurs who:

talked volubly and harmlessly of “hands” and “masters” and “schools” [...] there is an awakening suspicion that there is more to these pictures than mere connoisseurship can interpret; and that they have another, a deeper, significance than has been dreamed of by picture dealers and picture collectors.⁶⁶²

Half a century later, in the early 1900s, the figure of the connoisseur came under fire once more. For example, a regular column in the *Studio* — one of the new art magazines — titled ‘The Lay Figure’

⁶⁵⁹ Lina Duff Gordon and Margaret Symonds, *The Story of Perugia* (London: J. M. Dent, 1898), pp. vii–viii.

⁶⁶⁰ Duff Gordon to Symonds, [undated] July 1900 [WAT:I:G:77:H14–15], BIF. Emphasis in original.

⁶⁶¹ Cruttwell to Morrell, 20 May 1899 [2/12], BBVIT.

⁶⁶² Anna Jameson, *The Poetry of Sacred and Legendary Art*, 2 vols (London: Longmans, 1848), vol. 1, p. xxiv.

followed imaginary conversations held between archetypal figures such as the ‘Expert’, the ‘Art Critic’, the ‘Art Patron’ and the ‘Reviewer’, which focused on satirising the old master connoisseur and the taste for Italian artists. Each week, the column centered on topics such as ‘Are We Still Obsessed by the Italian Renaissance?’, despaired at the ‘multitude of fads’ now making up art criticism and disparaged critics who acted ‘as mouthpiece for this or that art clique’ and their ‘over-adulation of the Old Masters’.⁶⁶³

Duff Gordon noted approvingly of Fry that he was not a ‘carping critic’, and it was perhaps their wish to avoid being perceived as carping critics themselves that explains their choice of secondary sources for their guide. They principally draw on the work of previous generations of writers, J. A. Crowe and G. B. Cavalcaselle, Franz Kugler, Alexis-François Rio and Giorgio Vasari, and of historic and contemporary local Perugian writers.⁶⁶⁴ Aligning their guidebook with these earlier, historical approaches not only indicated their scholarly reading, but ensured that they avoided being grouped as a ‘mouthpiece’ or ‘disciple’ of a living connoisseur. This strategy paid off, as attested to by the hugely successful reception of their book. Running to a second edition in its first year of publication, *The Story of Perugia* received numerous laudatory reviews. In the *Academy*’s dedicated ‘Guide Book Supplement’ it was praised as a “‘model Guidebook’” conveying both ‘matter-of-fact details and moving characteristics’, and ‘fused by study and adorned by style’, while the *Sketch* gave its authors a full-page feature with portrait photographs (**fig. 3.6**).⁶⁶⁵

Their disavowal of a critical point of view in favour of personal style also worked sensitively yet pragmatically to shield their contribution from becoming a target for other art critics laying claims to Perugian art. For example, in their section discussing the Pinacoteca at Perugia, they

⁶⁶³ [Anon.], ‘The Lay Figure: Are We Still Obsessed by the Italian Renaissance?’, *Studio* (July 1901), 78; [Anon.], ‘The Lay Figure: On Fashions in Criticism’, *Studio* (April 1909), 256.

⁶⁶⁴ Duff Gordon to Symonds, [March 1900] [WAT:I:G:76:H3–6], BIF.

⁶⁶⁵ [Anon.], ‘All About Perugia’, *Sketch* (4 May 1898), 75. The book ran to ten editions in total between 1898 and 1927; [Anon.], ‘A Model Guidebook: *The Story of Perugia* (1898)’, *Academy: Guide Book Supplement* (11 June 1898), 633.

contradict their prefatory claim to avoid art criticism and proceed with notes on the paintings that ‘may be of use to anyone who requires a few more details’. Insisting these ‘pretend to be nothing like a serious criticism’, they still offer their opinions on hotly contested debates of attribution.⁶⁶⁶ Most boldly of all, they discuss one of the most contentious issues of authorship in relation to the Umbrian school – the attribution of the *Miracles of San Bernardino* (1473). These eight painted panels had been an ongoing source of fascination and uncertain attribution throughout the nineteenth century. The general consensus, most recently bolstered by Berenson’s opinion, was that they were the work of Fiorenzo di Lorenzo (c.1440–1522), a master of the school prior to the time of his more famous fellow citizen Perugino. Duff-Gordon and Symonds, however, disagreed, suggesting that another hand was involved in the execution.⁶⁶⁷ To deflect any sense of antagonism intended by their opinion against that of other critics, they employed a humorous description to highlight the disjunction between the distinctive manner in which the figures in the panels were depicted, and the pathos of the subject. Commenting on the panel of Saint Bernardino healing a wounded man, they observe how the onlookers to the scene appeared to be oddly ‘exquisite and undisturbed [...] all the time they are thinking of their well-set tunics and of their long and lovely legs [...] everything is too beautiful and finished for much pity’.⁶⁶⁸ As they noted, this impression contrasted with the widely-held conception of Fiorenzo as a devoutly religious painter.

Such remarks were received as ‘sympathetic and suggestive’, giving Duff Gordon and Symonds’ work ‘touches of personal sentiment and appreciation that distinguish it from a mere guide-book’.⁶⁶⁹ In this manner, the two women effectively garnered acclaim as authorities on the town, while avoiding any risk of suspicion or jealousy from critics whose opinions could influence the successful reception of their work, and their reputations, among art critic circles. For example, a

⁶⁶⁶ Duff Gordon and Symonds, *Perugia*, p. 236.

⁶⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 256.

⁶⁶⁸ Symonds and Duff-Gordon, *Perugia*, p. 256.

⁶⁶⁹ [Anon.], ‘Review of Lina Duff Gordon and Margaret Symonds, *The Story of Perugia* (1898)’, *Spectator* (8 October 1898), 471.

review by Robert Langton Douglas commended *The Story of Perugia* for ‘never sink[ing] to the level of the ordinary guide-book’ and even suggested it could have benefited from more criticism.⁶⁷⁰ Two years after its first publication, Duff Gordon wrote to Symonds expressing her ‘wonder that so many people know all about Perugia’, having heard that both the French historian and novelist Paul Bourget (1852–1935) and the Director of the Vieusseux library had both visited the town with their book to hand.⁶⁷¹ Duff Gordon also found that other critics were amenable to sharing their own work with her. For example, in preparation for her second commission from Dent to write on Assisi, Fry willingly sent Duff Gordon copies of his recently delivered lectures on Giotto, prior to their publication in the *Monthly Review*.⁶⁷²

While Duff Gordon and Symonds actively disassociated themselves from the label of ‘art critic’, another woman specialising in Perugian art deliberately placed herself on the front line, levelling her personal knowledge and experience of Perugian art in contest with that of other connoisseurs. Working and writing outside of the networks of London and the Anglo-Florentine community, Jean Carlyle Graham’s deluxe volume *The Problem of Fiorenzo di Lorenzo* (1903) offers us an example of a woman publishing a hybrid monograph-guidebook in a tone of voice and with a purpose rather different from those we have just noted in the case of Duff Gordon and Symonds.⁶⁷³

Graham was born in Glasgow and by 1881 she was living with her widowed mother Emma Young (dates untraced) in Knutsford, Cheshire. It was there in June 1885 that she married Thomas Speakman (1841–87), a widowed land agent with four children. Following his death, Graham was left with £200 and while details of her life and occupation in subsequent years are spare, it was

⁶⁷⁰ R. L. Douglas, ‘Perugia’, *Bookman* (14 August 1898), 136.

⁶⁷¹ Duff Gordon to Symonds, 23 June [1900] [WAT:I:G:77:H6–9], BIF.

⁶⁷² Duff Gordon to Symonds, [March 1900] [WAT:I:G:76:H3–6], BIF.

⁶⁷³ Jean Carlyle Graham, *The Problem of Fiorenzo di Lorenzo of Perugia* (Perugia: Domenico Terese; Rome: Ermanno Loescher and Co., 1903). Further references to this volume will be provided in parentheses in the text. Graham capitalises certain nouns, which I have retained in my quotations.

around 1900 that she moved to Italy alone (**fig. 3.7**).⁶⁷⁴ Graham lived principally in Siena, lodging at the Palazzo Pollini, a 1520s palazzo turned pension of which she ‘seem[ed] to be a permanent boarder’ (**fig. 3.8**).⁶⁷⁵ Her close friend, the American artist Mary Rogers Williams (1857–1907), spent several weeks in Siena with Graham during the summers of 1905 and 1907, and wrote of her:

She is one of the most charming women I have ever met. She writes on art and is wonderfully bright and entertaining. We had a heart to heart talk about Berenson this morning whom we neither of us seem to admire.⁶⁷⁶

Graham’s lack of approval of Berenson’s methods was expressed without reservation in *The Problem of Fiorenzo di Lorenzo*. This publication investigated the current state of knowledge concerning the Umbrian school of painting and the complex issue of attribution surrounding one of its mysterious early exponents. Unlike the serialised artist monographs popular at this time (see Chapter Two), Graham’s book was published independently in Perugia, as a stand-alone volume printed in a limited edition run of 300 copies. Subtitled ‘a critical and historical study’, it featured a lithographic printed title-page highlighted in gold, twenty-five full-plate photogravure and tipped-in photographic plates and a hand-tooled leather binding (**fig. 3.9**). The book was dedicated, in Italian, to the nobleman Luigi Manzoni (1844–1905) of Perugia’s Ansidei Manzoni family.⁶⁷⁷

Graham proudly acknowledged that the book had been written and printed in Perugia. Again, it is difficult to ascertain precisely why and how, as a resident of Siena, she came to write and

⁶⁷⁴ I am incredibly grateful to Eve Kahn for making Graham known to me and for so generously sharing her research on Graham with me.

⁶⁷⁵ Eve Kahn, *Forever Seeing New Beauties: The Forgotten Impressionist Mary Rogers Williams, 1857–1907* (Connecticut: Wesleyan University Press, 2019), p. 165.

⁶⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 165–66. Williams was deputy at Smith College art department from 1888–1906, where Berenson’s sister Senda taught athletics (Kahn, p. 233). Kahn suggests it was here that Williams may first have met Berenson as he occasionally attended the literary/artistic salon run by Williams’ colleagues, the Lathrop sisters.

⁶⁷⁷ Manzoni was a philologist, librarian and art historian who had studied in Bologna and moved to Perugia in 1873 to marry Francesca Ansidei.

publish a luxury book on Perugia. Furthermore, it is uncertain exactly how Graham funded such a publication and her living expenses while in Italy, although her connection with Manzoni may well have provided her with a means to cover her expenses. In contrast to her contemporaries discussed in this thesis, Graham does not seem to have undertaken consistent periodical work or journalism. Neither does she seem to have returned to the UK to establish connections with publishers and editors there and the publication of *Fiorenzo* appeared without any preceding periodical contribution or articles in the leading art historical journals, as had happened in the case of Cartwright or Cruttwell.⁶⁷⁸

Despite the lack of any art historical trail, *Fiorenzo* proves Graham to be well read in the principal texts of art criticism, aware of the different art historical schools of thought as well as unhesitatingly confident in voicing her own opinion of the current criticism on her subject. The preface to her monograph gives an indication as to what motivated her choice of Fiorenzo di Lorenzo as a topic for research: the artist presented ‘one of the most interesting and intricate problems’ in the study of Italian art. Graham states her intention as ‘simply to offer these facts to the Art-loving public’ and, crucially, not to ‘present an authoritative solution to the problem, which indeed, appears to be unsolvable’ (p. 5).

In line with what other contemporaries such as Halsey were doing, Graham sought to revive Fiorenzo’s reputation, which had been ‘lost in the blaze of Pietro Vannucci — clamoured out of hearing’ (p. 9). Pietro Vannucci, commonly known as Perugino, was one of the most prolific artists of Umbria and indeed, the pervasiveness of his style and school was so successful that he was seen as *the* representative artist of the school of Umbrian art. Vernon Lee had encapsulated this longstanding impression of Perugino in her article ‘In Umbria’ (1881) where she mused ‘is it a

⁶⁷⁸ Graham went on to produce another guidebook about the Val d’Elsa and published one article in the *Burlington* regarding the authorship of the frescoes in the Palazzo Comunale of San Gimignano: Jean Carlyle Graham, ‘The Authorship of the Sangimignano Frescoes’, *Burlington Magazine*, 6:24 (March 1905), 483–92; Jean Carlyle Graham and Elizabeth M. Derbishire, *San Gimignano of Val D’Elsa in Tuscany* (Rome: Ermanno Loescher and Co., 1910).

school or a man? – A school concentrated in one man or a man radiating into a school [...] Everything is Perugino, in more or less degree'.⁶⁷⁹ Graham's response to this conundrum was two-fold. First, she aimed to reframe the understanding of the Umbrian school of art such that an artist like Fiorenzo could be newly placed within it, through making a distinction between two local styles — the 'Umbrian' and 'Peruginesque'. The latter, resting principally on the characteristics of the eponymous artist, had come to subsume any independent conception of the former. By returning the term 'Perugian' to the equation, Graham intended to offer an adjective to describe the style of art emanating from the city in general, not solely from one individual artist, Perugino (p. 9). Secondly, Graham sought to provide an historical and documentary-based foundation from which accurate attributions for works by Fiorenzo might arise. Graham's methodological recourse in this matter was a combination of connoisseurship with information gleaned from historical documentation. However, her connoisseurship was avowedly not that which she termed the 'New Criticism'.

Graham's attention to archival documentation eschewed by both Berenson and Morelli, placed her in a philological camp of scholars who promoted this research methodology in Italy and Germany. Despite this *modus operandi* remaining prominent in certain quarters in the early years of the twentieth century, it was openly disparaged by intellectual heavyweights of the art world such as Berenson, who often discredited the authority of its practitioners, particularly women. For example, Cartwright recorded a conversation with Berenson in October 1906 where he had:

[...] laughed over [Constance Ffoulkes] & s[ai]d it was pitiful the way in whi[ch] she toiled for all these y[ea]rs at so dull a pa[in]ter [...] He says Cona cares more about [Vincenzo] Foppa's washing bills than his paintings [...] & it is Cona's work to rummage dull archives & slave for Foppa.⁶⁸⁰

⁶⁷⁹ Vernon Lee, 'In Umbria', *Fraser's Magazine*, 618 (June 1881), 800–16 (p. 802).

⁶⁸⁰ 10 October 1906 [Diary CE390], CENA.

However, Berenson equally reviled women who took up the ‘new art criticism’, as expressed in his response to a request from Mary Berenson that he take on a ‘Miss Maran’ as a pupil: ‘surely you ought by this time to know well with what disgust I regard females who take to connoisseurship’.⁶⁸¹ Such an attitude exemplifies the gendering of connoisseurship at the turn-of-the-century as a distinctly masculine endeavour. As Berenice Carroll has discussed in relation to the historical treatment of women’s intellectual contributions in the western system of knowledge-making, claims of ownership and originality are used to ‘preserv[e] for a small group of self-recruiting males both hegemony over received knowledge and control of a variety of rewards and privileges’.⁶⁸² In relation to connoisseurship, ownership and control of received knowledge in regard to the discovery and attribution of paintings resulted in lucrative forms of income for a man like Berenson.

Graham’s method, as we have seen was the case with other contemporary women writers on Italian painting, focused on looking at the paintings themselves and consulting relevant primary source material. On the one hand she had a deep familiarity with works by the artist, in this case pictures by Fiorenzo in the Pinacoteca and surrounding churches in Perugia, giving her an advantage, as she saw it, over other critics who had confidently yet unjustifiably pronounced attributions from afar. In her case, being on the margins of the English art-historical circle, Graham felt free to write as she wished, unconstrained by feelings of loyalty to any particular ‘camp’ or worries about reputational impact.

Graham dedicated the majority of her time to investigating Fiorenzo’s only signed work, a painted architectural niche for the church of San Francesco al Prato (1487) (**fig. 3.10**). In her opinion, this work conveyed both the ‘*individual* spirit of Fiorenzo’ and his ‘technical individualities’, which

⁶⁸¹ Bernard Berenson to Mary Berenson, 2 September 1899, BBVIT. I am grateful to Michael Gorman for drawing my attention to this quotation.

⁶⁸² Berenice Carroll, ‘The Politics of “Originality”’: Women and the Class System of Intellect’, *Journal of Women’s History*, 2:2 (Autumn 1990), 136–63 (p. 136).

assured ‘certainty in attribution’ (p. 13, emphasis in original). It was these aspects that she found lacking in other works claimed as that of Fiorenzo by ‘historians and critics who [...] persist in estimating Fiorenzo from the dubious paintings, instead of going to the only authentic document’ (p. 13).

It was the San Francesco al Prato niche which Graham reproduced as a photogravure frontispiece for her book, emphasising its importance to her argument. This painting had been photographed previously by Alinari and Anderson, but in 1901 Anderson had produced a new version with the latest silver salt gelatin print technology, and it is this version that Graham used (**fig. 3.11**). Graham devotes a chapter to contesting certain assumptions regarding this signed and dated work, particularly in regards to its position in Fiorenzo’s oeuvre and what this suggested about the artist’s early training. Graham observed that the ‘firm and life-like’ modelling of the two large figures of Saints Peter and Paul suggest Fiorenzo ‘must have continuously drawn from the nude’ (p. 18). Acknowledging this practice was unusual for the time, Graham refuted the assertion of ‘one of the New art critics’ that ‘Fiorenzo “put himself to school”’ under an artist known for his advancement in the depiction of human anatomy, Antonio del Pollaiuolo (p. 18). This critic was Berenson, who in his *Central Italian Painters* (1897) had claimed that Fiorenzo had been ‘thrice dipped in the vivifying stream of Florentine art’ and had ‘put himself to school at Florence under Antonio Pollaiuolo’.⁶⁸³ Graham opined that this theory ‘lack[ed] authentication’ and the only ‘indisputable facts’ were that both Antonio del Pollaiuolo and Fiorenzo di Lorenzo were ‘masterly draughts[men] and good anatomist[s]’ (p. 18).

Using the San Francesco al Prato niche as her ‘control’, Graham made a careful study of the documentation relating to Fiorenzo and this work, her second sort of evidence alongside that of works of art themselves. She provided photographic reproductions of her archival sources, and an

⁶⁸³ Bernard Berenson, *The Central Italian Painters of the Renaissance* (London: G. P. Putnam’s Sons, 1897), p. 89.

appendix with transcriptions of twelve previously unpublished Latin documents relating to Fiorenzo. Citing these sources, Graham was able to dispense with some of the long-standing beliefs regarding the artist's life, such as the consensus that Fiorenzo had enrolled at the College of Perugian Painters in 1463. This fact was traced back to the Perugian scholar Annibale Mariotti (1738–1801), but Graham asserted that it was based 'solely on intuitive conjecture' (p. 28). Consulting the Matriculation Lists of the Collegio dei Pittori, she observed that there was no specified date against Fiorenzo's name, providing an annotated facsimile of this list to authenticate her argument (p. 28).

For Graham, the issue of the contested San Bernardino panels encapsulated the problematic characterisation of Umbria and its art as being steeped in 'graceful femininity', which she argued was solely drawn from the pervasive influence of Perugino's 'personal conception of beauty' (p. 35). Referring again to Berenson's attribution of the panels to Fiorenzo, she noted the discrepancy between his assertion that in 1473 that Fiorenzo was a novice who undertook the San Bernardino panels 'fresh' from his training in Florence and the existence of a contract dated 1472 — which she reproduced in English for the first time — for an altarpiece for the Perugian church of Santa Maria Nuova, which placed Fiorenzo at an 'undoubtedly mature' stage of his career (p. 36).

For Graham, it was not connoisseurship in itself that was at issue, but the unverified attributions given by those who had a vested interest in baptising works of art with certain names. Noting with irony how the 'rising demand for works of Fiorenzo' had been met with a sudden proliferation of newly-discovered 'authentic' paintings, Graham ridiculed Berenson's apparently 'disinterested' connoisseurship. For example, pointing with irony to how 'we are ordered, still by Mr Berenson' to group an *Annunciation* from the Portiuncula of Assisi as a work by Fiorenzo, she noted that it 'unfortunately — leaving an ugly scar of plaster in its stead — ha[d] disappeared in the last few years, in spite of Italian state ordinances as to the expatriation of works of art!' (p. 68). As Lucilla Vignoli has detailed, this painting, now attributed to Piermatteo d'Amelia (c.1450–1508),

was illegally exported from Italy by Berenson for sale to his patron Isabella Stewart Gardner (1840–1924).⁶⁸⁴

Graham does in fact speak highly of certain connoisseurs, in particular of Morelli and his method. For example, she acknowledged that his description of Fiorenzo's characteristic 'faun-like ear' correlated with the artist's signed work (p. 59). However, observing the presence of this feature in only two of the eighty-eight figures depicted in the San Bernardino panels, which Morelli also attributed to Fiorenzo, Graham questioned if 'our Generalissimo', as she titled Morelli, had 'le[d] us astray', acknowledging coolly 'but even Morelli was a man' (p. 110).

It was not only the financial, but also the 'self-commendation' that Graham regarded as motivating the rapid reattributions of a work of art from one artist to another. She termed these 'displacements' the means by which the 'reputation of a New Art Critic mount[ed] to the heights where laurels grow' (p. 115). As she points out, Fiorenzo was then represented by some fifty paintings, the majority of which had only been reattributed to him in recent years. For Graham, it was important to elucidate both the 'glaring improbabilities' and the 'daring possibilities' of these purported authentic works. To illustrate how unfeasible certain of these recently proposed claims were, in her final chapter Graham refers to two recent newcomers to the artist's oeuvre, to demonstrate the stark discrepancies of style between works that were supposedly by the same artist. These were a *Virgin and Child with Saints* at Frankfurt and a *Crucifixion* at the Villa Borghese (**figs. 3.12; 3.13**). Graham believed the former was more in keeping with the work of a Sienese artist, while she could find 'no convincing reason' why the latter had been plucked from Pintoricchio and given to Fiorenzo by Adolfo Venturi (p. 116). The problem of Fiorenzo for Graham was 'as interesting as it is perplexing' given that the variety and range of style, technique, development and approach across the fifty-odd paintings attributed to the artist had resulted in such contradictory

⁶⁸⁴ Lucilla Vignoli, 'L'Annunciazione Gardner da Assisi a Boston: le intricate vicende dell'esportazione illegale di un capolavoro del Quattrocento italiano', *Rivista d'Arte*, 5:1 (2011), 351–73.

assessments among critics (p. 117). In sum, Graham found it difficult to believe that all of these works could have been painted by one man and concluded that as ‘the first earnest student’ of Fiorenzo, she hoped her investigations would lead to better understanding’ of this ‘most interesting Old Master’ (p. 119).

Unsurprisingly, Graham’s book was not particularly well received in London. In his review for the *Burlington Magazine*, Herbert Cook was especially scathing of Graham’s unwillingness to show proper deference to Berenson’s attributions:

There is a saying, ‘All women are angels; but there are different kinds of angels.’ In the field of art criticism the woman who is content to be a recording angel has proved ere this her value; but it ill becomes her to essay the part of the destroying angel; yet such is Miss Graham’s task in the book before us.⁶⁸⁵

Evidently, as Cook’s gendered language makes abundantly clear, the work of a woman in the field of art criticism was deemed of value when it involved compiling the opinions of other (male) critics, but to venture into the territory of making or breaking attributions was seen as destructive and unbecoming. Cook’s short review offers little account of Graham’s work, other than to satirise her refusal to offer a definite pronouncement on the issue of Fiorenzo’s attributions as evidence of her own misplaced critical judgement of others. Another, more sympathetic, reviewer in the *Magazine of Art* acknowledged that Graham had ‘the full courage of her convictions [...] and dar[ed] to challenge the opinion even of the redoubtable Mr Berenson’.⁶⁸⁶ Unlike the other women discussed in this chapter, Graham did not share those same social circles, or mutual networks of support, by which they negotiated their relationships with male colleagues whose status, and professional affiliations, had the power to help or hinder.

⁶⁸⁵ H. C. [Herbert Cook], ‘Review of Jean Carlyle Graham, *The Problem of Fiorenzo di Lorenzo* (1903)’, *Burlington Magazine*, 4:12 (March 1904), 288.

⁶⁸⁶ [Anon.], ‘Review of Jean Carlyle Graham, *The Problem of Fiorenzo di Lorenzo* (1901)’, *Magazine of Art*, 28 (1904), 448.

Precisely because Graham lacked these connections, she was at greater liberty to express her disagreements with powerful male critics. Her example provides a fascinating case study of how a single woman could engage in her own research and find support to publish her work in Italy. Though her findings were dismissed in certain circles, nonetheless, they still drew attention to different ways of conducting research and the important drivers behind them. Her principal accusation — that the proliferation of newly attributed works to Fiorenzo had more to do with trends of the market and taste than with true recognition and understanding of the artist's style — still holds true today. For example, the San Bernardino panels are now attributed variously to Fiorenzo, Perugino and Pintoricchio. The Frankfurt *Madonna and Saints* is doubtfully attributed to Fiorenzo, while the Borghese *Crucifixion* has been returned to the oeuvre of Pintoricchio. Graham remains, like numerous other women writers of her time, a voice written out of the chorus of art history at the turn of the twentieth century, despite her assertions and questioning having stood the test of time in the way that certain opinions by esteemed male contemporaries have not.

This chapter has focused, as these women writers did for the most part, on the artistic culture of the northern regions of Italy. However, there is evidence that several of the women discussed here attempted to expand the range of their research into areas of the *Mezzogiorno*, or the south of Italy. Earlier women writers had used the genre of travel literature to scope out less-familiar sites, such as Maria Callcott's *Three Months Passed in the Mountains East of Rome, During the Year 1819* (1820).⁶⁸⁷ Based on a three-month stay with her husband in the Lazio region to the east of Rome, Callcott intended to differentiate her writing from the mass of published accounts on the city. Her record of her experiences offers an insight into the *contadini* and peasants not often encountered by

⁶⁸⁷ Maria Callcott, *Three Months Passed in the Mountains East of Rome, During the Year 1819* (London: Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme and Brown; Edinburgh: Constable, 1820).

English tourists. In her preface, she stated her intention to depart from the Grand Tour, and instead to raise awareness of the topic of contemporary Rome, on which modern authors were silent.⁶⁸⁸

The *Mezzogiorno* too remained comparatively unexamined at the end of the nineteenth century, particularly due to the characterisation of the northern regions such as Tuscany and Lombardy as ‘civilised’, compared to the ‘barbarous’ south.⁶⁸⁹ As Nelson Moe explores, this othering of the southern regions of Italy occurred mid-century, with the struggle to assert Italy’s status as a modern, European nation. However, the *Mezzogiorno* also provoked curiosity for those writers seeking a picturesque ideal of an untamed, pre-modernised world.⁶⁹⁰

The Abruzzo remained an area normally excluded from the traditional tourist circuit. One notable exception is *In the Abruzzi* (1908) by Anne MacDonell (dates untraced) which Attilio Brilli notes was written not from the perspective of a distanced observer, but in the wake of direct contact with locals.⁶⁹¹ Undeveloped photographic negatives in the personal archive of Edith Coulson James show that she too conducted travel through the Abruzzo in 1902 and her numerous portraits of local people and customs suggest she may even have been planning a book on the region.

Sicily also grew as a place of interest for women writers, as Georgia Alù has explored.⁶⁹² For example, following the publication of *The Story of Assisi* (1900) and her marriage in 1902 to the artist Aubrey Waterfield (1874–1944), Duff Gordon moved to Palermo to begin research on that

⁶⁸⁸ Betty Hagglund, ‘The “Bricolage” of Travel Writing: a Bakhtinian Reading of Nineteenth-Century Women’s Travel Writings About Italy’, *Studies in Travel Writing*, 16:2 (June 2012), 107–21 (p. 114).

⁶⁸⁹ John Dickie, *Darkest Italy: The Nation and Stereotypes of the Mezzogiorno, 1860–1900* (London: Macmillan, 1999), p. 7.

⁶⁹⁰ Nelson Moe, *The View from Vesuvius: Italian Culture and the Southern Question* (Berkeley; Los Angeles; London: University of California Press, 2002), pp. 1–2. See also: Sharon Ouditt, *Impressions of Southern Italy: British Travel Writing from Henry Swinburne to Norman Douglas* (London: Routledge, 2013).

⁶⁹¹ Anne MacDonell, *In the Abruzzi*, illus. Amy Atkinson (London: Chatto and Windus, 1908); Attilio Brilli, *Il viaggio in Italia: storia di una grande tradizione culturale* (Bologna: Società Editrice il Mulino, 2006), pp. 249–51.

⁶⁹² Georgia Alù, *Beyond the Traveller’s Gaze: Expatriate Ladies Writing in Sicily, 1848–1910* (Oxford: Peter Lang, 2008)

town for a prospective guidebook for the ‘Medieval Towns’.⁶⁹³ However, after five months spent researching and sketching in Palermo, the ever profit-minded publishing house of Dent asked the couple to postpone further work on that town and instead to write a more lucrative volume on Rome, giving them only three months to complete the 400-page, fully-illustrated book in order to get ahead of a rival publisher.⁶⁹⁴ Cruttwell, too, began researching the elusive sculptor Francesco Laurana (c.1420–c.1502) in July 1903, having been offered the project by Mary Berenson.⁶⁹⁵ She wrote to Wilhelm von Bode to request help with sourcing photographs, informing him that she had begun teaching herself photography in advance of a trip to Sicily planned for the following year, to photograph and study Laurana’s existing works *in situ*.⁶⁹⁶ Unfortunately, Cruttwell was unable to complete this research trip, it seems due to the expense, and though she was able to visit and photograph the works attributed to Laurana in France, the project was left uncompleted.⁶⁹⁷ These examples of aborted, and therefore overlooked, projects are nevertheless worthwhile drawing into the current discussion as they indicate another avenue by which women looked to expand cultural awareness of Italy, beyond the Vasarian frame.

In this chapter, I have sought to establish the importance of the guidebook as a mediator of art historical knowledge at the turn of the twentieth century, and the significant role of women as authors of these texts. While the Baedeker and Murray guides have remained synonymous with the idea of British travel to Italy through the long nineteenth century, other publishers commissioned a range of art-focused guides, often seeking the expertise and knowledge of women art writers to produce them. For some women, like Baxter, residence in Florence and connection to local publishers brought opportunities to produce volumes on local sites for British visitors. Others, like

⁶⁹³ Waterfield, *Castle in Italy*, p. 111.

⁶⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 115; Lina Duff Gordon and St. Clair Baddeley, *Rome and Its Story*, illus. Aubrey Waterfield (London: J. M. Dent, 1904).

⁶⁹⁵ Cruttwell to Morrell, [undated, letter postmarked 28 March 1903] [6/12], BBVIT.

⁶⁹⁶ Cruttwell to Bode, 12 July 1903, Stiftung Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Berlin, Zentralarchiv Bode Nachlass, Correspondence, Maud Cruttwell, quoted in Rumberg, ‘Andrea Verrocchio’, Appendix 5.4, p. 259.

⁶⁹⁷ Cruttwell to Bode [1903], quoted in *ibid.*

Cartwright, possessed the authority to shape their publication from a general guide into a scholarly tool, in keeping with their own ambitions to promote art historical knowledge. In the case of Cruttwell, the guidebook was intended to mediate the visitor's experience directly through her own vision, adding fresh understanding to our knowledge of how their readers engaged with and encountered Italian art *in situ*, an experience that can to some extent be re-imagined today, as I have shown with the example of her *Florentine Churches*.

This chapter has also added to our knowledge of British women's engagement with other regions of Italy, by examining as case studies two little known texts focusing on Perugia, and offering an excursus into women's engagement with southern Italy. The work of Duff Gordon, Symonds and Graham attests to the active presence of women as writers and researchers in that town, broadening the existing geographical focus of Anglo-Italian cultural exchange beyond Florence. The example of Dent's 'Medieval Towns' series demonstrates the flexible, collaborative ways in which many women wrote about Italian art at this time. The guidebook format offered two young women the means of conveying their own ideas, without directly challenging existing authorities. On the other hand, Graham deliberately sought to question those very authorities, who she felt were being guided by ulterior motives other than historical and scholarly accuracy. As an outsider to the Anglo-Italian community of Florence, Graham had no qualms about voicing her disagreement with the current state of understanding of Fiorenzo's oeuvre as put forward by leading male connoisseurs, bolstered by her own intense study of the archival material and works of art in Perugia itself.

Examining women's engagement with forms of art history writing beyond the periodical article or monograph demonstrates the diversity of their output, much of which has historically been sidelined for not being 'scholarly' enough. This omission obscures an important textual output of

women's active engagement with and navigation around Italy's museums and churches.⁶⁹⁸ They were certainly recognised as a dominant presence in these spaces at the time, as attested by the prevalence in both contemporary fiction and painting of the figure of the female art observer and critic, consulting art and guidebook in tandem (**fig. 3.14**).⁶⁹⁹ Examining the portrayal of such characters in the work of early modernist women writers, Karin Roffman observes that they are often found to be 'standing at a kind of attention in front of a collection [...] museums and libraries are new places that require alertness and a serious commitment of intellectual and emotional attention'.⁷⁰⁰ The guidebooks written by women at this time present us with verifiable proof of this dedicated commitment and offer a counterpoint to the often satirical treatment of the female critic or art observer found in the work of male writers such as E. M. Forster or Henry James. It is this commitment of attention that the women discussed here sought to cultivate in their readers through their guidebooks. As Duff Gordon expressed it to Symonds, 'it [went] to [her] heart to see people fly pass works of art' and she wished to 'draw the hurried tourist into hidden byways'.⁷⁰¹ Attending to these texts reveals important other means by which women contributed to the knowledge and appreciation of Italian art, wherever it might be found in historic monuments, villas, museums and churches.

⁶⁹⁸ A recent MA thesis has explored how nineteenth-century women writers accessed and responded to various sites of artistic interest in Florence: Antje Anderson, 'Gendering Art History in the Victorian Age: Anna Jameson, Elizabeth Eastlake, and George Eliot in Florence', unpublished MA thesis, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, 2020. Anderson maintains the argument of Pamela Gerrish-Nunn, that these women would not have been recognised as legitimate art critics in their time and were 'imitative' in their work discussing canonical Italian art (pp. 182–83). The author has created an accompanying website with interactive maps tracking the routes of these writers around the city centre: 'George Eliot's Art World: Travel Maps' <<http://georgeeliotartworld.com./neatline>>.

⁶⁹⁹ Perhaps the most well-known fictional example is E. M. Forster's Lucy Honeychurch from *A Room with a View* (1908). See: Fernanda Luísa da Silva Feneja, 'Tourist Experience in Narrative Fiction: E. M. Forster's *A Room with a View*', in *Identity and Intercultural Exchange in Travel and Tourism*, ed. by Anthony David Barker (Bristol; Buffalo; Toronto: Channel View Publications, 2015), pp. 105–16.

⁷⁰⁰ Karin Roffman, *From the Modernist Annex: American Women Writers in Museums and Libraries* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2010), pp. 1–2.

⁷⁰¹ Duff Gordon to Symonds, [May 1900] [WAT:I:G:77:H1–3], BIF.

CHAPTER FOUR

WOMEN AT THE FRONT LINE: CAMPAIGNING FOR HERITAGE

But everywhere there is a minority [...] that profits from aesthetic culture [...] people born not to fight corruption, but to enjoy the rich heritage of the great centuries of art. This is the class that requires aesthetic cultivation [...] Such a class is still very limited in every country, but in Italy it barely exists.⁷⁰²

Published in 1875 in the *Rivista Europea*, Vernon Lee's article 'Sulla necessità della coltura estetica in Italia' ('On the necessity of aesthetic culture in Italy') deplored the poor state of artistic education in her adopted home country. Despite being a place of immense cultural richness, as Lee observes, Italy often found itself the object of foreign criticism, for its failure to safeguard adequately the art and monuments in its possession. Lee argued that the establishment of museums and galleries, and recent developments in art criticism, were not effective enough to encourage a sense of public custodianship towards this heritage, as these institutions spoke to a limited audience, while keeping art at a distance from the wider public.⁷⁰³ Lee believed it was the responsibility of the already 'illuminated minority' to promote this 'aesthetic cultivation', particularly towards those works of art and monuments that still remained in their original location and could be encountered in daily life. Publishing this article in Italian and signing herself as a 'cosmopolita', Lee identifies herself as one such individual ideally situated to stimulate this change.⁷⁰⁴

⁷⁰² Vernon Lee, 'Sulla necessità della coltura estetica in Italia: lettera di un cosmopolita al Direttore della Rivista Europea', *Rivista Europea*, 3 (November 1875), 434–41 (p. 427).

⁷⁰³ Donatella Boni, 'Profitiche e polemiche parole d'amore: Vernon Lee scrive agli Italiani di ieri e di oggi', in *Dalla stanza accanto: Vernon Lee e Firenze settant'anni dopo*, ed. by Serena Cenni and Elisa Bizzotto (Florence: Consiglio Regionale della Toscana, 2005), pp. 242–54 (p. 245).

⁷⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 244.

Historians of heritage have pinpointed the late nineteenth century as the founding moment of our modern-day conception of western European heritage.⁷⁰⁵ Lee's article can be understood in the context of contemporary debates concerning precisely how to preserve objects and monuments deemed culturally valuable and who had ultimate responsibility for their ongoing care. For the most part, prevailing histories of heritage have been written from a nationalist outlook. However, recent scholarship by Astrid Swenson posits that the emergence of heritage as a cultural concern in this period was an inherently international phenomenon. It involved complex networks of exchange and connection between activist groups and individuals from different countries, united by a shared agenda to raise awareness of their campaigns and the validity of them.⁷⁰⁶

In this chapter, I will explore how Lee, along with a number of other British women art writers including Annie Evans (dates untraced), Janet Ross, Linda Villari (née White; 1836–1915) and Helen Zimmern became activists and campaigners in the cause for preserving Italian heritage. It is in a footnote that Swenson goes on to state, 'little has been written on the history of gender relation and the protection of heritage'.⁷⁰⁷ While figures such as John Ruskin and William Morris (1834–96) are familiar names in discussions of British attitudes towards the restoration and safeguarding of Italian art and architecture in the nineteenth century, the significant involvement of women in this arena has received scant examination to date. To address this gap, my focus will be on the campaign group the *Associazione per la difesa di Firenze antica* (Association for the Protection of Old Florence, established 1898) and the work that various British women undertook in relation to it. While the involvement of Lee with this group has been frequently acknowledged, there is yet to be any sustained critical analysis of the implications of this connection for the wider field of women

⁷⁰⁵ See for example: David Lowenthal, *Possessed by the Past: The Heritage Crusade and the Spoils of History* (New York: The Free Press, 1996) and Derek Gillman, *The Idea of National Heritage*, revised edn (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010; first published 2006).

⁷⁰⁶ Astrid Swenson, *The Rise of Heritage: Preserving the Past in France, Germany and England, 1789–1914* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), p. 3.

⁷⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, fn. 272, p. 131.

writing on the arts, or direct investigation into precisely what role Lee, and other female members, took in the association. To this end, this chapter draws on for the first time documentation from the private archive of the President of the *Associazione*, Tommaso Corsini (1835–1919), which has remained in the same state in which it was left at his death. This primary source provides a ‘time capsule’ as to the activities of the association that has been untouched by the potentially disruptive and filtering methodological choices of subsequent archival organisation, allowing the contribution of numerous women to be assessed in all its depth and reach.

Much of the work women did to promote the protection of heritage was enacted in the form of lectures, journal articles and newspaper features. The ephemeral nature of these contributions has led to this part of their output being less considered than their other publications. Yet, while they did not publish dedicated volumes on issues of preservation and heritage, through the flexible, immediate and public-facing format of their lectures and notices in local expatriate newspapers, they nevertheless exploited their reputations among both Anglo-Italian circles and in the British publishing world to secure widespread and influential support for their cause.

In their periodical articles women had published on the latest developments and discoveries in the field; in their monographs they had proven their scholarly and connoisseurial expertise in the construction of the life and work of individual old masters, making important contributions to a rapidly developing canon; and their personal knowledge of Italian cities and galleries had informed their popular guidebooks which guided visitors through their own personal vision of the town or city under review. It was a combination of these skills and experiences — reporting at the cutting-edge, expert knowledge and personal investment in Italy and its culture — that laid the groundwork for their direct intervention in issues of preservation, cultural custodianship and the importance of preserving artworks *in situ*.

4.1 The Emergence of Heritage Concerns in the First Half of the Nineteenth Century

The presence of British women within an Italian preservation campaign group has its precedent in earlier developments regarding British engagement with heritage concerns in Italy. During the eighteenth century, the British conception of heritage had principally focused on the extant remains of the antique world. Visiting the monuments of ancient Greece and Rome served as an exercise in validating one's own sense of cultural prowess, yet it often entailed disregarding the present-day reality of the living city.⁷⁰⁸ As Andrew Szegedy-Maszak has discussed, the ruined appearance of historic monuments in fact reinforced the 'high elegiac mode' in which visitors engaged with them, particularly in the case of cities like Rome. Leading photography studios such as those of Gioacchino Altobelli (1814–83) and James Anderson (1813–77) produced photographs of famous sites such as the Colosseum to supply visitor demand for a vision of the 'perfect ruin', rather than to satisfy archaeological or historical interest.⁷⁰⁹ The view of historical monuments as the remnants of a distant, glorious past whose modern-day inheritors were the 'enlightened' visitors rather than 'ignorant' locals, also rationalised numerous instances of wholesale removal of artefacts, notably in 1803 with the case of Thomas Bruce, 7th Earl of Elgin (1766–1841) and the sculpture of the Parthenon of Athens, for which the question of 'stewardship' still remains contested.⁷¹⁰

During the 1830s and 1840s, the issue of national responsibility for the protection of local monuments and objects of cultural value became a Europe-wide concern, in the wake of widespread looting during the French Revolution (1789–99) and the subsequent Napoleonic Wars (1803–15).⁷¹¹ In Italy especially, the impact of Napoleon's (1769–1821) dismantling of the institutions that traditionally had safeguarded these works of art — such as occurred with the suppression of religious

⁷⁰⁸ Stephen Mailloux, 'Narrative as Embodied Intensities: The Eloquence of Travel in Nineteenth-Century Rome', *Narrative*, 21:2 (May 2013), 125–39 (p. 129).

⁷⁰⁹ Andrew Szegedy-Maszak, 'A Perfect Ruin: Nineteenth-Century Views of the Colosseum', *Arion*, 2:1 (Winter 1992), 115–42 (pp. 116–17).

⁷¹⁰ Mary Beard, *The Parthenon* (London: Profile Books, 2004), p. 176.

⁷¹¹ Swenson, *The Rise of Heritage*, p. 3.

orders and guilds — instigated an extended period of unregulated export and sale, while financial crisis on a local level meant that Italians themselves took advantage of the lack of enforcement of regulations governing the circulation of works of art in the marketplace.⁷¹² In response, a flurry of public picture galleries opened across Italian cities to house works of art, and new decrees to prohibit unauthorised exportation were introduced, such as those issued in Tuscany in the late 1850s, reinforcing earlier edicts issued by the Pope since 1754.⁷¹³

Around the same time in Britain, the topics of historical painting technique, conservation and the care of fragile works of art became the focus of ongoing debate in Parliament and the press. Concerns emerged, on the one hand, regarding the competency of living British artists to replicate the materials and techniques used by the deceased foreign old masters whose work had stood the test of time far better than many modern works. On the other hand, there were investigations into the methods and approaches employed by public galleries to care for old master works in their collections. During the 1840s, the project to redecorate the Houses of Parliament brought renewed attention to the status of art patronage in Britain and especially the progress and talent of British artists. In 1835, the establishment of a Parliamentary Committee to investigate the relationship between the state of art and manufactures in Britain had culminated in a report advocating the promotion of the technique of fresco painting among local artists. This was followed in 1841 with the appointment of a new Commission of the Fine Arts, charged with orchestrating and overseeing the decoration of the new Houses of Parliament, with Charles Eastlake appointed as Secretary.⁷¹⁴

⁷¹² Guido Guerzoni, ‘The Export of Works of Art from England to the United Kingdom, 1792–1830’, in *London and the Emergence of a European Art Market, 1780–1820*, ed. by Susanna Avery-Quash and Christian Huemer (Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute, 2019), pp. 64–78.

⁷¹³ Donata Levi, “‘Let agents be sent to all the cities of Italy’: British Public Museums and the Italian Art Market in the Mid-Nineteenth Century”, in *Victorian and Edwardian Responses to the Italian Renaissance*, ed. by John E. Law and Lene Østermark-Johansen (Aldershot: Ashgate 2005), pp. 33–53 (p. 39).

⁷¹⁴ T. S. R. Boase, ‘The Decoration of the New Palace of Westminster, 1841–1863’, *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, 17:3–4 (1954), 319–58.

However, enthusiasm for fresco to be used in the newly-commissioned decorative schemes at the Palace of Westminster was countered by the lack of precise knowledge among British artists about how to properly employ the technique. The work of one woman, Mary Philadelphia Merrifield, was to prove revelatory in this regard.⁷¹⁵ In 1844, Merrifield's translation of the Italian artist and writer Cennino Cennini's (c.1370–c.1440) *Il Libro dell'arte* (of the late 1390s) provided the first English version of this significant compilation of Italian archival documents relating to the techniques and studio practices of painters.⁷¹⁶ This was followed, two years later, by *The Art of Fresco Painting* (1846), a glossed anthology of Italian and Spanish sources relating to artists' pigments and the processes of true fresco.⁷¹⁷ Though these were works of translation (*Il Libro dell'arte* was based on the first printed edition in Italian by Giuseppe Tambroni of 1821) and drew for the most part on already published, though difficult to access, documentation, they were presented by Merrifield as intended to aid the interest of the Commissioners of the Fine Arts, reflecting the 'fresco frenzy' Zeitgeist.⁷¹⁸

Merrifield's most ambitious project and her third publication, *Original Treatises* (1849), was the result of extensive research trips abroad, in which she utilised her network of connections with Italian librarians, archivists and art specialists. Funded by the Fine Arts Commission and dedicated to the Prime Minister, Sir Robert Peel (1788–1850), this two-volume work was the first major English publication to provide edited and annotated translations of previously unpublished technical

⁷¹⁵ Zahira Véliz Bomford, 'The Art of Conservation: Mary Merrifield's Quest: A New Methodology for Technical Art History', *Burlington Magazine*, 159:1371 (June 2017), 465–75.

⁷¹⁶ Thea Burns, 'Cennino Cennini's *Il Libro dell'Arte*: A Historiographical Review', *Studies in Conservation*, 56:1 (2011), 1–13; Cennino Cennini, *A Treatise on Painting*, trans. Mary Philadelphia Merrifield (London: Lumley, 1844).

⁷¹⁷ Mary Philadelphia Merrifield, *The Art of Fresco Painting, as Practised by the Old Italian and Spanish Masters* (London: Gilpin, 1846).

⁷¹⁸ Bomford, 'Art of Conservation', p. 467; Zahira Véliz Bomford, 'Navigating Networks in the Victorian Age: Mary Philadelphia Merrifield's Writing on the Arts', *19: Interdisciplinary Studies in the Long Nineteenth Century*, 28 (2019), DOI: <<http://doi.org/10.16995/ntn.826>>.

manuscripts, together with commentary sourced from her personal interviews with restorers and artists conducted during her Continental trips.⁷¹⁹

Contemporaneously, Eastlake was also pioneering research relating to old master painting techniques. As Secretary of the Fine Arts Commission, he had published papers on fresco painting in 1842 and his reports to the Commission and interest in establishing a solid foundation of knowledge into such methods complemented the work of Merrifield.⁷²⁰ Eastlake's own pioneering *Materials for a History of Oil Painting* (1847) examined the origins and development of early Northern European oil painting and sought to provide a scholarly, fact-based reassessment of the inherited myth that Jan van Eyck had invented the technique.⁷²¹ Despite his expertise, in his first two roles at the National Gallery as Keeper (1843–47) and then as Trustee (1850–55), Eastlake became the focus of negative criticism in relation to concerns surrounding the processes used to clean and conserve paintings in the national collection, resulting in the 'cleaning controversies' of 1846 and 1852.⁷²² One of Eastlake's critics on this matter was the young Ruskin, who took a strictly anti-restoration stance in his attitude to the preservation of works of art, whether paintings or architecture.⁷²³ In relation to

⁷¹⁹ Bomford, 'Navigating Networks'.

⁷²⁰ Susanna Avery-Quash, "I consider I am now to collect facts not form theories": Mary Merrifield and Empirical Research into Technical Art History During the 1840s, review of *La donna che amava i colori: Mary P. Merrifield: lettere dall'Italia, 1845–1846*, ed. by Giovanni Mazzaferro (2018)', *Journal of Art Historiography*, 19 (August 2018), 1–18 <<https://arthistoriography.files.wordpress.com/2018/08/avery-quash-rev.pdf>>.

⁷²¹ Susanna Avery-Quash and Corina Meyer, "Substituting an approach to historical evidence for the vagueness of speculation": Charles Lock Eastlake and Johann David Passavant's Contribution to the Professionalisation of Art-Historical Study Through Source-Based Research', *Journal of Art Historiography* 18 (June 2018), 1–49 <<https://arthistoriography.files.wordpress.com/2018/05/avery-quash-and-meyer.pdf>>. The second volume appeared posthumously in 1869, published by Elizabeth Eastlake. See also: Susanna Avery-Quash and Marika Spring, 'Sir Charles Eastlake Encounters Jan van Eyck (1828–65): Contextualising His Research into Early Netherlandish Materials and Techniques' in *National Gallery Technical Bulletin*, 40 (London: National Gallery Company Ltd, 2019), pp. 102–27.

⁷²² Susanna Avery Quash, 'Sir Charles Eastlake and Conservation at the National Gallery', *Burlington Magazine*, 157:1353 (December 2015), 846–54.

⁷²³ Susanna Avery-Quash, 'John Ruskin and the National Gallery: Evolving Ideas about Curating the Nation's Paintings During the Second Half of the Nineteenth Century', 'Art for the Nation: John Ruskin, Art Education and Social Change', special issue of *Journal of Art Historiography*, ed. by Susanna Avery-Quash, Janet

Italy, this was later to be most famously expressed by the 1870s controversy over renovations to Saint Mark's Basilica in Venice, in which Ruskin played a key role.

If Italians were on the one hand castigated as neglectful for abandoning their cultural inheritance to disintegration, they were also seen as reckless when undertaking restoration. Ruskin's *Seven Lamps of Architecture* (1849) underlined his stringent take on the matter. In the fourth chapter, 'The Lamp of Memory', he stated irrefutably that restoration 'means the most total destruction which a building can suffer', comparing even the most sympathetic of methods to a feat as impossible as raising the dead. For Ruskin, the only correct form of preservation was to 'watch an old building tenderly with anxious care'.⁷²⁴ Ruskin's vehemence on the matter certainly contributed to the establishment by the 1860s of the term 'anti-restoration' in the British press.⁷²⁵

One of the most famous instances of Ruskin's anti-restoration approach being put into action was his intervention with related projects in Venice. The city had acquired the image of a place left to dilapidation, a view encapsulated in Ruskin's subtitle for the fourth volume of the revised edition of his hugely influential *Stones of Venice*, written, as he explained, 'for the Guidance of English Travellers while they visit her ruins'.⁷²⁶ Successive works on Saint Mark's Basilica undertaken in 1860–64 and 1865–75, supervised by the Venetian architect Giovanni Battista Meduna (1810–86), had provoked the consternation of several critics disapproving of Meduna's changes.⁷²⁷ Among them was one Count Alvisio Piero Zorzi (1846–1922), a descendent of a noble patrician Venetian family, who shared Ruskin's feelings. The two engaged in a collaborative campaign to prevent further

Barnes and Paul Tucker, 22 (June 2020) <<https://arthistoriography.files.wordpress.com/2020/05/avery-quash.pdf>>.

⁷²⁴ John Ruskin, *The Seven Lamps of Architecture*, 6th edn (Kent: George Allen, 1889), p. 194.

⁷²⁵ Swenson, *Rise of Heritage*, pp. 80–1.

⁷²⁶ Robert Hewison, *Ruskin on Venice: 'The Paradise of Cities'* (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 2009), p. 345.

⁷²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 365. The second phase of Meduna's campaign comprised a complete reconstruction of the south side of the basilica, replacing the original Greek marble cladding with grey Italian marble, and involving extensive structural intervention to the columns, with much of the original capitals and other stonework recut or replaced.

changes to the basilica's façade.⁷²⁸ Meduna's restoration, intended to 'straighten out' the whole external appearance of the basilica, was in complete contrast to Ruskin's belief as to what contributed to the aesthetic power of Saint Mark's. On 25 May 1877, Saint Mark's Day itself, Zorzi published his pamphlet protesting against further work, while Ruskin issued the first three chapters of *St Mark's Rest*.⁷²⁹ The international attention garnered by their publications quickly resulted in the suspension of Meduna's plans.⁷³⁰

Ruskin's influence on prevailing British attitudes to preservation was amplified by his membership of two significant organisations that were vocal proponents of the preservation and conservation of art and historic monuments: the Arundel Society and the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings (SPAB). As noted earlier, the Arundel Society's focus was almost entirely on Italian fresco painting still *in situ*, and they were vocal in their criticism of the competency of Italian authorities to preserve these works. The SPAB, founded in 1877 by the Arts and Crafts designers William Morris and Philip Webb (1831–1915), formed one of the most prominent organisations during 1870–1914, the period identified by Swenson as the emergence of 'modern preservationism'.⁷³¹

Ruskin and Zorzi's campaign greatly influenced the SPAB, which in itself became an important model for other similar European organisations.⁷³² Common to the SPAB and other 'new preservationists', such groups supported methods that departed from idealistic restorations and favoured more sensitive and authentic methods of care. Developing out of the model of some of the

⁷²⁸ John Unrau, *Ruskin and St Mark's* (Wisbech: Thames and Hudson, 1984), p. 195.

⁷²⁹ Piero Alvise Zorzi, *Osservazioni intorno ai restauri interni ed esterni della Basilica di San Marco* (Venice: Ongania, 1877).

⁷³⁰ Hewison, *Ruskin on Venice*, p. 372.

⁷³¹ Swenson, *Rise of Heritage*, p. 3. In England, the first self-proclaimed preservation societies included not only the aforementioned SPAB, but also the Common Preservation Society (CPS) founded in the preceding decade in 1865, and the National Trust, founded at the end of the century, in 1894.

⁷³² *Ibid.*, pp. 78–9.

traditional learned societies of the late eighteenth century, the ubiquity of such groups marked the ‘spread of heritage-consciousness’.⁷³³

While the earlier learned societies ranged in their interests regarding preservation, they were selective in the voices and attitudes they privileged. Their membership was principally the province of male antiquaries, collectors and connoisseurs, in line with contemporary attitudes regarding the relation of gender and the appreciation of ‘high’ culture.⁷³⁴ The latter decades of the nineteenth century saw increasing competition with what Swenson calls the ‘new activist preservation associations’, which were able to ‘offer alternative forms of sociability and new approaches to heritage’, by placing ‘less emphasis on research but privileg[ing] activism’.⁷³⁵ As Chris Miele has discussed, the SPAB marked itself as an organisation run by outsiders with no vested interest in buildings other than as historic monuments.⁷³⁶

Appearing across Europe from the 1870s onwards, along with Britain’s SPAB we can include *L’Ami des Monuments* (established 1877) in France and the *Tag für Denkmalpflege* (1900) in Germany. In Italy, the establishment of *brigade* or ‘brigades’ and ‘friends of monuments’ groups proliferated at the turn of the twentieth century in most major towns and cities, often forming spontaneously and gradually developing formal organisational structures, manifestos and aims.⁷³⁷ In addition to the *Associazione per la difesa di Firenze antica*, which will be discussed in detail below, were Rome’s *Associazione artistica fra i cultori di architettura* (1890), Bologna’s *Comitato per*

⁷³³ Ibid., pp. 66–69, 71. For the geographic distribution and disciplinary specialisation of learned societies in Germany, Italy and the UK around 1900, see: Jean-Pierre Chalie, ‘Les sociétés savantes en Allemagne, Italie et Royaume-Uni à la fin du XIX^e siècle’, *Histoire, économie et société*, 1 (2002), 87–96, DOI: <<https://doi.org/10.3406/hes.2002.2266>>.

⁷³⁴ Ann Bermingham, ‘The Aesthetics of Ignorance: The Accomplished Woman in the Culture of Connoisseurship’, *Oxford Art Journal*, 16 (1993), 3–20.

⁷³⁵ Swenson, *Rise of Heritage*, pp. 70, 77–78.

⁷³⁶ Chris Miele, ‘The First Conservation Militants: William Morris and the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings’, in *Preserving the Past: The Rise of Heritage in Modern Britain*, ed. by Michael Hunter (Stroud: Alan Sutton Publishing, 1996), pp. 17–37.

⁷³⁷ Andrea Ragusa, *Cultural Heritage in a Comparative Approach: In the Name of Aphrodite* (Cambridge: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2017), p. 49.

Bologna storica e artistica (1899) and Arezzo's *La Brigata degli amici dei monumenti* (1906), to name just a few.⁷³⁸

Though initially concerned with the preservation of English churches, in 1878 the decision was made to expand the SPAB's mission to include the protection of foreign buildings.⁷³⁹ Following a visit to Venice, where Morris witnessed medieval mosaics being stripped from the Baptistery of Saint Mark's, the SPAB Committee was persuaded to include foreign buildings in its remit, leading to the establishment of a Foreign Committee in March 1879.⁷⁴⁰ This new wing of the SPAB's activities focused its attention first on the new proposals for the renovation of the west front of Saint Mark's, part of the aforementioned fifteen-year restoration project orchestrated by Meduna.⁷⁴¹ This campaign was one of the most significant in the SPAB's history, provoking extensive press coverage and drawing the attention of the British public to what was happening in Venice on the cultural front. However, the British intervention was ultimately a failure. The petition containing over 2,000 signatures, which Morris submitted to the Italian government in opposition to the restorations, backfired. Indignant at what was perceived as the arrogance of this British group, the Italian government condemned the SPAB's campaign as unwarranted interference. Furthermore, the petition itself did not include any Italian signatures, as Morris did not consider the importance of corraling local support.⁷⁴² The harsh criticism of the Saint Mark's campaign did not go unnoticed by the British press, exemplified in the famous satirical sketch 'The Morris-Dance Round St Mark's',

⁷³⁸ There was a similar concerted effort to establish protectionist programmes for Italy's natural environment and landscapes, see: Luigi Piccioni, 'Nature Preservation and Protection in Nineteenth and Twentieth Century Italy, 1880–1950', in *Nature and History in Modern Italy*, ed. by Marco Armiero and Marcus Hall (Ohio: Ohio University Press, 2010), pp. 251–68.

⁷³⁹ Frank C. Sharp, 'Exporting the Revolution: The Work of the SPAB Outside Britain, 1878–1914', in *From William Morris: Building Conservation and the Arts and Crafts Cult of Authenticity, 1877–1939*, ed. by Chris Miele (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 2005), pp. 187–212 (p. 187).

⁷⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 187–89.

⁷⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 188.

⁷⁴² *Ibid.*, pp. 191–92. Morris also sent the petition to the wrong government department, further stoking Italian indignation.

published in *Punch* (fig. 4.1). In future campaigns, the SPAB exercised far more diplomacy and commonsense. Despite these early shortcomings, the case was nonetheless an important milestone within the new heritage movement, and ‘set a new trend by relying on mobilising public opinion’, on an increasingly broad geographical basis.⁷⁴³

4.2 The Women of Florence’s *Associazione per la difesa di Firenze antica* (1898)

The SPAB’s Saint Mark’s campaign is a key example of the growing international aspect to preservation awareness and the grassroots, community-focused support that could be drawn on for the protection of foreign monuments. Such awareness was to increase as art and monuments became better known through travel, exhibitions, literature, and illustrations.⁷⁴⁴ Established in May 1898, with Tommaso Corsini of Florence’s noble Corsini family as its President, the *Associazione per la difesa di Firenze antica* can be seen as a hybrid group in which impetus came from British members residing abroad, who helped enlist support back home. In the current discussion it is notable for the extensive involvement of women in its membership.

Female membership was certainly another significant difference between the earlier learned societies and the new preservationist groups in Britain, France, and Germany. Founding members of the latter were for the most part middle class (the learned societies had originally comprised many members of the nobility), while several members of the same family, including women, were often active participants, thereby ‘introduc[ing] an important female presence’.⁷⁴⁵ Whereas women had generally been excluded from learned societies, Swenson observes of the later groups that ‘female membership was noticeably higher [...] because of their philanthropic or leisure-oriented nature’,

⁷⁴³ Swenson, *Rise of Heritage*, p. 81.

⁷⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 239.

⁷⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 131.

although it was only in England that women could join of their own volition or hold positions of authority.⁷⁴⁶

The *Associazione* was founded in response to ongoing extensive urban renewal works in Florence's historic centre. Following the city's baptism in 1864 as the capital of the newly-unified Kingdom of Italy, concerns were raised by the local government that the medieval city centre needed updating to reflect its status as the new modern capital. The Florentine architect and town planner Giuseppe Poggi (1811–1901) was appointed to oversee this project, which aimed to reconfigure Florence into a sanitised neo-Renaissance vision.⁷⁴⁷ The drive to create a modern Florence was born of a desire for the city to reflect its status as both a site of historic rebirth and modern cosmopolitan regeneration, yet this interest was often selective, with certain sites privileged at the expense of others.⁷⁴⁸

When the capital transferred to Rome in 1871, questions were raised over the necessity of continuing with the proposed modernisation of Florence. One particularly egregious intervention concerned the historic Mercato and Ghetto, where the dense, twisting network of streets and small piazzas was seen as an unhygienic, medieval throwback to Florence's past (**fig. 4.2**). On 28 December 1886, Poggi's plans were approved and these areas were subsequently demolished, replaced with the new Piazza Vittoria Emanuele II (today's Piazza Repubblica), surrounded by neo-Renaissance housing blocks (**figs 4.3; 4.4**). Wide new boulevards leading off from the piazza

⁷⁴⁶ Ibid., pp. 131–32. As an interesting point of comparison, Swenson notes that female membership of new preservation societies were 'lowest in Germany, linked to the predominance of the professionalised, male-dominated discipline of architecture in preservationism', which correlates with Amy Von Lintel's observation regarding the numbers of women publishing artist monographs in Germany in comparison to Britain, as discussed in Chapter Two, p. 117.

⁷⁴⁷ D. Medina Lasansky, 'Reshaping Attitudes Towards the Renaissance: The Fight Against "Modern Mania" in Florence at the Turn of the Century', in *The Renaissance in the Nineteenth Century*, ed. by Yannick Portebois and Nicholas Terpstra (Toronto: Centre for Reformation and Renaissance Studies, 2003), pp. 263–96 (p. 265).

⁷⁴⁸ Ibid., pp. 264–65.

ensured that major monuments, such as Florence's Duomo, were now visible with unimpeded views, newly framed in a modern cosmopolitan setting.⁷⁴⁹

These changes confirmed the increasingly vocal fears of some locals, particularly among the Anglo-Florentine community, that such developments were creating 'a nineteenth-century urban ideal of the Renaissance [...] at the expense of a historic reality'.⁷⁵⁰ Yet, despite heated council debates, the programme of modernisation continued, spurred by mayor Pietro Torrigiani's (1846–1920) 'Piano per il Riordinamento del Centro' ('Plan of the Reorganisation of the City Centre'). This was intended to enlarge and straighten the roads around the Ponte Vecchio, the Arno and between the Porta Rossa and Palazzo Pitti. It included the major extension of Via Pellicceria up to the Arno, involving a complete 'Haussmannisation' of the intermediate area.⁷⁵¹ Of particular concern was the Piazza della Parte Guelfa and its surrounding group of medieval buildings, which stood directly in the line of proposed demolitions. This comprised the thirteenth-century Palagio della Parte Guelfa (the historic headquarters of the Guelph party), the fourteenth-century Palazzo dell'Arte della Seta (the guildhall of silk workers), the church of Santa Maria Sopra Porta (later known as San Biagio) and the historic Palazzo Canacci and Palazzo Giandonato (**fig. 4.5**).⁷⁵²

As Florence's mayor prior to Torrigiani, Corsini had faced increasing criticism for his hesitancy in approving Poggi's Mercato and Ghetto renovation plans and, unwilling to associate his name with the proposals, he resigned from office in January 1886.⁷⁵³ The increasing protests of both foreign and local residents at the proposed wholesale destruction of further parts of the historic centre necessitated the establishment of a group that could present a united and wide-ranging front

⁷⁴⁹ D. Medina Lasansky, *The Renaissance Perfected: Architecture, Spectacle and Tourism in Fascist Italy* (University Park, Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2004), p. 30.

⁷⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁷⁵¹ Laura Cerasi, *Gli ateniesi d'Italia: associazioni di cultura a Firenze nel primo novecento* (Milan: FrancoAngeli, 2000), p. 111; Bernd Roeck, *Florence 1900: The Quest for Arcadia*, trans. Stewart Spencer (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 2009), p. 125.

⁷⁵² Daniela Lamberini, "'The Divine Country': Vernon Lee in difesa di Firenze antica", in *Dalla stanza accanto*, pp. 38–52 (p. 39).

⁷⁵³ Cerasi, *Gli ateniesi d'Italia*, p. 112.

for their cause.⁷⁵⁴ The first meeting of the *Associazione per la difesa di Firenze antica* was held on 15 May 1898 at the Corsini family palazzo on the Lungarno, where Corsini announced the aim of founding the association to:

gather together cultured persons and lovers of the arts into one association, with the purpose of caring not only for our renowned monuments, but also the ancient houses and all the other remnants of our glorious past era.⁷⁵⁵

The roster of names of the *Associazione*'s members show that they were well connected and could seek support and diffuse information about its aims and activities at home and abroad. Members included figures from the Florentine aristocracy and several well-known local artists and collectors, such as the German sculptor Adolf von Hildebrand (1847–1921) and the collector Frederick Stibbert (1838–1906). Among Italian art critics and historians were architectural historian Luca Beltrami (1854–1933) and Venetian historian Pompeo Molmenti (1852–1928). From the contemporary English art scene, the painters Sir Lawrence Alma-Tadema (1836–1912), Walter Crane (1845–1915) and Edward Poynter — then director of the National Gallery — lent their voices to the cause.

Several influential women writers who were resident in the city also became members. In fact, according to previous histories of the *Associazione*, it was the English members who ‘pulled the strings’ of the campaign, of which the women, who ‘were legitimate experts [...] constituted a distinctive and influential female voice in the documentation and historic preservation of the city’.⁷⁵⁶ Lee’s involvement in the campaign has been frequently cited in the discussion of this group.⁷⁵⁷ However, the precise relationship that she and other female members had with the association has yet to be explored fully. Lee was in fact a close friend of the Corsini family. Ephemera of the

⁷⁵⁴ Lasansky, ‘Modern Mania’, p. 33.

⁷⁵⁵ [Anon.], ‘Adunanza generale del 15 maggio 1898’, *Bollettino dell’Associazione per la Difesa di Firenze Antica*, primo fascicolo (Florence: L. Franceschini, 1900), p. 5. Own translation.

⁷⁵⁶ Roeck, *Florence 1900*, pp. 130–31; Lasansky, ‘Modern Mania’, p. 283.

⁷⁵⁷ Lamberini, “‘The Divine Country’”, p. 39.

Associazione and its campaign preserved today in the Corsini family's private archive attest to the extent to which she was intrinsic to the group's efforts as well as to the high esteem in which she was held by Tommaso Corsini. The latter's papers relating to the *Associazione* remain in their original state, providing a rich and untapped source of information regarding the *Associazione*'s activities and the involvement of its female members.⁷⁵⁸

The manifesto of the *Associazione*, as set out in its Statute, stressed its dual aims as being to preserve Florence's historic culture, and to diffuse knowledge and appreciation of it among a broad public. Three types of membership to help with this two-pronged campaign were established, all of which were appointed with approval of the President: *effettivi*, *aderenti* and *corrispondenti*.⁷⁵⁹ *Effettivi*, or principal/full members, were elected by the society's Council. Contributing an annual membership fee of five lire, they were limited to seventy-two people at any one time, who were allowed to vote in meetings in relation to items on the agenda. *Aderenti* paid half membership fees and were given a consultative vote, while *corrispondenti* consisted of supporters living outside Florence.⁷⁶⁰ The *Associazione*'s official *Elenco dei Soci* (membership list), published on 15 May 1899, includes Lee and Zimmern among the British female members as inaugural *effettivi* (in fact they were the only non-Italian *effettivi* members elected at the society's founding), while Evans, Ross and Villari were elected as *aderenti*.⁷⁶¹ As D. Medina Lasansky observes, the threat of

⁷⁵⁸ I am deeply grateful to the Corsini archivist, Nada Bacic, for her generosity in aiding my search among the Corsini family papers. There are no inventory numbers with which to cite individually these documents but the overall archival citation is: Archivio Corsini Firenze, Ville Le Corti, San Casciano Val di Pesa, Stanza 15, campata 8, palchetto 1, hereafter cited as ACF. I am also grateful to Duccio Corsini for his generous hospitality during my visits to Villa Le Corti.

⁷⁵⁹ *Statuto dell'Associazione per la Difesa di Firenze Antica*, 1898, p. 3, ACF.

⁷⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 6.

⁷⁶¹ [Anon.], *Associazione per la Difesa di Firenze Antica: Elenco dei Soci al 15 Marzo 1899* (Florence: L. Franceschini, 1899), ACF. The information from the official membership list helps to correct our previous knowledge of women's involvement. For example, Lamberini states that Lee was the only female member of the *Associazione* (Lamberini, "The Divine Country", p. 41) and according to Lasansky all the society's Italian members were male (Lasansky, 'Modern Mania', p. 284). Alongside the British women already mentioned, the Marchesa Luisa Guadagni, born Louisa Barlow Hoy (1838–[?], Yorkshire, England), wife of Guadagno Guadagni (1833–1905) and Marchesa Ginevra Niccolini, born Margaret Colebrooke (1857–1944,

demolition of the very monuments around which these women centered their literary lives provided the impetus to channel their skills as art writers into activism.⁷⁶²

The official *Bollettino* of the *Associazione* shows that these women were very much actively participating members, their names appearing in the list of attendees present at the society's meetings.⁷⁶³ Villari was the author of fiction and travelogues and translator into English of several works by her second husband, the Italian historian and politician Pasquale Villari (1827–1917; they had married in 1876) (**fig. 4.6**). The Villaris were among the prominent members of the community and the influence of Linda Villari's salon, held at the Villa Gherardesca in Bellosguardo, was commented on by the writer Carlo Placci (1861–1941), to whom Lee had been introduced by Linda.⁷⁶⁴ A third *aderente*, Ross, who as previously discussed was located at Villa Poggio Gherardo, had in fact memorialised the historic centre of Florence just prior to its demolition in her essay 'The Ghetto of Florence'.⁷⁶⁵

Though the name of Evans is not familiar within general secondary literature on the Anglo-Italian Florentine community, she was certainly well connected in the *Associazione*, the evidence suggesting that she had been recommended for membership by the Villaris.⁷⁶⁶ Evans worked as a columnist for the local expatriate newspaper the *Italian Gazette* and made a living through both writing and lecturing on art, as demonstrated by her advertisement published in the *Gazette*

Lanarkshire, Scotland), wife of Marchese Carlo Niccolini (1844–1912) were elected among the *aderenti*. The *Elenco* reveals that several Italian women were also members: Angelica Rasponi (1854–1919) a close friend of Lee's, elected among the first *effettivi*, with Contessa Eufrosina Gamba (dates untraced) joining in 1902. Margherita Cantagalli (dates untraced), Anna Corsini (1840–1911), the sculptor Amalia Dupré (1842–1928), and Marchesa Ernestina Montagliari (dates untraced) were elected as *aderenti*.

⁷⁶² Lasansky, 'Modern Mania', p. 285.

⁷⁶³ For example, Zimmern was present at the second meeting on the 24 May 1898: 'Adunanza generale del 24 maggio 1898', *Bollettino dell'Associazione*, primo fascicolo, p. 7.

⁷⁶⁴ Giuliana Pieri, *The Influence of Pre-Raphaelitism on Fin de Siècle Italy: Art, Beauty and Culture* (London: Maney Publishing, 2007), p. 38.

⁷⁶⁵ Janet Ross, *Italian Sketches*, illus. Carlo Orsi (London: K. Paul, Trench and Co., 1887), pp. 87–100.

⁷⁶⁶ As proven by the presence of the Villaris' calling card in Corsini's archive, dated 28 January 1899: 'I sottoscritti raccomando caldamente la Signorina A. Evans la quale desidera di far parte della Società per la "Difesa di Firenze Antica", P. Villari, Linda Villari', ACF.

announcing her ‘Popular Lectures in Galleries, Museums, and Churches’ to be delivered by a ‘Public Lecturer on the History of Art’ and priced at one franc a ticket.⁷⁶⁷ It is notable that she published her accreditation, citing the letters ‘LLA’ after her name. This was the acronym of the ‘Ladies Literate in Arts’ qualification, which had been established by the University of St Andrews in 1877. Described as a ‘Higher Certificate for Women’, it was one of the earliest examples of academic accreditation for women. It quickly gained success, with further external examination centres established round the UK, and from 1899 across Europe and even the USA. Intended to be the closest equivalent to the MA degree, then only available to men, the LLA offered a wide range of subjects and from 1888 included the addition of Italian and a ‘cultural group’ of disciplines consisting of Fine Art, Music and Aesthetics.⁷⁶⁸ Evidently, Evans was keen to advertise her qualification, which undoubtedly would have distinguished her from other local guides.

In relation to her activities at the *Associazione*, in the Corsini archive there is a lengthy letter written by Evans (in Italian) calling his attention to a marble funerary slab in the church of Santa Croce of Galileo Bonaiuti (c.1370–c.1450), an ancestor of the more famous later polymath, whose own funerary monument is in the same church.⁷⁶⁹ As Evans recalled, the carved relief slab had been greatly admired by Ruskin in his *Mornings in Florence* (1875), and, as a consequence, ‘hundreds of English and Americans came every year to find it’, enjoying this ‘beautiful example of art by an unknown Florentine sculptor’.⁷⁷⁰ In its current state, exposed under the footsteps of visitors, the delicate lines of the relief were in danger of being worn away still further. Taking action, Evans requested the *Associazione*’s endorsement to establish a subscription aimed at the English and American visitors who would arrive during the winter season, to pay for a small railing of iron or

⁷⁶⁷ [Anon.], ‘Popular Lectures in Galleries, Museums and Churches’, *Italian Gazette*, 25 May 1897, p. 9.

⁷⁶⁸ Elisabeth Margaret Smith, ‘“To Walk Upon the Grass”: The Impact of the University of St Andrews’ Lady Literate in Arts, 1877–1892’, unpublished doctoral thesis, University of St Andrews, 2004, p. 43. Smith states that women could join the scheme from anywhere between fourteen and fifty-three years of age and there was no restriction on the number of years necessary to complete the certification (p. 57).

⁷⁶⁹ Annie Evans to Tommaso Corsini, 27 June 1899, ACF.

⁷⁷⁰ *Ibid.*

bronze ‘of a simple style like that which currently exists around the tomb of Donatello at the Certosa’ to surround the marble.⁷⁷¹ Evans assured Corsini that she would find the necessary means of funding the railing among friends and tourists, and would write to Ruskin himself to secure his influential approval. Her motivation for her actions is given at the end of the letter, where she states that this relief is of an artistic quality equal to other works of art, yet being by an unknown artist, it had failed to command official attention.⁷⁷² Her letter highlights an ongoing problem for institutional heritage management, in terms of selecting what was worthy of protection. As an intermediary between Italy and England, Evans could draw on two sets of networks to raise awareness of a conservation issue that had hitherto remained under the radar.

Of all the campaigners one of the most vocal was Lee. Her letter to the editor of *The Times* of 15 December 1898 in support of the *Associazione* became the rallying call for the campaign. It was reprinted in the *Associazione*’s official *Bollettino*, introduced as a letter by a ‘writer of great fame, and a Florentine by choice of many years’.⁷⁷³ Prior to its publication in *The Times*, Sidney Colvin wrote a letter of his own, appearing on 2 December and seeking to make known the efforts of the ‘distinguished and influential Florentine committee’.⁷⁷⁴ Colvin’s letter, addressed to Torrigiani, emphasised the ‘inestimable artistic and historic value’ of the buildings threatened by the mayor’s plan and warned that the destruction of ‘one of the oldest, the most historic and most picturesque quarters’ of the city would remove ‘those very monuments which make Florence a centre of attraction to the whole civilised world’.⁷⁷⁵ It was undersigned by several prominent figures in the British art world, including the architect George Aitchison (1825–1910), Alma-Tadema, Crane, Phillips and Poynter. Between the publication of Colvin and Lee’s letters, the *Associazione*

⁷⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷⁷² Ibid.

⁷⁷³ [Anon.], ‘Allegato F – Lettera di Miss Paget’, *Bollettino dell’Associazione*, primo fascicolo, pp. 35–44. Own translation.

⁷⁷⁴ Sidney Colvin, ‘The Proposed Demolitions at Florence’, *The Times*, 2 December 1898, p. 10.

⁷⁷⁵ Ibid.

concentrated its efforts on securing signatories for a petition to be presented to Torrigiani in protest against the demolitions, in much the same manner as the SPAB had done in relation to its Saint Mark's campaign. What is markedly different between these two petitions, however, is, firstly, the *Associazione's* international reach, with the inclusion of local Italians and, secondly, the direct involvement of its female members in promoting the petition.

As an Italian-founded group, the *Associazione* was certainly distinctive in its ability to garner support from an impressive roster of international supporters. An envelope in Corsini's archive marked 'Adesione illustri' in his hand contains numerous letters from prominent supporters relating to a number of different issues. These include missives from Andrew Langdon, President of the Buffalo Historical Society in New York, supporting the *Associazione* in its efforts to derail the proposed destruction of the Ponte Vecchio.⁷⁷⁶ Other letters are signed by the French novelist and critic Paul Bourget and the historian Robert de la Sizeranne (1866–1932). Enclosed in this envelope we also find letters from other British women offering their aid in promoting the campaign. A card from Lisa Stillman (1865–1946), eldest daughter of the painter Marie Spartali Stillman (1844–1927), informed Corsini of her work gathering a list of signatures 'from members of government, well-known writers and other distinguished persons who wish to demonstrate to the Society for the Protection of Old Florence the sympathy they have for their aims', noting that she had been furnished with the appropriate forms by Lee.⁷⁷⁷ Roeck notes the existence of another letter from Stillman in the Horne archive in Florence, in which she directly addresses her female friends to join her in protesting the threat of another 'act of vandalism, the destruction of the unique Ponte Vecchio'.⁷⁷⁸ Another woman, Rachel Hariette Busk (dates untraced), acted as a principal contact for

⁷⁷⁶ Andrew Langdon to Tommaso Corsini, 17 November 1898, ACF.

⁷⁷⁷ Lisa Stillman to Tommaso Corsini, 13 December 1858, ACF.

⁷⁷⁸ Archivio Horne, Carte Horne HXII, quoted in Roeck, p. 133. Unfortunately, the material in the Horne archive was not available for consultation during my research period in Florence, so I have not yet been able to consult the documents related to the *Associazione* kept there.

gathering signatures for the *Associazione* in London and also reported on their activities.⁷⁷⁹ This she could do effectively, given that she was the Roman correspondent of the *Westminster Review* and a reporter for the *Englishwoman*, in which capacity she would later work to promote the ‘Beatrice Exhibition’ in England.⁷⁸⁰

Torrigiani’s reply to Colvin attempted to defuse the escalating criticism. Describing Colvin’s letter as an ‘emphatic protest against the irreparable injury of imaginary demolitions’, Torrigiani assured his correspondent that there were no imminent plans to carry out works except those ‘demanded by the requirements that modern life imposes in the interests of hygiene, viability and commerce’, and that should such demolitions become necessary the ‘Administration will leave behind elements [...] without destroying buildings precious to history or to art’.⁷⁸¹ Torrigiani’s attempt to quieten English concerns was rather deflated by *The Times*’ decision to print his letter alongside Lee’s. Here she addresses herself as ‘one of the few foreign members’ able to convey ‘official information’ on the proposed demolitions, having gained it through a personal interview with Torrigiani himself.

Referring back to the clearing of the Ghetto in 1885, Lee acknowledged that the sanitation risks and repeated cholera outbreaks necessitated improvements to the area. However, rather than being ‘cleared or ventilated or drained’ the area was ‘simply swept off the face of the earth’ and replaced with ‘commonplace and inappropriate streets, and the ostentatious and dreary arcaded square’ with only a ‘colossal inscription’ announcing the ‘astounding self-mutilation’ (**fig. 4.7**).⁷⁸² Lee was able to report that the current project, as witnessed in plans submitted to the municipality, involved the extension of two boulevards connecting Piazza della Signoria with Piazza Santa Trinità,

⁷⁷⁹ See for example *The Times*, 9 December 1898, p. 6, where Busk reports that she had received an extension of time for receiving signatures from the *Associazione*, having already gathered about 1,500 names.

⁷⁸⁰ T. J. Carty, ed., *A Dictionary of Literary Pseudonyms in the English Language*, 2nd edn (London: Routledge, 2015), p. 188; Janet Horowitz Murray and Myra Stark, eds, *The Englishwoman’s Review of Social and Industrial Questions: 1891* (London: Routledge, 2016), pp. 93–94.

⁷⁸¹ Pietro Torrigiani, *The Times*, 15 December 1898, p. 9.

⁷⁸² Vernon Lee, ‘Letter to the Editor’, *The Times*, 15 December 1898, p. 9.

the other connecting the new Piazza Vittorio Emanuele with Ponte Vecchio, effectively cutting through an area of thirteenth- and fourteenth-century buildings and churches. Negating Torrigiani's assurances that no demolition works were imminent, Lee revealed that in the previous year alone she had witnessed blocks of houses pulled down in via Porta Rossa, the gutting of a fifteenth-century house in Piazza Davanzati, subsequently turned into 'a repository for dustcarts', and 'the beginning of a street running from the "Centre" to Ponte Vecchio'.⁷⁸³ After cataloguing the current state of destruction in Florence since 1885, Lee insisted that future events would 'entirely depend upon the greater or lesser power which the Society for the Protection of Old Florence may gain [...] over the mind of the people of the town', observing that the 'municipal authorities are after all only the representatives of public opinion of the moment'.⁷⁸⁴

Discussing her interview with Torrigiani on the proposed plans for Borgo San Jacopo, Lee was able to demonstrate that Torrigiani's assurances that it would 'remain untouched' were disingenuous. She explained that they were contradicted when the official called in to confirm Torrigiani's statement to Lee in fact 'certified to this being a mistake and to the plans requiring the whole of the inland side of Borgo San Jacopo'. Lee noted that 'this little incident' revealed just how 'complete' the 'actual plans of destruction' were, and thus how vital it was to gain the support 'of the townsfolk' in order to sway the municipality into a different course of action as soon as possible. Calling for the initiation of an 'active crusade', Lee insisted 'every means should be taken to educate the taste and historic spirit of the small bourgeoisie and working people by lectures, newspaper articles, tracts, pamphlets'.⁷⁸⁵

Alongside her petition in *The Times*, Lee utilised her connections with British journals to publish short articles drawing attention to individual buildings threatened by the demolitions. One, published in November 1898 in the *Pall Mall Gazette*, concerned a medieval tower located at the

⁷⁸³ Ibid.

⁷⁸⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁸⁵ Ibid.

corner of Porta Rossa and the Piazza Davanzati. This was the Torre dei Foresi, formerly owned by the Foresi family, and one of the largest and best preserved towers in Florence.⁷⁸⁶ Rather than emphasising the cultural significance of the tower through the format of either a formal history or news report, Lee's article takes the form of a brief and pithy narrative recollection of her visit to see the tower, which at the time stood 'at a great gap of destruction' where the results of Poggi's plan left it exposed and therefore extremely vulnerable (**fig. 4.8**).⁷⁸⁷ Lee had conducted interviews with local shopkeepers to petition their support to speak out against further demolition, informing Corsini about them when she wrote to enquire about the tower's original owners.⁷⁸⁸

Lee's *Pall Mall Gazette* article was based on an interview she had conducted with a local butcher at the Porta Rossa, who had 'obligingly' answered her queries regarding the encroaching demolitions in the area, and who had responded that 'logically, the tower must come down too'.⁷⁸⁹ Rather than lambast this opinion, Lee satirically underlines the circular logic and short-sighted consequences of such attitudes: 'for logically if you have begun a straight line you must continue it; if you have begun destroying a Medieval city you must go on destroying it'. Lee contends that 'logically' the implication is of one who 'must despise the past and disregard the future'.⁷⁹⁰ She was accompanied on this visit by a friend 'the doctor' (this is likely the 'eminent physician' also mentioned in Lee's *Times* article of 15 December who had stated that drainage and ventilation of the Ghetto could have been achieved without demolition), whose professional perspective she added to her own grassroots interviewing. She quotes him on the disadvantages that modernisation brought to the health of its citizens. Where once the narrow streets provided both shade and shelter, these were being replaced with 'wide streets where you alternately get sunstroke or bronchitis'; the internal

⁷⁸⁶ Lara Mercanti and Giovanni Straffi, *Le torri di Firenze e del suo territorio* (Florence: Alinea Editrice, 2003), pp. 98–9.

⁷⁸⁷ Vernon Lee, 'A Tower in Florence', *Pall Mall Gazette*, 3 November 1898, p. 3.

⁷⁸⁸ Lee to Corsini, 3 November 1898, ACF.

⁷⁸⁹ Lee, 'A Tower in Florence', p. 3.

⁷⁹⁰ *Ibid.*

courtyards and gardens allowing air and light to filter in were now being filled in with ‘solid cubes of houses only separated by a shaft smelling of sink’.⁷⁹¹

To demonstrate the fate of the poor, Lee included the content of an interview she had conducted with a former local resident. Following a ‘kind lady’ through a palazzo adjoining the tower, and ascending to its uppermost floor, the spectacular view with which she was greeted led her to pronounce that ‘the people of that house required no electric trams to take them to see views and breathe fresh air!’. The only ‘regrettable thing’ about this view was the ‘great bare empty new square’, piazza Vittorio Emanuele, the site of the former Mercato Vecchio, which the ‘kind woman’ pointed to ‘with admiration: “it’s a splendid thing for Florence. The rents have risen enormously, and all the centre is now kept for rich people and fine shops”’. Questioning where the people who had formerly lived in the Ghetto had gone to after their houses had been pulled down, Lee is met with the offhand reply: ‘those people? You mean the poor ones? They have gone — wherever they could. You must have noticed how much more crowded the poorest quarters have become [...] very nasty streets I call them’. Indicating a man selling fruit at the street corner, Lee’s hostess informs her that he and his ‘twelve children [...] have had to crowd all of them into one room, because this part of the town is so much improved’.⁷⁹² Lee was attentive not only to the aesthetic, but also to the human impact of what would now be called gentrification.⁷⁹³

At the heart of Lee’s argument is a Ruskinian advocacy for a breaking with ‘the fetishization of novelty’, represented by the pork butcher who ‘live[s] only in the present’ and the ‘kind woman’ who admires the new piazza, both of whom fail to realise the ‘redemptive potential of historically minded art appreciation’.⁷⁹⁴ Lee’s focus on the social impact of those who suffered the consequences

⁷⁹¹ Ibid.

⁷⁹² Ibid.

⁷⁹³ It is estimated that 341 dwelling houses, 451 *botteghe* and 173 shops were demolished and 1, 778 families were forcibly resettled for the reordering of the historic centre: see Roeck, *Florence 1900*, p. 125.

⁷⁹⁴ Kristin Mary Mahoney, ‘Haunted Collections: Vernon Lee and Ethical Consumption’, *Criticism*, 48:1 (Winter 2006), 39–67 (p. 49).

of gentrification exemplifies her particular promotion of the cultivation of an aesthetic sensibility that would not only improve the individual, but also contribute to greater social harmony. Her growing awareness of the social disparity inherent in the appreciation of and access to art meant she could not support a pursuit of cultural enrichment which sought only the ‘pleasant and certain things of this life [and] shut our eyes and ears resolutely to the unpleasant and uncertain’.⁷⁹⁵ In order for aesthetic appreciation to grow and mature past its current state of what she termed ‘juvenilia’, Lee argued that the world could be viewed ‘no longer as a mere storehouse of beautiful inanimate things, but as a great living mass’.⁷⁹⁶

In January 1899, Busk’s report of a meeting between the *Associazione* and the municipality appeared in *The Times*, described as ‘not only conciliatory, but on the whole satisfactory’.⁷⁹⁷ Speaking on behalf of the *Associazione*, Corsini had voiced his belief that it was not for new hotels and modern conveniences that visitors came to Florence, but to view its galleries and churches ‘in their appropriate setting, amidst their historic memories, in their own *ambiente*’.⁷⁹⁸ On 1 March 1899, a ceremony was held at Palazzo Corsini for the presentation of the petition, which was ultimately successful in persuading Torrigiani to abandon his plan, thereby saving the Piazza di Parte Guelfa.⁷⁹⁹

Corsini’s emphasis on the importance of local environment and the historic evocation of place was a topic very close to Lee’s heart, encapsulated in her idea of the *genius loci*; they may have discussed these ideas together. Lee’s concept of the *genius loci* emerged gradually and organically over the course of her sequential volumes of essays on aesthetics.⁸⁰⁰ In her introduction

⁷⁹⁵ Vernon Lee, *Juvenilia: Being a Second Series of Essays on Sundry Aesthetical Questions* (London: T. Fisher Unwin, 1887), p. 18.

⁷⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 20.

⁷⁹⁷ Rachel Hariette Busk, ‘Letter to the Editor’, *The Times*, 3 January 1899, p. 7.

⁷⁹⁸ *Ibid.*

⁷⁹⁹ Lamberini, “‘The Divine Country’”, p. 42.

⁸⁰⁰ Richard Cary, ‘Aldous Huxley, Vernon Lee and the Genius Loci’, *Colby Library Quarterly*, 5:6 (June 1960), 128–40.

to *Genius Loci: Notes on Places* (1899) she described the way places ‘become objects of intense and most intimate feeling’ and how the ‘visual embodiment’ of this feeling, the *genius loci*, was to be found in the ‘lie of the land, pitch of the streets, sound of bells or of weirs [...]’.⁸⁰¹ It was these very local, peculiar and often overlooked aspects of place that could ‘touch us like living creatures’.⁸⁰² Such sentiments underscored Lee’s fight to preserve the unassuming Piazza di Parte Guelfa and its buildings.

4.3 Art History for the Masses: Lectures and Local Newspapers

As Lee had proposed in her *Rivista Europea* article, it was the responsibility of the ‘illuminated community’ to disseminate knowledge and appreciation of art to the wider public. To this end, Evans, Lee, and Zimmern published regularly in local newspapers for the resident and visiting Anglophone community, while also giving public lectures in Florence.

One particularly prominent organ in this regard was the *Florence Illustrated Gazette* (1890–1908).⁸⁰³ This popular newspaper, published weekly from November to May, was written by and published for the resident and visiting Anglophone community. Local gossip was reported in its ‘Florence Day by Day’ column, notices of day trips and tables of museum opening times aided visitors in planning their sightseeing, and advertisements for ‘English bakers’ and other Anglophone-friendly services indicated where every convenience necessary for a stay in the city could be found. Emphasising Florence as a place of historic interest to the visitor, its leading articles generally focused on stories of the city’s past, rather than current events. Soon the *Gazette* became a key mouthpiece for voicing concern over proposed urban renewal projects and a means of fostering support against ‘modern mania’.⁸⁰⁴ Its reach and efficacy in this regard is attested to by its

⁸⁰¹ Vernon Lee, *Genius Loci: Notes on Places* (London: Grant Richards, 1909), pp. 3–5.

⁸⁰² *Ibid.*, p. 3.

⁸⁰³ This became the *Italian and Florence Gazette* from 1894. Other notable local weeklies included the *Florence Herald* and *Italian Gazette*.

⁸⁰⁴ Lasansky, ‘Modern Mania’, pp. 275–76.

widespread circulation, being distributed not only to public reading rooms and hotels in Italy, but also in Australia, Austria, Egypt, England, France and Germany.⁸⁰⁵

The *Gazette* attests to the highly visible presence of women in Florence as active disseminators of knowledge concerning local art and culture, propagated through talks, lectures and tours. With the guarantee of a regular captive audience during the season and the advantages of being in close proximity to the works of art and monuments, lecturing provided a great source of work and income for women to supplement their writing. Lee was reported in its pages as being one of the most popular speakers at the ‘Florentine Society of Public Lectures’ held in Palazzo Ginori during the season of 1892. Her lecture on ‘La Sculture del Rinascimento’, delivered in Italian, was reported to have been:

heard in profound silence and attention, and finally loudly applauded, by an appreciative audience. Miss Paget handled her subject in a manner that showed her thorough knowledge of it. It is rarely that a like opportunity occurs to listen to such artistic erudition, especially from a woman, and from one who has made such a thorough study of Art during the period of the Renaissance.⁸⁰⁶

In a follow up article, it was noted that the lecture given the following week by the Italian historian Pompeo Molmenti (1858–1928) was ‘not as well attended’ despite ‘the well-known merits of the lecturer’, and the reporter was ‘particularly struck with the absence of ladies, who generally form a large part of the audience at Palazzo Ginori’.⁸⁰⁷ As with the salons presided over by women like Lee at their villas, such lectures offered a means of self-education concerning Florence’s artistic history as well as an important social forum to display one’s cultural competence and meet other Anglophone female visitors to the city.

⁸⁰⁵ Ibid., fn. 32, p. 275.

⁸⁰⁶ [Anon.], ‘About Town’, *Florence Gazette*, 5 April 1892, p. 4.

⁸⁰⁷ Ibid., 12 April 1892, p. 5.

Indeed, much of the *Gazette*'s reporting was aimed towards a female readership, which explains the regular inclusion of snippets of advice suggesting the best means of navigating the city independently (the Via Calzaiuoli was to be avoided without an escort, but at the Lungarno 'ladies are perfectly *au couvert* from any sort of annoyance') and regular updates on the latest tea-room opening which provided 'a sort of ladies' club, much needed in Florence'.⁸⁰⁸ In particular it addressed the needs of women who were interested in the arts, and in its pages Florence was presented above all as a place of feminine intellectual and cultural enjoyment.

Lasansky has observed that Evans and Zimmern took up Lee's call in *The Times* to promote appreciation of Florence's historical beauty among locals, embarking on a course of lectures during the years 1898 to 1899. In fact, they were both regular lecturers in Florence prior to the foundation of the *Associazione*; indeed, from the information reported in the *Gazette*, it is apparent that they already enjoyed well-established and respected reputations as public lecturers by the time the *Associazione* came into being. We have noted that Evans contributed as a columnist to the *Gazette* and advertised her lecture tours in its pages.⁸⁰⁹ Following the establishment of the *Florence Gazette*, Zimmern realised that her association with the newspaper would further her professional progress

⁸⁰⁸ Ibid., 12 November 1892, p. 2; 19 November 1892, p. 3, in reference to the establishment of the Society of Arts and Crafts with its own tea room. The opening of the new Vieuxseux Library on via Vecchietti in 1898 incorporated the Albion Tea Room, 'managed by the Misses Macaulay', where tea was 'served in the daintiest possible way' and a room above was reserved for holding lectures (ibid., 1 November 1898, p. 2). It would be in 1908 that the first dedicated women's club in Florence was founded in the form of the Florentine branch of the Lyceum Club, inaugurated by the founder of the London Lyceum Club, Constance Smedley (1876–1941). The President was Beatrice Pandolfini Corsini (1868–1955), daughter of Tommaso Corsini, while Linda Villari was a member of the Club's Promoting Committee. See: Donatella Lippi, 'Associazionismo femminile fra Ottocento e Novecento: la storia del Lyceum Club Internazionale di Firenze', *Rassegna Storica Toscana* (July–December 2016), 189–224, translation and adaptation by Diana Panconesi Sears, 'The Story of the Lyceum Club Internazionale di Firenze'

<https://lyceumclubfirenze.it/onewebmedia/D.%20Lippi_History_of_LYCEUM_FIRENZE_English_version.pdf>. The Florentine Lyceum was noted for holding the first exhibition of Impressionist art in Italy, in 1910.

⁸⁰⁹ In a similar fashion to Baxter, Evans also provided English translations of local guides for Anglophone visitors, such as her translation of the exhibition catalogue for a portrait exhibition at the Palazzo Vecchio: *Palazzo Vecchio and the Portrait Exhibition* (Florence: The Italian Gazette, 1911).

and she became a regular contributor, before becoming its editor in 1894, thereby cementing her status as a central figure in the Anglo-American community.

Zimmern's involvement with the *Associazione* was enhanced through her role as editor at the *Florence Gazette*. While British women art writers' roles as editors in the British press has been the subject of study, their role at foreign-language periodicals warrants greater attention.⁸¹⁰ Isabelle Richet's examination of Zimmern and Theodosia Garrow Trollope's (1816–65) roles as editors in Florentine journals provides a useful introduction in this regard.⁸¹¹ Richet points to English-language newspapers and periodicals in Italy as another important source of intellectual and cultural dialogue, across which the notion of a shared 'common cultural citizenship' among members of the Anglo-Italian community in Florence was demonstrated. While Garrow Trollope's role at the *Tuscan Athenaeum* (1847–48) focused on supporting Italian independence, Zimmern's attention was on promoting the importance of the newly-unified nation's cultural and intellectual heritage.⁸¹² The figuring of Florence as the 'cradle of the Renaissance', as perpetuated in the writings of numerous historians and critics, was combined with the new ideals of unification to emphasise the idea of a national heritage as a cultural asset that belonged to everyone.

Zimmern's prolific periodical output meant her name was already well known among English visitors, and gave her sufficient cultural standing to command her own lecture series.⁸¹³ One of these, held through the 1898 season, was a course of ten talks, supported by the patronage of Torrigiani

⁸¹⁰ See, for example: Marysa Demoor, *Their Fair Share: Women, Power and Criticism in the Athenaeum, from Millicent Garrett Fawcett to Katherine Mansfield* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2000).

⁸¹¹ Isabelle Richet, 'Two English Women Periodicals Editors in Italy: Theodosia Garrow Trollope and Helen Zimmern as Literary and Cultural Go-betweens', paper presented at *Cosmopolis and Beyond: Literary Cosmopolitanism after the Republic of Letters*, Trinity College, Oxford, March 2016, podcast and transcription online: <<http://podcasts.ox.ac.uk/two-english-women-periodicals-editors-italy-theodosia-garrow-trollope-and-helen-zimmern>>.

⁸¹² *Ibid.* There is a discrepancy between Richet and Vivo's accounts of the extent of Zimmern's editorial role at the *Gazette*. Richet states that Zimmern edited the *Gazette* from 1890 to 1915 and founded the *Gazette* herself. Vivo gives the start of Zimmern's editorship as 1894 and makes no reference to her being its founder.

⁸¹³ See for example: Zimmern, 'From the City of Flowers', *Illustrated London News* (4 April 1891), 441 and (9 May 1891), 618.

himself, a fact which underlines Zimmern's prestigious position in Florentine society. The lectures provided information 'in many cases extracted from old manuscripts and not easily accessible sources' and were intended to 'prove of great help to tourists and residents in assisting them to appreciate better and more quickly the artistic riches of this lovely city'.⁸¹⁴

Held at what was then the International Institute, located at the Villa Victoria on the Viale Amedeo (today's Viale Giacomo Matteotti), the first lecture concerned Florence's Duomo and attracted 'a distinguished audience' including Vittoria Colonna Caetani, the Duchess of Sermoneta (1880–1954); Nerino Ferri, curator of the Gabinetto Disegni e Stampe of the Uffizi (1851–1917); and Guido Biagi of the Biblioteca Laurenziana. Zimmern was noted for not simply conveying well-known information, but 'confuting many popular traditions and especially falling upon Mr Ruskin, whose enthusiasm she was obliged to frequently alter'.⁸¹⁵ Zimmern's lectures were particularly renowned for her use of 'lime-light projections, which are such an original and beautiful feature of [her] addresses', many of them 'never before exhibited' and 'collected with considerable difficulty and no small expense', often illustrating pictures that were outside Florence or held in hard-to-access private collections.⁸¹⁶

At this time, art history lectures were becoming hugely popular and were important tools for attracting new audiences to the topic of art. Certainly, the art lecture was not a new phenomenon and the activities of figures such as Berenson and Ruskin in this regard have already been noted. What was new, at this point, was the emergence from the 1880s onwards of the photographic lantern slide as an essential tool of the art historian.⁸¹⁷ Developing from the popularity of magic lantern shows,

⁸¹⁴ [Anon.], 'Florence Day by Day', *Italian Gazette*, 11 January 1898, p. 3. The lectures focused on the following topics: Florence's Duomo, the Baptistery, Cimabue and Giotto, Fra Angelico, Della Robbia, Botticelli, the Medici, Florentine Palaces, Donatello, and Andrea del Sarto.

⁸¹⁵ [Anon.], 'Florence Day by Day', *Italian Gazette*, 18 January 1898, pp. 2–3

⁸¹⁶ [Anon.], 'Florence Day by Day', *Italian Gazette*, 26 April 1898, p. 2; [Anon.], 'Florence Day by Day', *Italian Gazette*, 25 January 1898, p. 8; [Anon.], 'Florence Day by Day', *Italian Gazette*, 22 February 1898, p. 3.

⁸¹⁷ Katsura Miyahara, 'The Impact of the Lantern Slide on Art-History Lecturing in Britain', *British Art Journal*, 8:2 (Autumn 2007), 67–71 (p. 67).

lantern slide lectures were inherently democratic and accessible, as they did not rely on the speaker's personal collection of photographs or proximity to an institution's collection, enabling numerous images to be shown to a large audience and in turn encouraging greater analytical discussion.⁸¹⁸ Considering the frequency with which the reviews of Zimmern's talks commented on the quality and variety of the slides she presented, evidently her employment of this apparatus was seen as a unique and highly attractive aspect of her lecturing. They certainly impressed upon local businesses the financial merits of promoting Florence's artistic heritage, as was reported when the 'enterprising manager' at Paoli's Hotel secured Zimmern to deliver her lectures as part of the evening entertainment for guests.⁸¹⁹

The precise content of Zimmern's lectures will probably remain unknown, given that her personal archive was dispersed after her death.⁸²⁰ However, from the brief reports provided in the *Gazette*, we can glean an idea of her approach and emphasis. On 10 February 1898, Zimmern delivered her lecture in the usual location, focusing on the Della Robbia. The *Gazette* noted that despite the wealth of recent publications on the Florentine family of sculptors, Zimmern was still able to offer much 'of interest and novelty', including the 'reassign[ing]' of many works following the findings of recently uncovered documents.⁸²¹ One specific attributional change that Zimmern discussed, according to the report, was in relation to the sculpted frieze and tondo reliefs of the Ospedale del Ceppo in Pistoia (1526–28), which had long been assigned to Giovanni della Robbia (1469–1529/30). The report unfortunately does not specify which reliefs and to which Della Robbia artist Zimmern gives her re-attributions. It is interesting to note, however, that this was an issue of particular interest to another female writer, Maud Cruttwell. In preparation for the publication of her own monograph on the Della Robbia, Cruttwell devoted a two-part article specifically to Girolamo

⁸¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 68.

⁸¹⁹ *Italian Gazette*, 26 April 1898, p. 2.

⁸²⁰ Vivo, *Helen Zimmern*, p. 77.

⁸²¹ [Anon.], 'Florence Day by Day', *Italian Gazette*, 15 February 1898, p. 3.

Della Robbia (1488–1566) for the *Gazette des beaux-arts* (1904), boldly advancing her theory that it was this member of the family who was responsible for the hospital reliefs.⁸²² Though it is uncertain if Cruttwell attended Zimmern’s lectures, she was in Florence at this time and considering their prominent status on the calendar of regular art-related events for the Anglo-Florentine community, it is tempting to consider that there may have been some kind of discussion or even indirect influence between the two women in their ideas regarding Della Robbia attributions.

A fervent interest for Della Robbia art among English audiences and collectors had been established through Ruskin’s enthusiasm for the artists, together with John Charles Robinson’s (1824–1913) keen pursuit and promotion of examples of Della Robbia work for the decorative art collections he curated at the South Kensington Museum (now the Victoria and Albert Museum).⁸²³ Zimmern’s lecturing on the topic can be seen as another aspect to this revival, ‘on-the-ground’ in Florence. Together with Baxter’s emphasis on Della-Robbiana in Temple Leader’s Vincigliata collection, Zimmern played a key part in promoting interest in and taste for these works among British visitors, who, when in Florence, had the opportunity to see examples of this work *in situ*.

Art history lecturing was certainly not unique to women. In Britain, the art critic and later Keeper of the Tate and Wallace Collection, D. S. MacColl (1859–1948), began lecturing with lantern slides from the mid-1880s in his Oxford University Extension series, while Fry’s extensive collection of lantern slides are today preserved at King’s College Cambridge, among the archive of his professional papers.⁸²⁴ However, none of the women discussed here had such formal platforms for their own lectures, while the materials they employed — slides, notes, photographs — have not been preserved for posterity. Yet from newspaper accounts, we can see that it was not just in

⁸²² Maud Cruttwell, ‘Girolamo Della Robbia et ses oeuvres’, *Gazette des beaux-arts*, 46:31 (January 1904), 26–52, 140–48 (p. 143).

⁸²³ Charlotte Drew, ‘Luca Della Robbia: South Kensington and the Victorian Revival of a Florentine Sculptor’, *Sculpture Journal*, 23 (2014), 171–83; Julie Sheldon, ed., *From Renaissance to Regent Street: the Della Robbia Pottery: an exhibition at the Williamson Art Gallery, Birkenhead* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2015).

⁸²⁴ Miyahara, ‘The Impact of the Lantern Slide’, pp. 67, 70.

Florence, but in London too that women were engaged in this practice. For example, in March 1898, just two months before the founding of the *Associazione*, art writer and women's rights activist Evelyn March Phillipps ([?]-1915) wrote to the National Gallery, requesting permission to take a group from Weybridge, for whom she had been lecturing on Italian art, around the Gallery after it was closed to the public.⁸²⁵ The Board refused Phillipps's request on the grounds that during the forthcoming summer months the gallery operated later opening hours when her group could visit.⁸²⁶ Disappointed with this response, Phillipps replied that she found it 'curious that every attempt to help people to understand & appreciate our National treasures of art sh[oul]d be as systematically discouraged'.⁸²⁷ Her comment and her thwarted efforts to obtain for her students from outside of London an immediate tour of the national collection should be contextualised within contemporary disputes over the Trustees' unwillingness to install gas lighting and thereby their inability to extend opening hours after dusk to enable people to visit the collection after the working day.⁸²⁸

Other women did have more success, such as the artist, illustrator and writer Edith Harwood (1866-1926). A graduate of the Royal Female School of Art, alongside her work as an illustrator in the Arts and Crafts tradition,⁸²⁹ Harwood wrote two successful guidebooks to Florence and Rome, practised painting in tempera and authored several articles on the old masters.⁸³⁰ In the *Women's Penny Paper*, Harwood advertised her lecture series on the Italian pictures at the National Gallery,

⁸²⁵ Evelyn March Phillipps to National Gallery, 6 March 1898 [NG7/221/7], NGA.

⁸²⁶ Meeting of the National Gallery Board of Trustees, 5 April 1898, p. 45 [NG1/7], NGA.

⁸²⁷ Phillipps to National Gallery, 19 March 1898 [NG7/221/8], NGA.

⁸²⁸ Geoffrey N. Swinney, "'The evil of vitiating and heating the air'": Artificial Lighting and Public Access to the National Gallery, London, with particular Reference to the Turner and Vernon Collections', *Journal of the History of Collections*, 15:1 (May 2003), 83-112.

⁸²⁹ In collaboration with architect and designer Charles Robert Ashbee's (1863-1942) Guild of Handicraft, Harwood illustrated the ornamental letters for a luxury vellum edition of Geoffrey Chaucer, *The Flower and the Leaf* (London: Edward Arnold; New York: S. Buckley and Co., 1902), among other publications. See also, Maria Quirk, 'Reconsidering Professionalism: Women, Space and Art in England, 1880-1914', unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Queensland, Australia, 2015, pp. 47-8.

⁸³⁰ Edith Harwood, *Notable Pictures in Florence* (London: J. M. Dent, 1905); and Edith Harwood, *Notable Pictures in Rome* (London: J. M. Dent, 1907).

available for 10s 6d.⁸³¹ For this same paper, she published a three-part series on ‘Studies from Pictures of Women in the National Gallery’, focusing on the stories behind figures such as Penelope from Pintoricchio’s *Penelope and the Suitors* (NG911).⁸³² This may well have formed the subject of her lectures at the Gallery that she conducted for the readers of the *Women’s Penny*. Harwood’s work as a tempera artist placed her among the group of contemporary artists leading the revival of this medium, pioneered, as noted earlier, by Herringham. Harwood too exhibited her own examples of tempera work and copies after the old masters, securing a stand-alone exhibition held at the Dowdeswell Galleries in November 1910.⁸³³ Her exhibited works featured watercolour and tempera studies after Botticelli’s *Primavera*, Cosimo Tura, Piero Della Francesca and her own original compositions inspired by Italian Renaissance paintings.⁸³⁴ The show proved so successful that she was invited to exhibit it two years later at Florence’s Lyceum Club, which, as previously noted, was organised by Beatrice Corsini and other women of the Anglo-Florentine community, where it was reported to have ‘created a great deal of interest’ and attracted many repeat visitors.⁸³⁵ The example of Harwood illuminates the fascinating cross-cultural artistic and literary networks along which women could operate in the field of disseminating knowledge and appreciation of Italian art between London and Florence, well into the early twentieth century.

To return to Zimmern, she continued to lecture regularly in Florence. At the start of the twentieth century, she was able to move to a new residence at the prestigious Palazzo Buondelmonti

⁸³¹ [Anon.], ‘Lectures’, *Women’s Penny Paper* (3 January 1895), 2.

⁸³² Edith Harwood, ‘Studies from Pictures of Women in the National Gallery — III: Penelope’, *Women’s Penny Paper* (18 July 1895), 44–45.

⁸³³ Edith Harwood, *Catalogue of a Series of Tempera Paintings and Drawings: Which Things are an Allegory*, Dowdeswell Galleries, London, November 1910 (London: Dowdeswell Galleries, 1910). Unfortunately, the only copy of this catalogue which I have been able to trace is recorded at the NAL, where it is missing.

⁸³⁴ As described in contemporary reviews: ‘At Messrs’ Dowdeswells’ Galleries’, *Academy* (3 December 1910), 546; ‘Other Exhibitions’, *Athenaeum* (26 November 1910), 673; ‘Art Exhibitions’, *The Times*, 12 November 1910, p. 6. This latter review observed that Harwood had ‘fallen on evil days, days of realism and prose; but, had she worked 40 years ago, with Rossetti and the young Burne-Jones, she would have made an impression’.

⁸³⁵ [Anon.], ‘Miss Harwood’s Pictures’, *Italian Gazette*, 12 May 1912, p. 4.

and it was from here that she conducted her talks.⁸³⁶ In 1907, the *Florence Herald* reported on these well-attended sessions, in which Zimmern covered favoured artists such as the Della Robbia, Fra Filippo and Filippino Lippi (c. 1457–1504), and Donatello, with her audience comprising attendees such as Constance Harding-Krayl (1884–[?]), a friend of the artist Käthe Kollwitz (1867–1945), a ‘Miss Penrose and her pupils’, and travel writer Edward Hutton (1875–1969).⁸³⁷ Attesting to the range and reach of this form of art historical dissemination, women like Zimmern were still very much an active presence in the early years of the twentieth century as authoritative voices on art for British (and other) audiences in Italy itself.

4.4 ‘A sort of necessary vandalism’: on Museums and Keeping Works of Art *in situ*

The development of an informed, sensitive approach to heritage management coincided with a period that Jordanna Bailkin describes as characterised by ‘intense politicisation of debates about the ownership of cultural objects’.⁸³⁸ The complex relationship between private ownership and public display of art was especially acute in Britain, where the vast majority of public art collections were formed by individual donation rather than through any systematic programme of institutional acquisition, intensifying a British sense of unison between private property and collective heritage.⁸³⁹ The 1880s marked a new era in debates between individual and collective ownership, as the

⁸³⁶ Vivo, *Helen Zimmern*, p. 66.

⁸³⁷ See [Anon.], ‘Society and General’, *Florence Herald*, 12 February 1907, p. 11; [Anon.], ‘Society and General’, *Florence Herald*, 19 February 1907, p. 11; [Anon.], ‘Society and General’, *Florence Herald*, 26 February 1907, p. 11; [Anon.], ‘Society and General’, *Florence Herald*, 5 March 1907, p. 11; [Anon.], ‘Society and General’, *Florence Herald*, 12 March 1907, p. 11. I am very grateful to Alyson Price for providing me with scans of the runs of the *Florence* and *Italian Herald* kept at the British Institute of Florence. *The Florence Herald* ran weekly from 1906 to 1913 and thereafter as *The Florence and Italian Herald* from 1913 to 1917. See: Isabelle Richet, ‘The English-language Press in Italy: Identification and Attempt at a Typology’, 2014, online presentation: <https://www.academia.edu/7608885/The_english-speaking_press_in_Italy>.

⁸³⁸ Jordanna Bailkin, *The Culture of Property: The Crisis of Liberalism in Modern Britain* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004), p. 8.

⁸³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 15.

agricultural depression and introduction of the Settled Land Acts of 1882 necessitated the sale of heirlooms from financially-straitened landed estates.⁸⁴⁰ The alarm as British aristocratic families sold off their collections paved the way for the establishment of safeguarding mechanisms such as the National Trust in 1895 and National Art Collections Fund in 1903, shifting the value of possessing such objects from the ‘province of the aristocracy intent on establishing status’ to becoming assets of collective national identity.⁸⁴¹

In relation to the situation in Italy, attempts by the government to enforce laws regulating the exportation of works of art proved repeatedly ineffective. At the same time that fears of the ‘art drain’ were causing much debate in the British press and Parliament, British women in Italy were voicing their concerns about the ongoing exodus of works of art from Italy, aided by the unscrupulous practices of well-connected dealers such as Bernard Berenson and Stefano Bardini. For example, in December 1898 at the height of the *Associazione*’s campaign, Berenson was arranging for the illegal exportation of Botticelli’s *Chigi Madonna* to America, again for his patron Isabella Stewart Gardner.⁸⁴²

Even before her involvement with the *Associazione*, Lee’s belief in the intrinsic value of seeing art in its intended setting was a prominent theme in her writings, stemming from her ‘median position between the poles of historicist and appreciative cosmopolitanism’.⁸⁴³ Following an afternoon in the Vatican observing the way a group of children reacted to the sculptures housed there, Lee’s essay ‘The Child in the Vatican’ (1881) pondered the suitability of the museum space as

⁸⁴⁰ Ibid., p. 16.

⁸⁴¹ Ruth Hoberman, *Museum Trouble: Edwardian Fiction and the Emergence of Modernism* (Charlottesville; London: University of Virginia Press, 2011), p. 67. Also see pp. 65–77 for a detailed discussion of the ‘art drain’ in relation to Henry James’ *The Outcry* (1911).

⁸⁴² Patricia Rubin, ‘Pictures with a Past: Botticelli in Boston’, in *Botticelli: Heroes and Heroines*, ed. by Nathaniel Silver, exhibition catalogue (Boston: Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, 2019), pp. 10–31 (p. 23–26).

⁸⁴³ Hilary Fraser, ‘Writing Cosmopolis: The Cosmopolitan Aesthetics of Emilia Dilke and Vernon Lee’, *19: Interdisciplinary Studies in the Long Nineteenth Century*, 28 (2019), DOI: <<http://doi.org/10.16995/ntn.844>>.

the environment best suited for an encounter with art.⁸⁴⁴ For Lee, the modern-day gallery presented a ‘dismal scientific piece of ostentation’ that was ‘constructed for our art-studying, rather than art-loving times’. She was unsurprised to see the children ‘staring about with dreary, vague little faces [...] numbed by a sort of wonder unaccompanied by curiosity’, when subjected to the ‘dreary labyrinth of brick and mortar’ of the Vatican galleries, ‘where art is arranged and ticketed and made dingy and lifeless even as are the plants in a botanic collection’.⁸⁴⁵

Here Lee draws on the long-standing motif of the dissatisfaction the viewer encounters in the museum space.⁸⁴⁶ For Lee writing about the Vatican galleries, this unsuitability resulted from the strange, enforced space in which the sculptures were now crowded together, the Belvedere Court, which she refers to pointedly as their ‘place of exile’, in contrast to their former home, where they:

once stood, each in happy independence, against a screen of laurel or ilex branches, or on the sun-heated gable of a temple, where the grass waved in the fissures and the swallows nested, or in a cresset-lit, incense-dim chapel, or high against the blue sky above the bustle of the market place.⁸⁴⁷

Lee’s description of the thriving, living, multi-sensory environment in which the sculptures were originally to be found is contrasted with their current, deadened holding-space of ‘long, bleak, glaring corridors’, where the works of art are incarcerated in a ‘catacomb of stones’ and regimented into ‘endless rows of niche, shelf and bracket’.⁸⁴⁸ Admitting galleries to be ‘necessary things’, intended ‘to save pictures and statues (or the little remaining of them) from candle smoke, sacristans’

⁸⁴⁴ Vernon Lee, ‘The Child in the Vatican’, in *Belcaro: Being Essays on Sundry Aesthetical Questions* (London: Satchell, 1881), pp. 17–48.

⁸⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 17–18.

⁸⁴⁶ Jonah Siegel, ‘The Material of Form: Vernon Lee at the Vatican and Out of It’, *Victorian Studies*, 55:2 (Winter 2013), 189–201 (p. 194).

⁸⁴⁷ Lee, ‘Child in the Vatican’, p. 18.

⁸⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

ladders, damp, worms and street boys’, Lee nonetheless affirmed them to be places where ‘a sense of a sort of negative vandalism’ pervades.⁸⁴⁹

That same year, Lee’s imaginative recreation of the gallery space as morgue was realised through the removal of a group of frescoes from the Villa Lemmi, in Florence. Discovered in September 1873 under layers of whitewash, the three large frescoes were immediately attributed to Botticelli, drawing the attention of critics and museum officials internationally. While the third fresco was already too faded to discern what it depicted, the subject matter of the other two was eventually understood to show allegorical scenes relating to the marriage of the Florentine nobleman Lorenzo Tornabuoni (1465–97) and noblewoman Giovanna degli Albizzi (1468–88) in 1486.⁸⁵⁰ Consequently, the two legible frescoes were given the titles: *Giovanna Receiving a Gift of Flowers from Venus* and *Lorenzo Presented by Grammar to Prudentia and the other Liberal Arts*. Soon after their discovery, these frescoes were exported from Italy.

Joanna Smalcerz has detailed the factors leading to this event. Failing to obtain an export license for the works after negotiating their sale to the Louvre, Bardini resorted to underhand methods to smuggle the frescoes out, eventually selling the works to the French government. Once outside of the country, the Italian government’s insufficient laws rendered it unable to pursue any kind of restitution.⁸⁵¹ Exhibited at the Louvre on 9 March 1882, the detached Villa Lemmi frescoes were displayed prominently on the Daru Staircase, facing the famed sculpture of the Nike of Samothrace and praised in the French press as a successful acquisition, demonstrating the cultural

⁸⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁵⁰ Patricia Simons has identified the female figure in the Villa Lemmi frescoes as Lorenzo’s second wife, Ginevra Gianfigliuzzi, not Giovanna, as has been repeated frequently in the literature. See: Patricia Simons, ‘Giovanna and Ginevra: Portraits for the Tornabuoni Family by Ghirlandaio and Botticelli’, *I Tatti Studies in the Italian Renaissance*, 14:15 (2011–2012), 103–35 (p. 119).

⁸⁵¹ Joanna Smalcerz, ‘A Lesson in Loopholes: Stefano Bardini and the Export of the Botticelli Frescoes from Villa Lemmi’, in *Dealing Art on Both Sides of the Atlantic, 1860–1940*, ed. by Lynn Catterson (Boston: Brill, 2017), pp. 291–310.

prowess of France.⁸⁵² As well as being enormously popular with copyists, their location at the Louvre imbued the frescoes with new meanings for their museum audience. For example, it was reported in *Harper's Bazaar* that they had inspired 'an innovation in bridesmaids' costumes' after being seen by 'a young English lady of rank' who had decided on the colours of mauve and green for her own bridesmaids' attire, following the combination used by Botticelli for one of Giovanna's handmaidens.⁸⁵³

However, the frescoes had suffered much damage at the point of their removal, as Ruskin had feared, having speedily dispatched his copyist, the dealer and connoisseur Charles Fairfax Murray (1849–1919), to make copies before the event.⁸⁵⁴ Ruskin also questioned the suitability of their relocation to the galleries of the Louvre, an issue shared by Lee.⁸⁵⁵ Lee's article 'Botticelli at the Villa Lemmi' appeared in the *Cornhill Magazine* in August 1882.⁸⁵⁶ As Jeremy Melius observes, Lee herself was not a devoted fan of Botticelli, but the removal of the frescoes affronted her 'deep commitment to the phenomenology of place'.⁸⁵⁷ Lee's essay presents a focused discussion of the wider issues concerning public and private ownership of art, cultural custodianship and the suitability of encountering art in a museum setting.

Lee's article opens with a description of the process of removing the frescoes, known as *a massello*, after which they were given 'the seals of the officials, the van of the railway, the criticism of the experts and the gape of the public'.⁸⁵⁸ As she explained, it was not a sense of personal loss, her

⁸⁵² Gabriel Montua, 'Botticelli's Path to Modernity: Continental Reception, 1850–1900', in *Botticelli Reimagined*, ed. by Mark Evans and Stefan Weppelmann, exhibition catalogue (London: V&A Publishing, 2016), pp. 86–91 (p. 87).

⁸⁵³ [Anon.], 'October Weddings', *Harper's Bazaar*, 15:39 (30 September 1882), 610–11.

⁸⁵⁴ Jeremy Melius, 'Art History and the Invention of Botticelli', unpublished doctoral thesis, University of California, Berkeley, 2010, p. 3.

⁸⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

⁸⁵⁶ Vernon Lee, 'Botticelli at the Villa Lemmi', *Cornhill Magazine*, 46:272 (August 1882), 159–73, later republished in Vernon Lee, *Juvenilia: Being a Second Series of Essays on Sundry Aesthetical Questions*, 2 vols (London: T. Fisher Unwin, 1887), vol. 1, pp. 77–130.

⁸⁵⁷ Melius, 'Art History and the Invention of Botticelli', p. 2.

⁸⁵⁸ Lee, 'Botticelli at the Villa Lemmi', p. 159.

strong preference for Botticelli, or the lack of access to works by the artist that provoked her disagreement with this ‘particularly modern action’. Instead, it was the disjunction between her current experience of seeing the works at the Louvre and the ‘very strong impression’, formed the first time she had viewed the frescoes at the Villa Lemmi. For Lee, their removal was part of a ‘modern tendency [that] deprives us of our most valuable artistic possessions’.⁸⁵⁹ Acknowledging the paradoxical nature of this statement, Lee argued that while such actions were believed to ‘save from destruction and to render accessible as great as possible a proportion of the works which former artistic times have bequeathed to us’, it in fact detracted from ‘the most precious artistic possession that we possess [...] of assimilating art into life’.⁸⁶⁰

Encountering art in its original setting, unmediated by the museum space, presented for Lee the ideal conditions through which to absorb fully the ameliorating impressions that the experience of art could convey to the viewer. The modern ‘preoccupation with art’, placed in museums where it was ‘not only physically, but intellectually housed’ had, Lee argued,

induced a perfect habit of removing works of art from their natural and often beautiful surroundings in order to place them in a kind of artificial Arabia Petraea of vacuity and ugliness [...] we are so horribly afraid that a picture should get damaged by the smoke of the candles on the altar [...] that smoke or sacristan (both freely taken into account by the painter) should possibly injure this picture, that we hasten to buy it, new frame it, stick it up under the glaring light of a gallery [...].⁸⁶¹

Lee’s argument here is startling for its anticipation of approaches taken today to interpret old master art through discerning the original function, display and its affective impact on the viewer. Satirising the project of the major European galleries of her time, Lee conceded that one could certainly ‘appreciate’ these works of art, through an understanding of their place within the disciplinary

⁸⁵⁹ Ibid., p. 166.

⁸⁶⁰ Ibid., pp. 166–67.

⁸⁶¹ Ibid., p. 170.

framework of art history: ‘we know all about the filiation of the schools and the characteristic of the epoch; we know, every ignoramus of us, that, after all, there are only three or four Leonardos and two Giorgiones in the wide world [...]’. Yet, for all this scholarly assimilation, Lee poses the provocative question: ‘do we enjoy more and more, or less and less?’.⁸⁶² Her answer is clearly in the negative:

the impressions of full artistic enjoyment are strongest, not from mornings in the Elgin Room or the Louvre, but from an hour or so of rambling through some old town like Verona, or Padua, or Siena, where we have found some picture by Girolamo dai Libri, or Moroni, or Sodoma, isolated over an altar, in the place, among the cheap finery, the tarnished finery, in the solitude and silence for which it was painted by the artist.⁸⁶³

For Lee, the true enjoyment of art is not experienced in a deliberate study session undertaken in a dedicated museum or gallery space, but rather through an unexpected encounter while exploring the artist’s place of activity. Her interest is not in the work of art as a cultural prize, framed and lit on the wall of a gallery, but as an every day object that is given meaning through its role in every day life. It was this unexceptional, unexpected encounter with art that underscored Lee’s heritage activism, in her advocacy of a ‘museo per il *demos*’, where the preservation of cultural patrimony was inextricable from the preservation of democratic access to and enjoyment of such patrimony.⁸⁶⁴

Lee’s opinion regarding ideal viewing conditions contrasted with that often vocalised by her contemporaries. Rosella Mamoli Zorzi has discussed the ‘continuous refrain’ of complaint which other writers like Henry James and John Ruskin levelled against the ‘bad lighting’ of Italian

⁸⁶² Ibid.

⁸⁶³ Ibid., p. 171.

⁸⁶⁴ Marco Canani, ‘Tra le lingue, tra le culture: intorno al manoscritto italiano “Ville romane: in memoriam” di Vernon Lee’, *Lingue Culture Mediazioni*, 3:1 (2016), 47–63 (p. 56), DOI: <<https://doi.org/10.7358/lcm-2016-001-cana>>. Emphasis in original.

churches.⁸⁶⁵ The year following Lee's Villa Lemmi article, James published his essay 'Venice', in which he lamented how 'many a masterpiece lurks in the unaccommodating gloom of side-chapels and sacristies. Many a noble work is perched behind the dusty candles and muslin roses of a scantily-visited altar [...] [and] suffer in a darkness that can never be explored'.⁸⁶⁶ Lee argued against the view that works of art needed to be salvaged from the imminent deterioration and obscurity awaiting them should they be left to their fate in the churches in which they were found and among the local populace with who they came into contact. Lee instead advocates for understanding art through its original function and intended effect on the viewer, encountered in the very spot for which it was created, in the 'solitude and silence' of a church. The removal of the Villa Lemmi frescoes represented not a safeguarding of a work of art for the public, but a communal loss of the 'sense that a painting is better in a farmhouse where it can be enjoyed, than in the most superb gallery where it will be overlooked'.⁸⁶⁷

The *Associazione per la difesa di Firenze antica* continued to be active until well into the First World War.⁸⁶⁸ Examining this group demonstrates the many networks with which British women were involved as cultural mediators, and which still remain to be explored. For example, the updated list of associated members, published in 1900, features the additional English female *aderenti* member Mildred Mary Blanche Mansfield (1862–1938), a name which to date has not

⁸⁶⁵ Rosella Mamoli Zorzi, 'John Ruskin and Henry James in the Enchanting Darkness of the Scuola Grande di San Rocco', in *From Darkness to Light: Writers in Museums, 1798–1898*, ed. by Rosella Mamoli Zorzi and Katherine Manthorne (Cambridge, UK: Open Book Publishers, 2019), pp. 53–70 (p. 59) <<https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0151>>.

⁸⁶⁶ Henry James, 'Venice', in *Italian Hours*, ed. by John Auchard (University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1992), p. 23, quoted in *ibid.*, p. 59.

⁸⁶⁷ Lee, 'Botticelli at the Villa Lemmi', p. 173.

⁸⁶⁸ Lasansky states that the *Associazione* folded in 1909, but no reference is given for this information. They are still listed as active in the official yearly report of administrative, commercial and professional bodies in the region of Tuscany of 1916: see the *Annuario toscano guida amministrativa, commerciale e professionale della regione* (Florence: Enrico Ariani, 1916), p. 4, with Corsini as President and Guido Biagi as Vice President. Also listed as active are the *Brigata degli Amici dei monumenti* and the *Federazione delle Brigate toscane degli amici dei monumenti*.

received attention either in scholarship on women art writers or the Anglo-Italian community in Florence.⁸⁶⁹ Mansfield must have been connected to the other women in the community in some way, assuming she was appointed in a similar manner to Evans. Like other women of the community, she made her living from publishing translations of early Italian texts and manuscripts, and contributing to guidebooks such as *Florence and Her Treasures* (1911), part of the same Methuen series to which Cruttwell contributed.⁸⁷⁰ Following several articles on little known works of the Tuscan school, Mansfield published in 1922 a monograph on the Florentine noble family of Lanfredini, who had been overlooked by historians in favour of the Medici dynasty.⁸⁷¹ This brief sketch demonstrates how much more there is to uncover about women who wrote about, discussed and lived with the art of Italy's past.

While Florence's *Associazione* does appear to be one of the few Italian heritage groups where local female residents were openly and conspicuously contributing members, there is evidence of women's engagement with heritage initiatives in other Italian cities. In her article 'Dark, Many-Towered Bologna' published in 1922, Lee refers to the work of her 'archaeological acquaintance' Alfonso Rubbiani (1848–1913), the founder of the *Comitato per Bologna Storica e Artistica*.⁸⁷² In Siena, the *Società senese degli amici dei monumenti*, established in January 1903, featured no women in its membership list.⁸⁷³ However, local resident British female art historians — including

⁸⁶⁹ [Anon.], 'Elenco dei Soci', *Bollettino dell'Associazione*, primo fascicolo, p. 15.

⁸⁷⁰ Herbert Vaughan, *Florence and Her Treasures*, with notes on the pictures by Mildred Mansfield (London: Methuen, 1911). Cruttwell contributed to: Hugh A. Douglas, *Venice and her Treasures*, with notes on the pictures by Maud Cruttwell (London: Methuen, 1909).

⁸⁷¹ Mildred Mansfield, *A Family of Decent Folk, 1200–1741: A Study in the Centuries Growth of the Lanfredini, Merchant-Bankers, Art-Patrons, and House-Builders of Florence* (Florence: Olschki, 1922).

⁸⁷² Vernon Lee, 'Dark, Many-Towered Bologna', *North American Review*, 216:800 (July 1922), 83–88. This was later republished as part of the collection *The Golden Keys and Other Essays on the Genius Loci* (London: John Lane, 1925).

⁸⁷³ See the 'Statuto' and 'Ruolo dei Soci' in *Rassegna d'arte Senese: Bulletino della Società della Amici dei Monumenti*, 1:1 (1905), 3–7. The society did appoint two British men as foreign correspondent members, the diplomat and connoisseur Sidney Churchill (1862–1921) for Palermo and Robert Langton Douglas for London.

Jean Carlyle Graham and Irene Vavasour-Elder (1883–1971) — were involved with this initiative can again be traced through their publications. Both women contributed to the Sienese society's *bollettino*, the *Rassegna d'arte senese*. Graham presented her discovery of unpublished documents from Florence's state archive shedding light on the obscure trecento Sienese painter Memmo di Filippuccio (c.1250–c.1325).⁸⁷⁴ Vavasour-Elder published several identifications of unknown Sienese works in collections outside of that town, while also drawing the society's attention to works in the region of the Val d'Elsa requiring conservation attention.⁸⁷⁵

In a similar fashion, the authority of Ethel Halsey was drawn on to offer support for a local heritage campaign in Varallo in 1905. Following an announcement by the local council that plans had been approved to demolish the Franciscan cloisters of the site's principal basilica Santa Maria delle Grazie to make space for new school buildings, a local community group was established to protest against these unwanted developments. It was Halsey who was invited to express her support in the group's pamphlet, her letter used to demonstrate the 'terrible impression that the devastating destruction would have on numerous foreign visitors', while also providing new evidence as to the important artistic value of the cloisters now at risk. In her letter, Halsey drew attention to the historical records which cited that Gaudenzio had executed his earliest fresco work at Varallo for the Franciscans, including two series depicting the lives of Saint Catherine and Saint Cecilia, yet to be found. Pointing to the numerous recent rediscoveries of frescoes from under whitewash in other parts of Italy, Halsey underscored the unthinkable loss that the demolition of the cloisters would be.⁸⁷⁶ Though brief, these accounts demonstrate the widespread influence of women's engagement with

⁸⁷⁴ Jean Carlyle Graham, 'Una scuola d'arte a Sangimignano nel trecento', *Rassegna d'arte senese*, 5:1–2 (1909), 39–42.

⁸⁷⁵ Irene Vavasour-Elder, 'La pittura senese nella Galleria di Perugia', *Rassegna d'arte senese*, 5:3 (1909), 63–77; Irene Vavasour-Elder, 'Un dipinto senese nella Pinacoteca di Lucca', *Rassegna d'arte senese*, 6:2–3 (1910), 42; Irene Vavasour-Elder, 'Un quadro sconosciuto di Niccolò Tegliacci', *Rassegna d'arte senese*, 7:1–2 (1911), 16–17; [Anon.], 'Dalle riviste', *Rassegna d'arte senese*, 5:3 (1909), 87–88.

⁸⁷⁶ Ethel Halsey, 'Un giudizio d'una scrittrice inglese', *Il chiostro di S. Maria delle Grazie in Varallo* (Novara: Fratelli Miglio, 1905), p. 16.

heritage concerns across Italy, encouraging us to reconsider the existing narratives and points to the yet-to-be rehabilitated figures who formed part of the rich and diverse tapestry of art history and heritage's formation in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

The work of women like Lee and Zimmern finds its echoes in that of later women across Europe whose cosmopolitanism and activism went hand-in-hand with their work promoting the importance of heritage and cultural engagement as an essential element and entitlement of human life. Rose Valland (1898–1980), for example, was a crucial figure in the French 'Commission de Récupération Artistique' (Commission for the Recovery of Works of Art) during the Second World War, and secretly recorded the illegal movement and sale of over 20, 000 works of art by Nazi looting. Valland is the subject of a dedicated conference in September this year.⁸⁷⁷ The efforts of Valland and several other women have often been subsumed in the historical account of the so-called 'Monuments Men'.⁸⁷⁸

Bringing things up to date, in Florence, for instance, the *Associazione Culturale Il Palmerino* established by Federica Parretti continues the rich culture of debate and the exchange of ideas, for which Lee's Villa Il Palmerino had been known, through interdisciplinary events and activities.⁸⁷⁹ It is also worth remembering that the historic centre of Florence was named a UNESCO site in 1982. The UNESCO Management Plan for the city, published as recently as 2016, gives among the criteria for its status:

The Historic Centre of Florence has safeguarded its distinguishing characteristics, both in terms of building volume and decorations. The city has respected its medieval roots such as its

⁸⁷⁷ 'Rose Valland – Monuments Woman: Résistance und Restitution', Jagdschloss Schorfheide, Berlin, Germany, 18 September 2020.

⁸⁷⁸ Today there is an *Association de la Mémoire de Rose Valland* <<https://www.rosevalland.com>>. Valland wrote about her experiences in her book *Le front de l'art* (1961). Along with several other women she was part of the group popularly known as the 'Monuments Men', this name underscoring the problematic recording of women's historical contributions to the restitution of art during the war.

⁸⁷⁹ 'Associazione Culturale Il Palmerino' <<http://www.palmerino.it/index.php?id=5>>.

urban form with narrow alleyways, and its Renaissance identity [...] these values are still appreciated within the historic centre, notwithstanding the 19th-century transformations [...].⁸⁸⁰

The work of Evans, Lee, Zimmern, and others was instrumental in safeguarding and promoting an appreciation of Florence which, at its heart, championed its ‘well preserved medieval character’ as an integral aspect to the ongoing economic, cultural and social wealth of the city. The group of trecento buildings and churches forming the Piazza di Parte Guelfa fell outside of the ‘canon of scholarly sites’ which the municipality favoured in their plan to edit the city centre.⁸⁸¹ As with their focus on ‘difficult artists’ and seldom visited locations, the campaign for the Piazza di Parte Guelfa drew attention to an otherwise overlooked aspect of Florence’s city centre. While the piazza may still not make it onto a general tourist’s must-see itinerary, Lee was attentive to the fact that unifying the urban fabric of the city to frame its major monuments in wide open spaces and broad roads was akin to transferring paintings from their altars with their accompanying backdrop of candles, smoke and finery, to hang evenly-spaced and brightly-lit on the blank walls of a gallery. The ability to enjoy art, beyond ‘sitting in judgement or listening to evidence’ was a fundamental part of fostering wider social respect for the historical remnants of the past.⁸⁸² Through lectures, activism, letters, and articles, these women played significant roles in disseminating how to conscientiously care for and enjoy the art of the past. Beyond the ‘wonderful fantastications of art philosophy’, they sought, as Lee wrote, not to ‘teach others, but to show them how far I have taught myself, and how far they may teach themselves’.⁸⁸³

⁸⁸⁰ Carlo Francini, Chiara Bocchio, Valentina Ippolito and Manuel Marin, *Management Plan of the Historic Centre of Florence, approved by the City Council on 19 January 2016* (UNESCO: Department for Culture and Sport of the Florence Municipality, 2016), p. 19.

⁸⁸¹ Lasansky, *Renaissance Perfected*, pp. xxvii, 28.

⁸⁸² Lee, ‘Botticelli at the Villa Lemmi’, p. 170.

⁸⁸³ Lee, *Belcaro*, p. 13.

CONCLUSION

WHY HAVE THERE BEEN NO GREAT WOMEN ART HISTORIANS?

Last year, the papers of Linda Nochlin (1931–2017), now housed at the American Archives of Art at the Smithsonian, were for the first time made widely accessible to the public.⁸⁸⁴ As Nochlin’s legacy of pioneering female art historical scholarship is secured, it seems especially pertinent to be thinking back to her provocative essay of fifty years ago, ‘Why Have There Been No Great Women Artists?’ (1971), and to extend her question to her invisible predecessors who wrote about art.⁸⁸⁵ How can we, in our practice today, ensure a more permanent place in the annals of art history for those ‘great women’ who came before? This thesis has demonstrated how a vocal and visible group of women writers directly influenced the developing discipline of art history in late nineteenth-century Britain. Through periodical articles, monographs, guidebooks, and lectures, the women discussed here did not hesitate to assert their connoisseurial aptitude or to propose attributions of their own. They revived the reputation of Italian old masters then deemed antithetical to prevailing taste, yet who today are considered canonical. Their willingness to write across genres and incorporate new approaches to thinking and writing about art enabled them to disseminate this knowledge to audiences beyond their scholarly peer group. They wielded impact over their peers and the public alike, while working on the cusp of art history’s formative moment of institutionalisation, a moment that would see their authority and contribution gradually sidelined.

These women wrote art history that was underscored by an informed knowledge, careful documentary research, acute visual competency and awareness of the current field of knowledge. Their work merits critical attention for these factors, an argument that has been championed in the

⁸⁸⁴ ‘Linda Nochlin papers, circa 1876, 1937–2017’, Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, <<https://www.aaa.si.edu/collections/linda-nochlin-papers-17580/how-to-use>>.

⁸⁸⁵ Linda Nochlin, ‘Why Have There Been No Great Women Artists?’, in *Woman in Sexist Society: Studies in Power and Powerlessness*, ed. by Vivian Gornick and Barbara K. Moran (New York: Basic Books, 1971), pp. 1–42.

past, and certainly drawn out in my thesis. What my research has newly revealed is the concrete evidence demonstrating the ongoing relevance of their contribution for art history today. Tracing the strands of influence from their thinking that remain pertinent to current scholarship, my thesis makes clear the ongoing lacunae that exist in our own self-critical awareness as practitioners of a discipline that omits their voices from consideration. The importance of addressing these women and their work is evident not only for their integral place in the historical moment of the discipline's formation, but in how it speaks to the most pressing issues of concern in art history and museum practice today.

Throughout this thesis, I have shown how the women discussed here wrote art history that engaged with and questioned that of their peers and predecessors. Maud Cruttwell's entry into the debate concerning the Florentine profile portraits threatened the authority of Wilhelm von Bode to the extent that he felt compelled to publicly discredit her in the pages of the internationally prestigious *Burlington Magazine*. Bode ridiculed Cruttwell's competency to understand the Pollaiuolo oeuvre beyond what she had been 'taught' by Bernard Berenson or Giovanni Morelli, but it is the attributions of what he dismissed as her 'deficient critical eye' that remain in play today. Ethel Halsey's doubt over an accepted autograph painting by Gaudenzio Ferrari warranted its owner Henry Willett's anxious petitioning of the National Gallery to display and thus endorse its authenticity, a request that was not taken up. It was not only in British collections that these women's connoisseurship held their ground, as seen in Halsey's reattribution of a *Madonna and Child* to Bernardino Lanino in the Poldi Pezzoli collection in Milan or Edith Coulson James' addition of a previously unpublished *Saint John the Baptist* to Francesco Francia's oeuvre in Bologna. Both of these attributions subsequently appeared republished by contemporary male peers, but with no due recognition of the source, thereby aiding the acceptance of these paintings into the established oeuvre of their respective artists, while these women's original scholarship was not carried forward. This is in stark contrast to the diligence Julia Cartwright took to acknowledge Roger Fry in relation to his

Baldovinetti portrait attribution in later editions of her *Painters of Florence*.

Together with recovering individual works of art, women art historians hugely assisted with the rehabilitation of numerous artists hitherto considered ‘difficult’ to appreciate or secondary to already canonised ‘great masters’, whether their style was seen as antithetical to conventional taste, as with Mantegna or Gaudenzio Ferrari, or like Lorenzo Lotto they were perceived as a mere imitator of more famous names of their school. Therefore women made important inroads into broadening the canon, at the very moment it was becoming fixed. As I have noted, artists like Lotto and Mantegna have been the focus of recent major exhibitions, while the peripheral nature of a figure such as Gaudenzio has made him an apt subject for the development of the latest approaches in the study of Italian art. Numerous other examples could be added here: Cartwright’s series of articles on Benozzo Gozzoli (1420/2(?)–97) published in the *Portfolio* in 1883, or Evelyn March Phillipps’ *Pintoricchio* (1901), both of which argued for the undervalued beauty and enjoyment to be found in the work of these artists, in contrast to Berenson who dismissed them as inconsequential decorators. Indeed, the lasting distinction of the contribution of these women is their ability to take risks with artists who did not fit the ‘great master’ paradigm. In this way, their approach can be seen to mirror that undertaken by Charles Eastlake at the National Gallery, who emphasised the importance of representing lesser-known names or schools of painting, underscoring the gallery as a training ground, not least for these women, in the absence of other arenas for undertaking formal academic art-historical study.

As Elizabeth Eastlake, Callcott, and Jameson had acted as arbiters of taste most consistently in relation to the early Italian Primitives, the women discussed in this thesis promoted a new wave of interest in late-quattrocento and early-cinquecento masters, whose work was on the cusp of what was deemed beautiful. Just as earlier women writers had encouraged viewers to look beyond perceived faults of execution by emphasising other important concepts such as iconography or a more universal appreciation of spirituality, so the arguments of later women also posited new ways of thinking and writing about their chosen artists. Cartwright’s reconstruction of the Borgherini bed chamber pointed

to the importance of patronage and the nature of artistic commissions for understanding the appearance of works of art now detached from their original intended place of display. Halsey's work was driven by the concept that an artist's oeuvre was intrinsically tied to their geography, while Vernon Lee interrogated the ethical complexities behind removing works of art from their original settings to furnish museum collections. These ideas — patronage, intended form, function and display, geographical influence, and the purported right of museums to remove cultural objects from their country of origin — all remain pressing areas of debate in art history and museum discourse today. Yet their roots can be traced to texts published by women over one hundred years ago, many of which are now out of print. Several other examples attest to the compelling interest and value of women's work for future study in this vein, such as Emma Gurney Salter's (1875–1967) *Nature in Italian Art: A Study of Landscape Backgrounds from Giotto to Tintoretto* (1912), a taxonomic account of the flora, fauna and landscape geology depicted in familiar Italian paintings. While such tangents of investigation were usually treated as 'merely accessory', to quote Salter, today they form distinct methodological approaches in their own right, and are regarded as exciting ways through which to engage new audiences.⁸⁸⁶

It was not only in the areas of lesser-known artists or new attributions where they enriched contemporary understanding, but in the kinds of audiences they reached and the genres and media in which they wrote. Indeed, together with their original and innovative contributions to scholarship, women aided the spread of art historical knowledge far beyond their peer group, playing a major role in the democratisation of art to an ever broadening public. In addition to the monograph and journal article, they utilised a range of formats to disseminate their work, such as guidebooks, lectures and

⁸⁸⁶ Emma Gurney Salter, *Nature in Italian Art: A Study of Landscape Backgrounds from Giotto to Tintoretto* (London: Adam and Charles Black, 1912), p. vii. This book was based on Salter's thesis, which was accepted at Trinity College Dublin for the degree of Doctor of Letters. Recent work in this vein includes Davide Gasparotto, ed., *Landscapes of Faith in Renaissance Venice* (Los Angeles: J. Paul Getty Museum, 2017); and Kathryn Havelock, 'Flora in Florence: Investigating the Symbolic Language of Flowers in the Art of Florence, c.1450–1550', forthcoming doctoral thesis, Birkbeck University of London.

catalogues, demonstrating how the flexibility of their approach to art history extended to their way of researching and presenting their work. This ensured their scholarship — and their names — reached a wide audience and one well beyond comparatively narrow academic circles. Lina Duff Gordon and Margaret Symonds' *The Story of Perugia* presents women working collaboratively to produce guidebooks on less familiar Italian towns. Again, several other works can be added into the equation to establish just how widespread this practice was among women writers; for instance, Lina Eckenstein's (1857–1931) *Through the Casentino with Hints for the Traveller* (1902) was illustrated by Lucy Du Bois-Reymond (1858–1915), and Hope Malleson (1863–1931) and Mildred Anna Rosalie Toker (1862–1957) were the dual-authors of the *Handbook to Christian and Ecclesiastical Rome* (1897). Collaboration likewise formed a key factor for the success of their work as educators and activists in relation to art. Though both the popular serialised monograph and guidebook genre came to be categorised as 'amateur' offerings, the opinions women expressed in these types of publication were influential on their colleagues and general readership alike. Whether collaborating with local collectors to produce English-language catalogues, like Lucy Baxter for Temple Leader's Vincigliata, or presenting lectures to raise awareness for local heritage campaigns, like Lee and Zimmern in Florence, through these activities women working collaboratively undoubtedly formed a widespread and prolific presence as art historians.

These women successfully navigated their own platforms to speak authoritatively to the public in the absence of an official title or affiliated professional role, at the same time as the drive to enshrine art history and connoisseurship as a validated discipline established greater disparity between the 'amateur' and 'professional'. While the painstaking empirical methodology of Coulson James reflected an approach to art history pursued by an earlier generation of women including Eastlake, Jameson, and Merrifield in the 1840s, three-quarters of a century later the primacy of the connoisseur's innate eye came to the front once more. Jean Carlyle Graham Speakman's archival work on Fiorenzo di Lorenzo directly questioned the establishment of connoisseurship as an

irrefutable ‘science’, the very idea used to advocate for art history’s legitimacy as a discipline. Graham’s proposal that not all attributions could be decisively answered for was untenable for her peers; yet, if published today, it would surely sit comfortably among contemporary work. The absence of these women’s names in most scholarship before my study also gives us pause to consider how many other names have been obscured through the process of institutionalisation.

This thesis has contextualised these women and their work within the historiography of the discipline using a framework that has eschewed a biographical approach in favour of an analysis across genre, topic and geographical emphasis. As discussed in the Introduction, this has enabled me to bring several previously unknown names into the picture and treat a wide range of texts. In this way, I have contributed new understanding of the multivalent nature of women’s voices in the field and demonstrated more clearly than previously recognised just how far-reaching their influence originally was. By mapping their work according to the type of writing and where such writing was produced, this thesis has provided an innovative framework for future scholars to utilise and expand on. My research has drawn attention to several areas in need of further investigation, such as women’s engagement with other schools of art like the Netherlandish and Spanish old masters, a relevant case for comparison with existing scholarship that has principally focused on writing on Italian art. As I have argued, the women discussed here strove to expand the conception of Renaissance art beyond painting, and to this end they produced a considerable amount of literature on Renaissance sculpture, another topic warranting future study.⁸⁸⁷ Moreover, while my focus has attended to their research and responses to the art of the old masters, many of them wrote extensively on contemporary British and European art, an area of their published output that has received comparatively little attention in scholarship on art criticism of the period.

⁸⁸⁷ On the topic of Victorian responses to Renaissance sculpture, see: Charlotte Drew, Kirstie Gregory and Melissa Gustin, eds, *New Sculptors, Old Masters* (forthcoming).

The number of previously unfamiliar names and texts brought to light through this study suggests promising outcomes for the employment of a similar methodology to examine other chronological periods or geographical foci of the discipline. One important area for future study is the existing gap in our knowledge of female art historians working on Italian art between the early decades of the 1900s and the 1960s. Potential figures to explore in this regard include Irma Richter (1876–1956), Irene Vavasour Elder (1883–1971) and Evelyn Sandberg Vavalà (1888–1961). Moreover, the presence and influence of female practitioners among the influx of German and Austrian art historians into Britain in the 1930s is ripe as a subject for detailed critical study.

Beyond Britain, this feminist historiographic reassessment has been taken up by French, Netherlandish, Italian, and Spanish scholars.⁸⁸⁸ Outside of Europe, research on American women writers has examined important individual case studies in the areas of connoisseurship, design criticism, and the popularisation of art history.⁸⁸⁹ The current interest in this field outside Britain or English-language art history signals a timely moment for further collaborative work. Mapping women at work in art history across borders would illuminate fascinating points of comparison, particularly considering the differing stages of art history's development on the continent. As discussed here, Britain had a seemingly more conducive climate for women's engagement in the field. This certainly impacts the existing taught historiographies of art history today, as Charlotte Schoell-Glass observes how in Germany, the country acknowledged with establishing the academic

⁸⁸⁸ For example: Yvette Marcus-de Groot, *Kunsthistorische vrouwen van weleer: de eerste generatie in nederland vóór 1921* (Rotterdam: Erasmus Universiteit Rotterdam, 2003); África Cabanillas Casafranca, 'Las mujeres y la crítica de arte en España (1875–1936) / Women and Art Criticism in Spain (1875–1936)', *Espacio, Tiempo y Forma*, Serie 7, 20–21 (2007–08), 363–89; Wendelin Guentner, ed., *Women Art Critics in Nineteenth-Century France: Vanishing Acts* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2013); Chiara Marin, *L'arte delle donne: per una 'Kunstliteratur' al femminile nell'Italia dell'Ottocento* (Padua: Libreria Universitaria Edizione, 2013).

⁸⁸⁹ Amy Von Lintel, 'Clara Waters and the Popular Audiences of Art History in Nineteenth-Century America', *Princeton University Library Chronicle*, 75:1 (Autumn 2013), 38–64; Julia Dabbs, 'The Multivalence of May Alcott Nieriker's *Studying Art Abroad and How to Do It Cheaply*', *Studies in Travel Writing* 16:3 (2012), 303–14; D. Medina Lasansky, 'Beyond the Guidebook: Edith Wharton's Rediscovery of San Vivaldo', in *Edith Wharton and Cosmopolitanism*, ed. by Meredith L. Goldsmith and Emily J. Orlando (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2016), pp. 132–65.

institutionalisation of art history, biographical surveys of art historians published as recently as 2008 do not include a single woman.⁸⁹⁰

My research has drawn heavily on the use of primary archival material, and featured it not as anecdotal accessory, but as a foundation to understanding the relevance of the published art historical texts. When arguing for the ongoing value and merits of studying subjects obscured by critical fortune, evidence gleaned from such material is a crucial source for furthering understanding, particularly for connecting these women to the well-delineated existing historiography. As a point of comparison, if this thesis had focused on Bernard Berenson, his merits as a historical figure for study would already constitute part of a shared disciplinary awareness. His importance could be easily plotted and summarised with reference to a substantial series of publications that remain in print and regular use by scholars today, and his legacy attested to by the presence of the archive and collections at Villa I Tatti. Dealing with relatively unknown names, whose published output is not easily categorised, accessed or identified and for whom lasting public acknowledgement of their achievements is scarce, requires a detailed, fine-grained empirical approach to establish basic facts and fill out a skeleton profile.

I have elucidated the profitable results obtained from examining the ephemeral – periodicals, diaries, newspapers, correspondence, out of print books – on an equal standing (if for different reasons) to that published. My research has drawn on caches of documentation that in some cases have not been examined since first being archived, while others have been ‘hiding in plain sight’, in the archives of well-known canonical figures. This thesis therefore illustrates the ongoing merit of an empirical approach to research, establishing the value of these women’s contributions from a documentary rather than a purely theoretical standpoint.

⁸⁹⁰ Charlotte Schoell-Glass, ‘Art History in German-Speaking Countries: Austria, Germany and Switzerland’, in *Art History and Visual Studies in Europe: Transnational Discourses and National Frameworks*, ed. by Matthew Rampley et al. (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2012), pp. 335–53.

It is perhaps not such a coincidence that this approach reflects the very same one utilised by the women who have formed the focus of my study. They pursued novel methods or seemingly marginal lines of enquiry to ask new questions, formulating ways of writing about art that still resonate today. In the same vein, my research has confirmed the need for us to ask different questions about what women did for the discipline, in order to understand the impact they had. If their research were published today, it arguably would fare much better in terms of public impact, in comparison with what many of their male contemporaries produced. Furthermore, the approaches they adopted to encourage wider appreciation of the old masters can offer us useful means to rethink our own ways of presenting the old masters to the public today, from both a methodological and practice-based approach.

This work has evolved at a timely period, one of self-critical reflection not only for art history, but for the museum and art world as a whole. In relation to women, their place in this world both in the past and today is now being attended to in many of its aspects. This thesis is situated in dialogue with, and is part of, this revived interest. The National Gallery's 2018 acquisition of the *Self Portrait as Saint Catherine of Alexandria* (NG6671) by Artemisia Gentileschi (1593–1654 or later) marked a significant moment in this call for change, bringing the total number of works by female artists in the permanent collection to twenty-one.⁸⁹¹ While this is still a disproportionately small number, the gallery's organisation of the 'Artemisia Visits' tour (2019), in which the painting travelled to a diverse set of locations including Glasgow Women's Library, HM Prison Send in Surrey and Pocklington GP surgery in Yorkshire, formed an unprecedented event in elevating the public profile of the new acquisition. Taking Artemisia's *Self-Portrait* out of the museum space and

⁸⁹¹ Letizia Treves, Francesca Whitlum-Cooper and Susanna Avery-Quash, '[In]Visible: Paintings by Women Artists in the National Gallery, London: An Interview with Letizia Treves and Francesca Whitlum-Cooper', *19: Interdisciplinary Studies in the Long Nineteenth Century*, 28 (2019), DOI: <<https://doi.org/10.16995/ntn.850>>.

into direct contact with the public is surely something which Lee would have found wholly appropriate.

Together with acquiring works by women artists, there has been a major resurgence of retrospective exhibitions of their work, this year alone seeing five monographic shows devoted to early modern female painters.⁸⁹² At Sotheby's special Master Paintings Evening Sale, *The Female Triumphant* (New York, 30 January 2019), Elisabeth-Louise Vigée Le Brun's (1755–1842) *Portrait of Muhammad Dervish Khan* (1788) sold for \$7.18 million, making a new record for a pre-modern female artist at auction. Yet the use of the phrase 'female Old Master' in press material for these events demonstrates the ongoing inadequacy of entrenched art historical terminology to accommodate the idea of a female artist in the pre-modern era.⁸⁹³ Other recent conferences have focused on women as dealers, patrons, and collectors, attesting to the widespread interest in reintegrating and acknowledging the impact of women in all areas of artistic production, patronage and promotion.⁸⁹⁴ Looking at women art historians, as I have done in this thesis, is another important part of this reassessment that has received comparatively little attention to date and still remains under the radar in terms of wider academic and public recognition. As we face the ongoing issues of a discipline that is still taught largely along nationalist lines, within largely elitist institutions, and on Euro-American subject matter, it is an ideal moment to go back to the formation of these assumed hegemonies. More broadly therefore, this thesis looks beyond the specificities of women at work in

⁸⁹² 'Women Artists of the Dutch Golden Age', National Museum of Women in the Arts (11 October 2019–5 January 2020); 'A Tale of Two Women Painters: Sofonisba Anguissola and Lavinia Fontana', Museo Nacional del Prado, Madrid (22 October 2019–2 February 2020); "'The Greatness of the Universe" in the Art of Giovanna Garzoni', Palazzo Pitti, Florence (planned for 10 March–24 May 2020, but temporarily closed due to the coronavirus pandemic); 'Artemisia', National Gallery, London (planned for 4 April–26 July 2020, but postponed due to the coronavirus pandemic); 'Angelica Kauffman', Royal Academy of Arts, London (planned for 28 June–20 September 2020, but cancelled due to the coronavirus pandemic).

⁸⁹³ [Anon.], Sotheby's, 'Once Overlooked Female Old Masters Take Centre Stage', <<https://www.sothebys.com/en/articles/once-overlooked-female-old-masters-take-center-stage>>.

⁸⁹⁴ 'National Galleries Scotland Research Conference: Women Collectors', Scottish National Gallery, 28 September 2019; 'Women Art Dealers, 1940–1990', *Christie's Education Symposium 2019*, Christie's New York, 17–18 May 2019.

art history and questions our ongoing adherence to inherited narratives that continue to shape the discipline today.

Women art writers were a visible and frequent presence in museums and galleries, but acknowledgement of their influential work is still rarely represented in those spaces. Monographic exhibitions on the old masters still tend to draw on the mainstay ‘founding fathers’ such as Bernard Berenson, Walter Pater, and John Ruskin as the go-to cited art historical authorities. A welcome recent departure from this practice can be seen in the Musée d’Orsay’s ‘Women, Art and Power’ tour, part of the permanent collection display, which includes reference to French nineteenth-century women art critics.⁸⁹⁵ Furthermore, the very existence of major shows on those artists which these women helped canonise attests to the continuing relevance of their contributions. Acknowledgements in recent major monographs, such that of Alison Wright to Cruttwell in the history of the critical reception of the Pollaiuolo brothers discussed in Chapter Two, sets an important precedent for future scholars to follow.

Most notably, the National Gallery conference and accompanying ‘Old Masters, Modern Women’ open-access special issue were direct public outcomes of this Collaborative Doctoral Project, and were crucial for disseminating this research beyond academia. Confirmed future events to be held at the National Gallery include the Anna Jameson Annual Lecture and the yearly Women in the Arts Forum event, both inaugurated in 2020, which attest to the potency of the museum as a place for diffusing this research to far broader audiences than those usually reached in a university environment. Certainly, the very nature of this project — defined and developed at the interstices of the university and the museum — has enabled the production of successful public-facing outputs such as those described above during the research and writing of this thesis.

⁸⁹⁵ Laurence des Cars, ‘Women, Art and Power’, <<https://www.musee-orsay.fr/en/collections/women-art-and-power.html#c101412>>.

Several ongoing projects at the Gallery today speak to and reflect the working practices and interests of art history's founding women. For example, Rebecca Gill and Susanna Avery-Quash's collaboration *Virtual Veronese* will present, digitally, an immersive installation that reunites Veronese's *The Consecration of Saint Nicholas* (NG26) with the church of San Benedetto al Po, where it was originally located.⁸⁹⁶ The development of the app Hidden Florence 3D brings to life the now demolished Florentine church of San Pier Maggiore around the *Coronation of the Virgin* (NG569.1–3; NG570–78) by Jacopo di Cione (documented 1365–died 1398/1400), which formerly occupied one of its altars.⁸⁹⁷ Both of these projects certainly speak to Cartwright's written reconstruction of the Borgherini bed chamber, or Cruttwell's understanding of the 'palimpsestic' nature of Florence's walls. Outside the museum, Vernon Lee's gallery talks have been reinterpreted for new audiences through theatrical performance, setting a precedent for other texts which suggest the potential of a performative reinterpretation to reinvigorate the work of these women for audiences today.⁸⁹⁸

Many of the ideas which women explored in their writing also resonate with pressing concerns in art history and museum practice today. For example, Eike Schmidt, director of the Uffizi, has recently called for state museums to take responsibility to reconstitute certain paintings back to the original churches for which they were created, as part of a drive to create a 'diffused museum'. This interest in reconnecting the public with the geographical and spiritual significance of works of art, through encountering them in the spaces for which they were created, certainly recalls Lee's insistence that paintings were better off left to remain quietly in their original church or villa setting, than thrust under the spotlight in a museum.⁸⁹⁹ The interest of Cruttwell and Halsey in the

⁸⁹⁶ See 'Virtual Veronese' <<https://www.nationalgallery.org.uk/whats-on/virtual-veronese>>.

⁸⁹⁷ See 'Rebuilding a Church in 3D' <<https://hiddenflorence.org/hf-3d/rebuilding-a-church-in-3d/>>.

⁸⁹⁸ 'Experimenting in the Galleries: Performing with Vernon Lee', 2 November 2018, Birkbeck School of Arts.

⁸⁹⁹ Anna Somers Cocks, 'Portare le opere dai musei nelle chiese originarie', *Il giornale dell'arte*, online edn (4 June 2020) <<https://www.ilgiornaledellarte.com/articoli/portare-le-opere-dai-musei-nelle-chiese-originarie/133401.html>>.

materiality and mixed-media practice of Gaudenzio Ferrari and Antonio Pollaiuolo now strikes us as incredibly fresh and forward-thinking for their time, anticipating concerns that reach far beyond the contemporary tussles over fixing a name to a painting, to chime strongly with our own modern day interests. Indeed, it is precisely because we are now attending to the range of unspoken narratives to be told about a work of art, as a means of making art history relevant to a broader audience beyond our peers, that these women and their work are now of such germane interest to us.

In June 1918, Julia Cartwright published one of her last articles, ‘Venetian Shrines and German Bombs’ in the *Englishwoman* magazine.⁹⁰⁰ She pointed to the tragic irony of how Italy, once the ‘divine land’ to which all the ‘Burekhardts and Bodes and hundreds of others devoted lifelong labour’, had now become the target of the Germans’ ‘blind fury’.⁹⁰¹ The First World War brought with it new and complex concerns regarding the protection of culture and historic monuments, as well as dispersing and fundamentally changing communities including that of the Anglo-Italians. In Florence, Lina Duff-Gordon turned her attention to rallying support for the British war effort.⁹⁰² In Lucca, Nelly Erichsen established a refugee camp for evacuated families, providing medical aid when the influenza epidemic swept through Italy, tragically succumbing to the disease herself.⁹⁰³ Alone in Paris, Cruttwell wrote to Ottoline Morrell, reminiscing: ‘one can scarcely realise that it’s the same world in which we used to read Browning & care for Mantegna, can one! Art seems so completely abolished that it seems to have belonged to another epoch & planet’.⁹⁰⁴ Yet, as our own moment now demonstrates, in times of unprecedented isolation and fear, it is to art that we turn for security and sanctity. Beyond the walls of the museum and the ticket barrier of the exhibition, we now seek ever-more creative ways of engaging and disseminating art to audiences from afar,

⁹⁰⁰ Julia Cartwright, ‘Venetian Shrines and German Bombs’, *Englishwoman*, 114:37 (June 1918), 165–88.

⁹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, p. 165.

⁹⁰² Christina Loong, “‘Victory Will Be With Us’: British Propaganda and Imperial Duty in Florence during the First World War”, *Twentieth Century British History*, 23:3 (2012), 311–35.

⁹⁰³ Sarah Harkness, *Nelly Erichsen: A Hidden Life* (Gloucestershire: Encanta Publishing, 2018), pp. 211–29.

⁹⁰⁴ Cruttwell to Morrell, [undated] [1916] [10/12], BBVIT.

utilising digital tools and initiatives that the women discussed here undoubtedly would have taken advantage of with relish, had they been available in their own time.

From second-wave feminism to today, the history of women in art history has evolved through various stages, revealing new interpretations of a story still principally told (and taught) as an exclusively masculine genealogy. The first wave of critical investigation framed these women as marginalised and compliant with the hegemony of male scholars over the discipline. Later studies underscored them as exceptional individuals, nonetheless qualified by the opinions of their male counterparts, while more recent interventions, including my own, posit these writers as active, flourishing, and equally prolific contributors to the field. Women wrote art history that innovated and popularised, corroborated and challenged the work of their colleagues both in Britain and abroad. In this thesis, I have chosen to illuminate the women who researched, read, and wrote about the art of the Italian old masters in the decades spanning the end of the Victorian period and the beginning of the Edwardian. However, as described above, it is my hope that this study will suggest many other fruitful tangents of future research, and spark interest in attending to the marginalised voices of women in art from other social backgrounds, ethnicities, sexualities and gender identities than those which have formed the scope of this thesis.

At the time of writing this conclusion, Griselda Pollock became the first art historian to be awarded the esteemed Holberg Prize.⁹⁰⁵ Pollock's own work has always been highly attentive to the idiosyncratic nature of art history in Britain, which remains, as she describes, 'anomalous, full of eccentricities'. Yet, as she argues, it is this very lack of a 'hegemonic nineteenth-century foundation' which is 'responsible for its experimental energy and disciplinary flexibility'.⁹⁰⁶ In nineteenth-century Britain, women art historians — despite the social and gendered constraints they faced —

⁹⁰⁵ Another important feminist scholar, Marina Warner, was awarded the prize in 2015 for, among other things, her transformative work on visual culture.

⁹⁰⁶ Griselda Pollock, 'Art History and Visual Studies in Great Britain and Ireland', in *Art History and Visual Studies in Europe*, pp. 355–78 (pp. 355, 361).

nevertheless found ways to permeate this field of unfixed boundaries. In themselves, *they* were undeniably the forces of experimental energy and flexibility, and crucially pushed the discipline forward in ways that are only now receiving the much-needed attention and long-overdue recognition they deserve.



[Andrea Mantegna, with a Group from his Triumphs of Julius Cæsar.]

ESSAYS ON THE LIVES OF REMARKABLE
PAINTERS.—No. XVII.

ANDREA MANTEGNA: b. 1430, d. 1506.

FOR a while we must leave beautiful Florence and her painters, who were striving after perfection by imitating what they saw in nature—the common appearances of the objects, animate and inanimate, around them—and turn to another part of Italy, where there arose a man of genius who pursued a wholly different course; at least he started from a different point; and who exercised for a time a great influence on all the painters of Italy, including those of Florence. This was ANDREA MANTEGNA, particularly interesting to English readers, as his most celebrated work, the Triumph of Julius Cæsar, is now preserved in the

palace of Hampton Court, and has formed part of the royal collection ever since the days of Charles I.

ANDREA MANTEGNA was the son of very poor and obscure parents, and born near Padua in 1430.* All we learn of his early childhood amounts to this,—that he was employed in keeping sheep, and being conducted to the city, entered, we know not by what chance, the school of Francesco Squarcione.

About the middle of this century, from which time we date the revival of letters in Europe, the study of the Greek language and a taste for the works of the classical authors had become more and more diffused

* The date of Mantegna's birth and death were long subjects of uncertainty and controversy. According to some authors he was born in 1451, and died in 1517; but the best and latest authorities are now agreed upon the dates as given in the text.

Fig. 1.1

Page from Anna Jameson, 'Essays on the Lives of Remarkable Painters — No. XVII Andrea Mantegna' with engraving of *Andrea Mantegna, with a Group from his Triumphs of Julius Caesar* by H. L. Clarke
Penny Magazine, 12 (28 October 1843), 409



Fig. 1.2

Unknown photographer

Julia Cartwright [seated third from left] with daughter *Cecilia Ady* [at her feet] and husband *Henry Ady* [seated to her right] and members of the *Branston family*

Photograph

Spring 1884

Cartwright Edgcote Collection, Northamptonshire Archives
(CE457)



Fig. 1.3

Maria Elisabeth 'Lili' Cartwright (née von Sandizell, 1805–1902)

The Saloon at Aynhoe

Watercolour

December 1834

Reproduced in Elizabeth Cartwright-Hignett, *Lili at Aynhoe: Victorian Life in an English Country House* (London: Barrie and Jenkins, 1989), p. 28

Author's copy

Cartwright-Hignett identifies the paintings as (L–R): *The Repentant Magdalene*, in the style of Guido Reni [current location unknown]; [painting over the fireplace unidentified]; Murillo, *A Vision of Saint Anthony of Padua*, acquired in 1974 by Birmingham Museum Trust (1974p24); Murillo, *Assumption of the Madonna*, [current location unknown]; Murillo, unidentified [St John the Baptist (?)]; two portraits of a Dutch couple from the studio of Rubens [current location unknown].



Fig. 1.4
Gaudenzio Ferrari (c.1480–1546)
Chapel of the Crucifixion
1520–25
Fresco and polychrome terracotta sculpture
Chapel of the Crucifixion, Sacro Monte, Varallo



MRS. HENRY ADY.

Fig. 1.5

James Russell and Sons (active 1850s–1940s)

‘Mrs Henry Ady’ [Julia Cartwright]

Reproduced in W. Lawler Wilson, ed., *The Imperial Gallery of Portraiture and Biographical Encyclopedia* (London: Iliffe and Sons, 1901), p. 176

British Library copy (003947686)

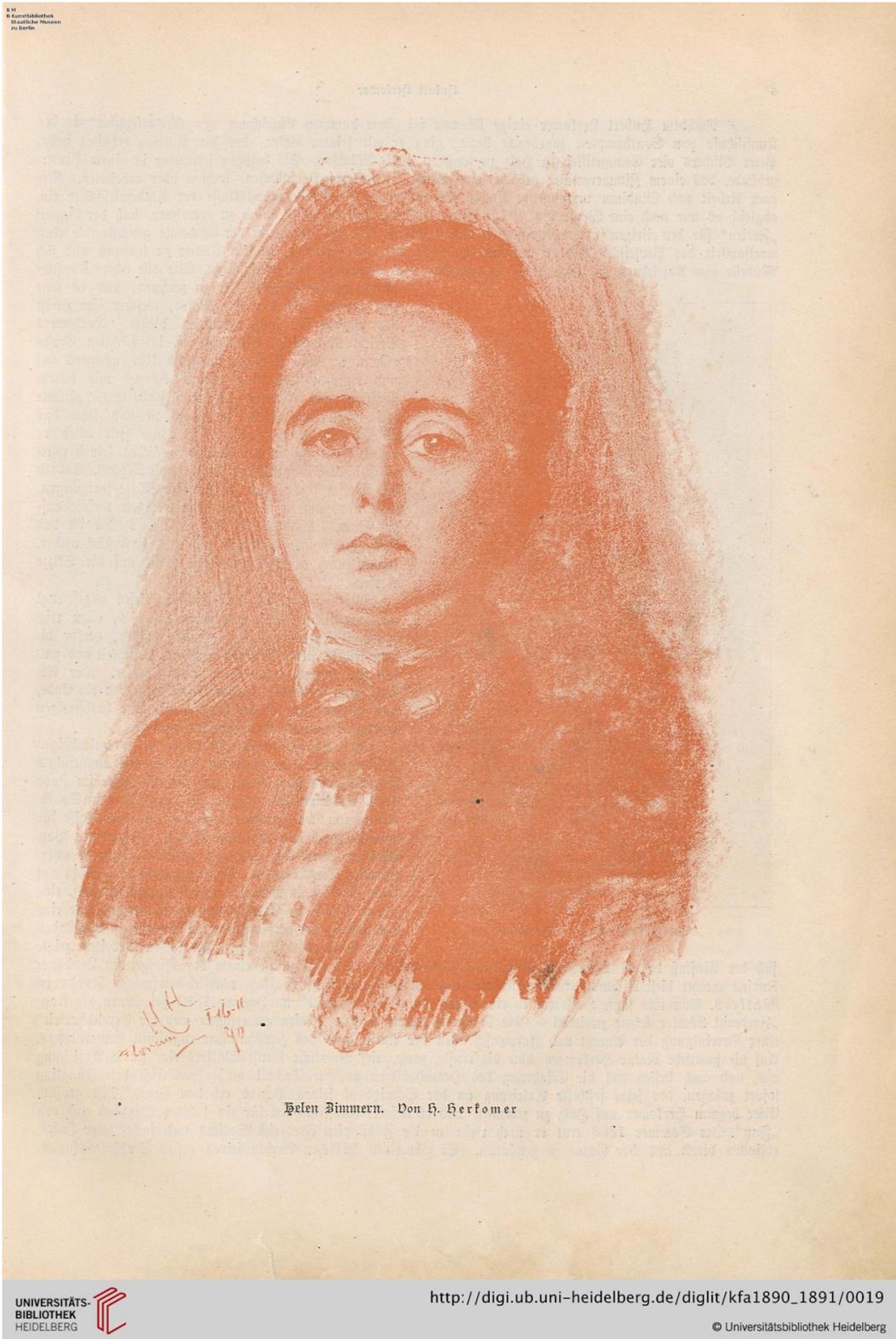


Fig. 1.6
Hubert von Herkomer (1849–1914)
Sketch of Helen Zimmern
1890
Red chalk
Inscribed: 'HH / Florence / Feb 11 90'
Reproduced in *Die Kunst für Alle*, 6 (1890–91), 5



Fig. 1.7

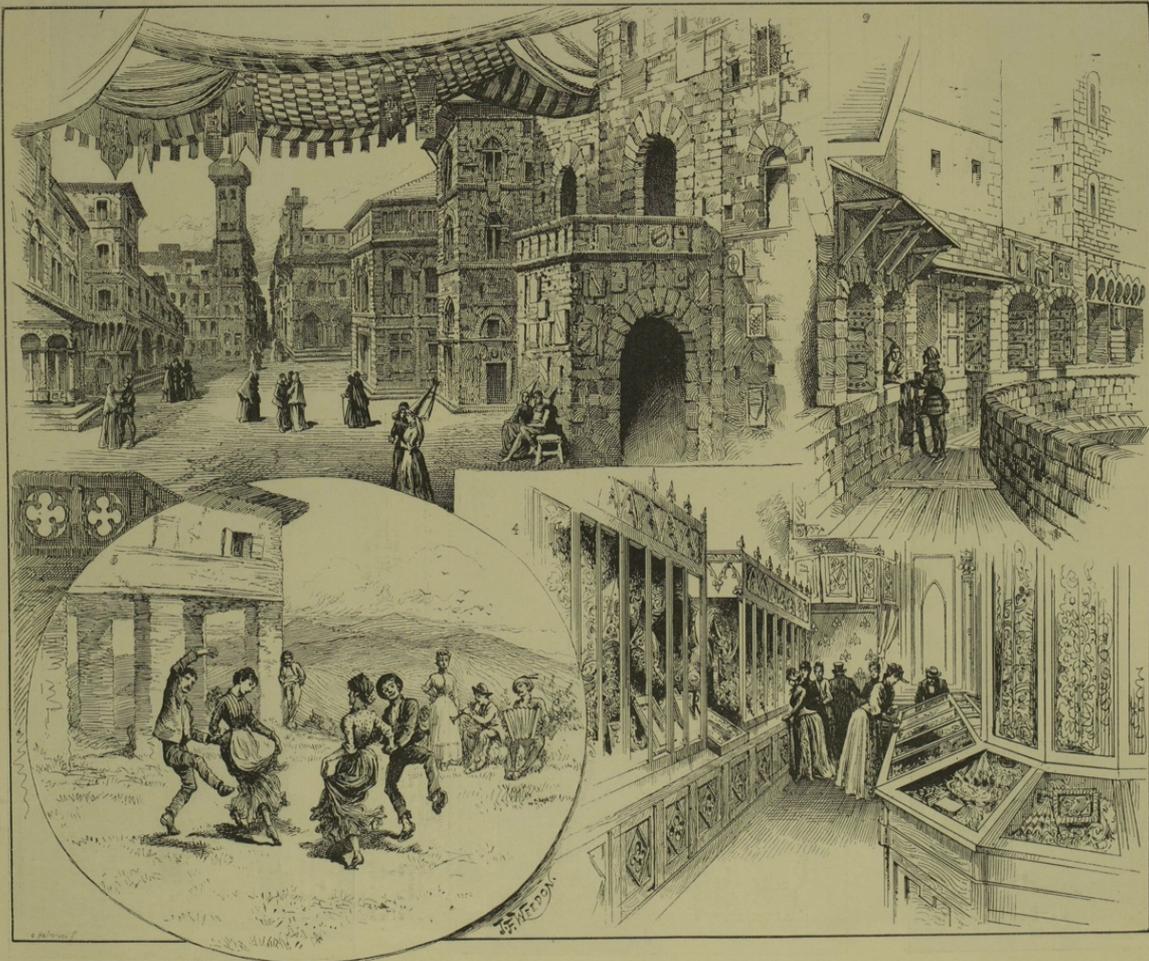
Unknown photographer

Unidentified sitter, probably Maud Cruttwell [identification proposed by Tiffany Johnston]

Date unknown [about 1895?]

Photograph

Biblioteca Berenson, Villa I Tatti, Florence, The Harvard University Center for Italian Renaissance Studies



1. The Piazza del Duomo in Dante's Time. 2. Ancient Florentine Shops. 3. Tuscan Peasants Dancing the "Frescoon." 4. A Corner of the Needlework Section.
THE BEATRICE EXHIBITION AT FLORENCE.

Fig. 1.8

Page from Leader Scott, 'The Beatrice Exhibition at Florence' with engraving after a drawing by J. S. Wheedon, *Illustrated London News* (10 May 1890), 591

THE DISCOVERY OF GHIRLANDAJO'S VESPUCCI FRESCO.

BY LEADER SCOTT.

WE are accustomed to the discovery of lost works of art in Florence, and generally take such excitements calmly. But we do not often get an important discovery, at such a very *à propos* moment, as the finding of Vespucci's portrait and Ghirlandaio's lost fresco in the church of Ognissanti just on the eve of the Vespucci centenary fêtes.

The world rolled on for centuries, and the old paintings under the whitewash were forgotten till Vespucci's centenary set every one seeking for the things appertaining to him.

First the architect, Signor Spighi, found an ancient shield in a corner of the church near the tower. It was emblazoned with the arms of the Vespucci, and



DETAIL OF GHIRLANDAJO'S VESPUCCI FRESCO. AMERIGO VESPUCCI.

The last representative of his line has been discovered in a charming little grey-haired Contesse de Tolon, and now we may compare her with her great ancestor as he appeared in life, for Domenico Ghirlandaio, as everyone knows, was a first-rate cinque-cento portrait painter. Nothing can be more lifelike than the family groups in this work, which has the further interest of being one of Ghirlandaio's first pictures. It must have been painted about 1476 or 1477, as it was prior to the "Caneolo" in the same convent, which was painted in 1480.

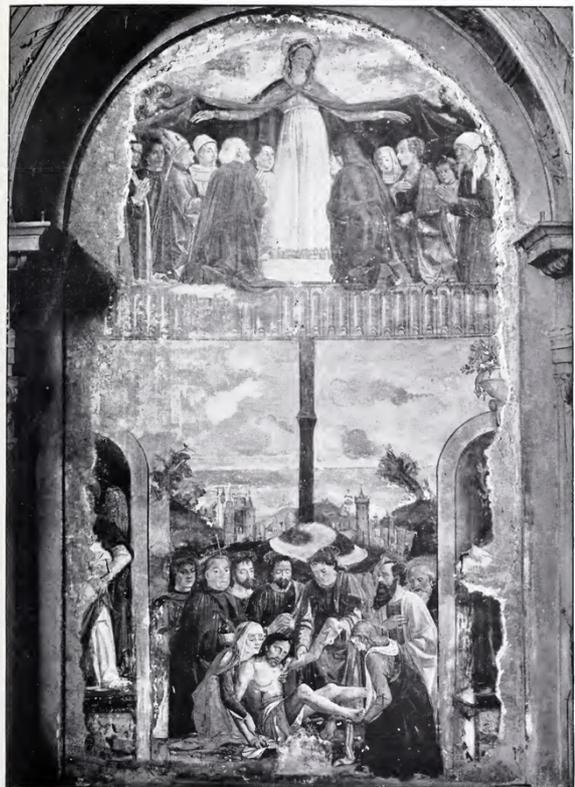
Vasari says in his life of Domenico Ghirlandaio: "His first pictures were in the Vespucci Chapel in All Saints' Church, where is a dead Christ with some saints, and over an arch [Vasari should have said above *in an arch*] is a "Mercy," in which is the portrait of Amerigo Vespucci, who made the voyage to the Indies." Bottari and Milanesi, the learned annotators of Vasari, assert that in 1616, when the Vespucci Chapel was ceded to the Baldivinetti family, the frescoes were whitewashed over, a painting of St. Elizabeth on canvas by Matteo Rosselli being placed over them.

had a funeral inscription to "Amerigo Vespucci *post-terrisque satis*." This Amerigo was the explorer's grandfather. The architect searched for a tomb in vain.

Then came Roberto Razzoli, a learned father of the order of the Minor Observants, who had been engaged for some years in compiling a history of his church. He thus describes his part in the discovery:

"On the first of February, Guido Carocci, the Inspector of Monuments, came to visit the church of Ognissanti in fulfillment of his office. He had finished his survey and was going away, when I, overcoming my natural timidity, addressed him and said that, according to my researches on the history of this church, there ought to exist two antique frescoes which were placed there in the time of the Umiliati;* that in the chapel of St. Elizabeth they

* The fathers of the Umiliati who perfected the "Arte della Lana" (Guild of Wool) came to Florence in 1229 and were given a church outside the Porta al Prato. This being found inconvenient, they were in 1254 transferred, within the walls, to Santa Lucia al Prato, and after that built a church for themselves, which they dedicated to All Saints, next their convent. Here they remained till 1561, when the Franciscans came.



THE GHIRLANDAJO VESPUCCI FRESCO.
(Recently discovered in the Church of Ognissanti, Florence.)

Fig. 1.9

Page from Leader Scott, 'The Discovery of Ghirlandaio's Vespucci Fresco',
Magazine of Art, 22 (1898), 324-25

THE DISCOVERER OF AMERICA.

A NEWLY-FOUND PORTRAIT BY GHIRLANDAIO OF AMERIGO VESPUCCI.

IN the little church of Ognissanti, Florence, celebrated Botticelli, has just been discovered an altar-piece by Domenico Ghirlandaio, which will be of great interest to the student of history as well as of art, containing as it does, presumable portraits of all the then living members of the Vespucci family, including the celebrated Amerigo and his sister the Bella Simonetta, mistress of Giuliano dei Medici.

Vasari, in his *Life of Ghirlandaio*, wrote: "His first pictures were in Ognissanti in the Vespucci Chapel, where is a dead Christ and Saints, and above, in the arch, a *Misericordia*, in which is the portrait of Amerigo Vespucci, who made the navigation of the Indies." And Bottari, in his addition, added the following note: "In the remodelling of this Chapel in 1816, when it was given up to the Baldovinetti, the picture of Ghirlandaio was whitewashed over." The other day, in removing an altar-piece by Matteo Rosetti, the fresco was discovered behind it, not whitewashed over but merely covered over by the picture.

There is no question of the authenticity of the painting, and the upper part, containing the portraits, is very characteristic of the best style of the master, but the *Pietà* itself has been so badly repainted as to be at first sight hardly recognisable. The two principal figures of the *Madonna* and dead Christ bear evident marks of late 16th or early 17th century style, and are coarsely and vulgarly restored, and the landscape also, entirely made over, shows no trace of the careful love of detail and delicacy of execution of Ghirlandaio. It is in the characteristic studied grouping of the figures, which gives so wooden and photographic an appearance to so many of his groups, that we recognise his hand behind the repaint, and in the faces of the two saints, to the extreme right and left, and the figure with clasped hands in the middle, which have suffered least from restoration. The *Misericordia* above, is, on the contrary, in a state of very

good preservation, and a good example of his work, the figure of the old man especially being one of his most sympathetic portraits, and the simplicity of feeling in the whole group admirable.

The chief interest for the moment to the Florentines lies in the supposed portrait of Amerigo himself, the young man with dark hair nearest the *Madonna* of Mercy, not unlike the Poliziano in the fresco of Santa Maria Novella. It being granted that the group is of the Vespucci family, which I see no reason to doubt, this identification is probable, for Amerigo being nearly the same age as Ghirlandaio, who could have been little more than twenty when he painted this fresco, it is the only secular figure which corresponds in years. Of the others it is possible that the old man with white hair is a portrait of his father Ser Anastagio, and the half-effaced figure of the monk behind, that Fra Antonio, his uncle, who was the friend and follower of Savonarola; while the personage between him and the bishop may be the celebrated Guidantonio Vespucci, ambassador at the court of France, to whom Amerigo acted at one time as Secretary of Legation. These are merely conjectures; and of the bishop and the monk I can give no suggestion. Among the group of women it is interesting to notice the likeness, not strong, but certainly apparent, to Piero di Cosimo's portrait of the Bella Simonetta, in the collection at Chantilly—the only authentic portrait of her, by the way, which exists, the so-called Botticelli of the Pitti Palace having long ago been rejected by students as being neither by that master nor a portrait of the celebrated beauty.

But putting aside historical interest, this *Misericordia* is of great artistic value, as being, perhaps, the most youthful production of Ghirlandaio's brush, and showing greater simplicity of feeling and spontaneity than most of his later works, and the discovery of the fresco has added importantly to our knowledge of the history of the artistic progress of the master.

MAUD
CRUTTWELL.



The Fresco by Ghirlandaio recently discovered in Florence.
By permission of Messrs. Brogi.

Fig. 1.10

Page from Maud Cruttwell, 'The Discoverer of America: A Newly-Found Portrait by Ghirlandaio of Amerigo Vespucci', *Art Journal* (May 1898), 150



Fig. 1.11

Henry Edward Tidmarsh (1854–1939)

Interior view of the National Gallery showing Raphael's Ansidei Madonna exhibited on a specially draped screen

c.1885

Body colour and wash on paper

14 cm

London Metropolitan Archives

(inv. 29382)

The Virgin and Child with Saint John and an Angel (NG275) can be seen on the screen behind.



Fig. 1.12

Unknown photographer

Edith Coulson James sitting in a garden [Tunbridge Wells?]

Undated [1920s?]

Photograph

Personal family archive of John Barnard



Fig. 1.13
Francesco Francia (c.1447–1517)
The Pietà, (lunette from the *Buonvisi Altarpiece*)
Oil on wood
1510–12
94 x 184.5 cm
National Gallery
(NG180)



Fig. 1.14

Francesco Francia (c.1447–1517)

Saint John the Baptist

Oil on wood

c.1500–10

61 x 43 cm

Palazzo Comunale, San Giovanni in Persiceto, Bologna
(inv. 1208)

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Fig. 1.15

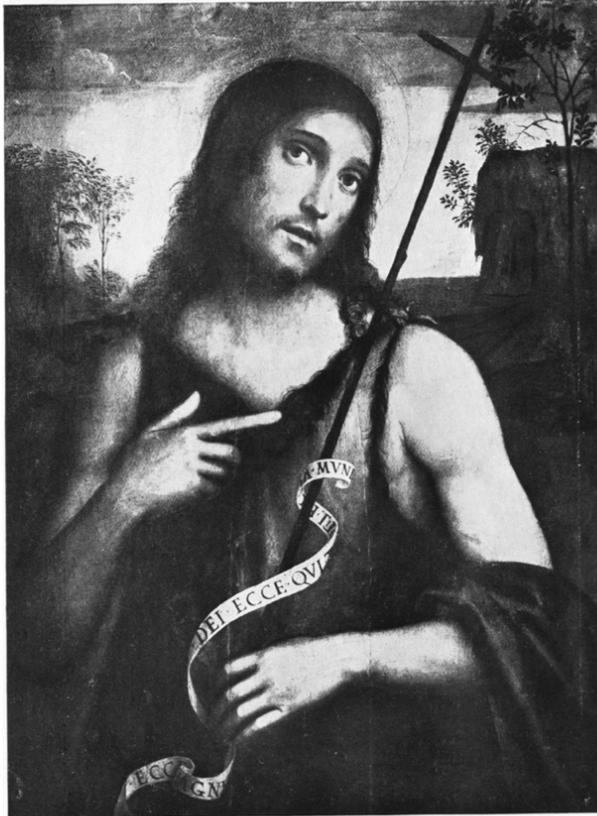
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3 August 1911

Records of the Copyright Office, Stationers' Company

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THE PICTURE AT S. GIOVANNI, PERSICETO



MADONNA ENTHRONED WITH SAINTS, BY FRANCESCO FRANCA. BOLOGNA GALLERY

"S. JOHN THE BAPTIST" BY FRANCESCO FRANCA

Fig. 1.16

Page from Edith Coulson James, 'St John the Baptist by Francesco Francia', *Burlington Magazine*, 20:103 (October 1911), plates 1 and 2



*Francia de Raubolinus Francia dicti Effigies descripta ex tabula, quae extat in Pinacotheca
Egypci, ac Nobilibus Bononiae Viri Valerii Boschi, Franciae ipsius manu, ubi se ita representavit,
ut vel Aurificem populus agnosceret, quo titulo, cum et Celator optimus et eximus formarum
audendi numismatibus Artifex, et summus Pictor extiterit praeteris delectari visus est.
Subscriptus enim fere invenitur excellentissimis tabulis, Francia Aurifex. In quadam etiam
accuratissimo teste Majinis, legitur annus 1525. Unde quod habet Vasarius de
tempore, et causa mortis eius, nempe anno 1518 deceisse ob marem ex invidia
contractam, visa Raphaelis Diva Caelitia, utrumque falsum evincitur. Contra
nihil est quod eiusdem Vasarii tradentis eum natum Bononiae anno 1450
auctoritati inficiatur. Ceterum quem ad annum praecise vitam produxerit ignoratur.*

Bon. M. Pratta Bononiae del.

Carol. Faucci Florentia, sc. an. 1763.

Fig. 1.17

Carlo Faucci (1729–84) after Francesco Francia (c.1447–1517)

Portrait of Francesco Francia, after the painter's self-portrait

Etching and engraving

1763

44.1 x 26.5 cm

British Museum, London

Given by Miss Edith Coulson James, 1922

(inv. 1992, 0913.1)



Fig. 1.18
Francesco del Cossa (c.1435–36–c.1477–78)
Portrait of a Man with a Ring
Oil on panel
c.1472–77
38.5 x 27.5 cm
Museo Nacional Thyssen-Bornemisza, Madrid
(inv. 105, 1956.14)



Fig. 1.19

Letter from Edith Coulson James to Adolfo Venturi, with photograph by Coulson James of the Faucci engraving
Fondo Venturi, Centro Archivistico Scuola Normale Superiore, Pisa
(AV. Cart. XIII, 895)

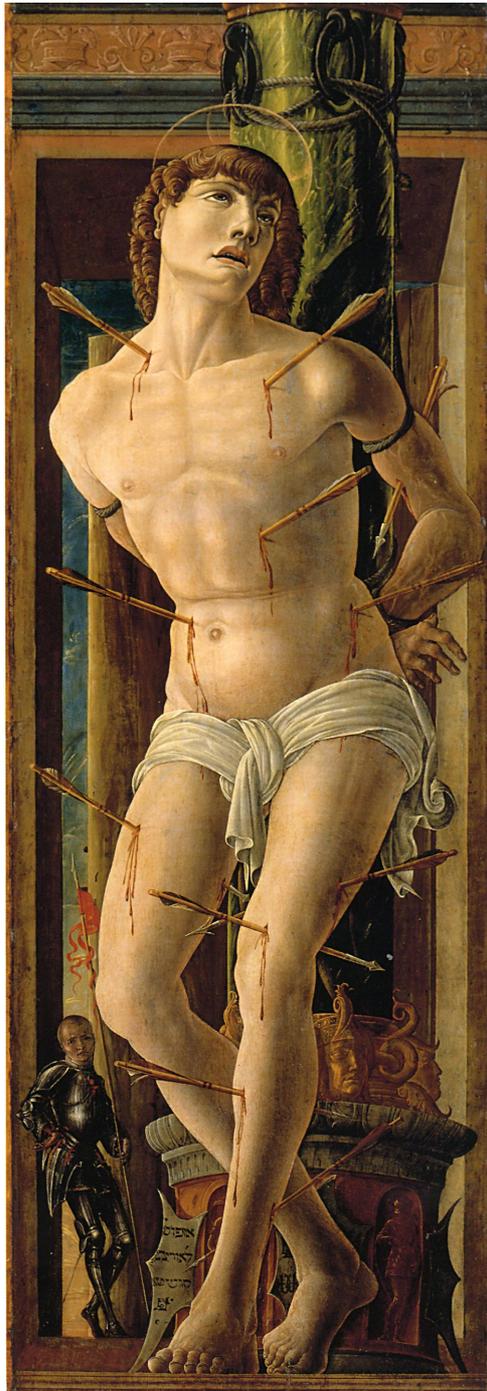


Fig. 1.20
Lorenzo Costa (1460–1535)
Saint Sebastian
1480–85
Tempera on panel
171.7 x 58.4 cm
Gemäldegalerie Alte Meister, Dresden
(inv. Gal.-Nr. 42 A)



Fig. 2.1
Charles Compton (1828–84)
A Study in the National Gallery, 1855
1855
Oil on canvas
25.4 x 30.5 cm
Private collection



Fig. 2.2

Andrea Mantegna (1431–1506)

The Virgin and Child with the Magdalen and Saint John the Baptist

c.1490–1505

Egg tempera on canvas

139.1 x 116.8 cm

National Gallery, London

(NG274)



ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST.

VIRGIN AND CHILD ENTHRONED.

THE MAGDALENE.

THE NEW MANTEGNA, AT THE NATIONAL GALLERY.

Fig. 2.3

Harvey Orrin Smith (active 1847–70)

‘The New Mantegna at the National Gallery’

Engraving

Reproduced in *Illustrated London News* (1 November 1856), 451

The Illustrated London News Historical Archive



Fig. 2.4
Andrea Mantegna (1431–1506)
The Agony in the Garden
c.1455–56
Egg tempera on panel
62.9 x 80 cm
National Gallery, London
(NG1417)



Fig. 2.5
Giovanni Bellini (c.1435–1516)
The Agony in the Garden
c.1458–60
Egg tempera on panel
80.4 x 127 cm
National Gallery, London
(NG726)



Fig. 2.6
Italian
Bust Portrait of Andrea Mantegna
c.1880
Plaster of Paris with a 'bronzed' finish on plaster
75cm x 75cm x 20cm
National Gallery, London
(NG2250)



Fig. 2.7
Andrea Mantegna (1431–1506)
The Adoration of the Shepherds
Shortly after 1450
Tempera on canvas, transferred from wood
40 x 55.6 cm
Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York
(inv. 32.130.2)



Fig. 2.8
Gaudenzio Ferrari (c.1480–1546)
The Martyrdom of Saint Catherine
1543
Oil on panel
334 x 210 cm
Pinacoteca di Brera, Milan
(inv. 449)



Fig. 2.9
Gaudenzio Ferrari (c.1480–1546)
Holy Family with a Donor
Late 1520s
Oil on wood
148.6 x 111.8 cm
The Ringling Museum of Art, Sarasota, Florida
(inv. SN41)



Fig. 2.10
Piero del Pollaiuolo (c.1441–96)
Portrait of a Lady
c.1470
Oil and tempera on panel
45.5 x 32.7 cm
Museo Poldi Pezzoli, Milan
(inv. 442)



Fig. 2.11
Piero del Pollaiuolo (c.1441–96)
Profile Portrait of a Young Lady
c.1465
Oil on panel
52.5 x 36.5 cm
Gemäldegalerie, Berlin
(inv. 1614)



Fig. 2.12
Antonio del Pollaiuolo (c.1432–98)
Portrait of a Woman
c.1475
Tempera on wood
55 x 34 cm
Galleria degli Uffizi, Florence
(inv. 1890 no. 1491)



Fig. 30.
THE GUARD-ROOM.

Fig. 3.1

Page from Leader Scott, 'The Guard-Room', *The Castle of Vincigliata*
(Florence: G. Barbèra, 1897), p. 124
British Library copy (014829082)



Fig. 23.

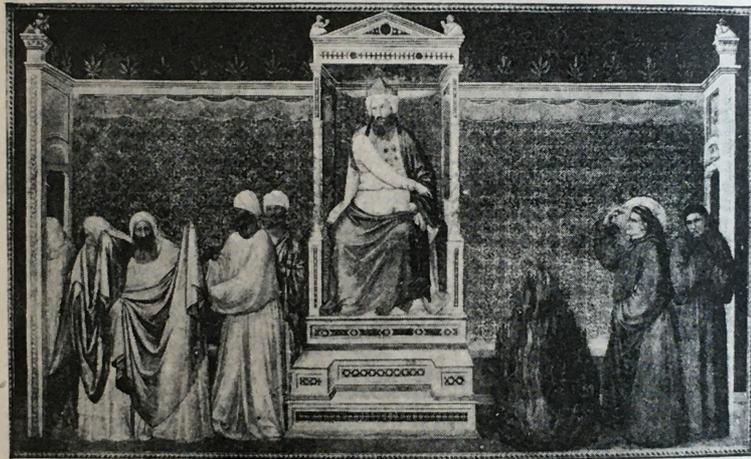
The window is also very interesting, being partly of painted glass of the Renaissance era. (Fig. 24.) The modern part is by De Matteis of Florence, and with its ornate scrolls and shields forms a most harmonious setting to the really beautiful antique portions, viz: the four central panes in medallion form, which are veritable *cinquecento* work. The upper one is a "St. Sebastian" said to have been designed by Pollaiuoli; the second represents the parable of the "Prodigal Son;" the third the "Marriage of the Virgin,"—this pane has a little half circle with figures of Adam and Eve painted beneath the principal subject, and

Fig. 3.2

Page from Leader Scott, 'The Chapel', *The Castle of Vincigliata* (Florence: G. Barbèra, 1897), p. 115

British Library copy (014829082)

Francis presents the rules of his Order to Pope Honorius. Below, he undergoes the ordeal by fire before the Sultan—a superb composition, in which the figures have great beauty and dignity. Below is the deathbed of the Saint and his apparition to the Bishop of Assisi, to assure him of the truth of the Stigmata. On the left, at the top, is S. Francis renouncing the worldly life and being clothed by the Bishop of Assisi.



S. FRANCIS BEFORE THE SULTAN

Giotto. S. Croce.

Below, he appears to S. Antonio while he is preaching in the Cathedral of Arles, and below again is the death of the Saint. The composition of this scene is exceedingly fine, and has been followed more or less faithfully in all subsequent paintings of the subject. The choristers at the foot of the bed are of great beauty. As in all Giotto's paintings, the figures are much better than the surroundings. Solidly modelled, admirably posed and grouped, they seem to have been painted direct from life, whereas the architecture is

Fig. 3.3

Page from Maud Cruttwell, *A Guide to the Paintings in the Churches and Minor Museums of Florence: A Critical Catalogue with Quotations from Vasari* (London: J. M. Dent, 1908), p. 98, with photograph by Vittorio Jacquier (1870–1935), *S. Francis Before the Sultan* — Giotto *S. Croce*

Author's copy

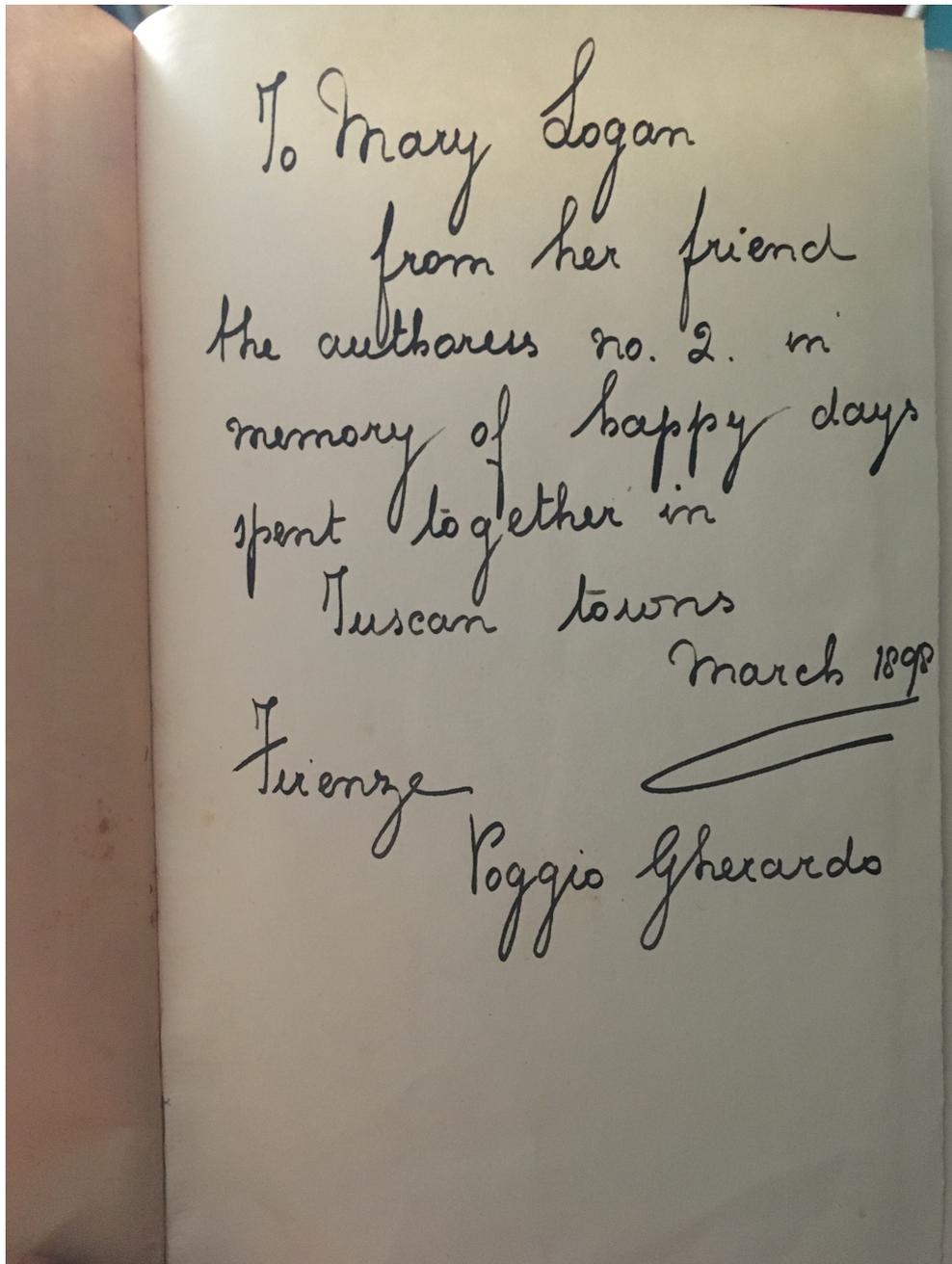


Fig. 3.4

Page from Lina Duff Gordon and Margaret Symonds, *The Story of Perugia*, illus. Helen M. James (London: J. M. Dent, 1898)

Inscribed: 'To Mary Logan from her friend the authoress no. 2 in memory of happy days spent together in Tuscan towns March 1898 Firenze Poggio Gherardo'

Biblioteca Berenson, Villa I Tatti, Florence, The Harvard University Center for Italian Renaissance Studies

(DG975.P4 S9 1898)



Madge Symonds & Lina Duff Gordon
at a knotty point in "Perugia".

Fig. 3.5

Unknown photographer

Madge Symonds & Lina Duff Gordon 'at a knotty point in "Perugia"'

Photograph

Waterfield Collection, British Institute, Florence

(inv. WAT:V:B:7:iii)

ALL ABOUT PERUGIA.

A new series of books, and more particularly the first volume of the set, is always interesting; but more than usual interest attaches to "The Story of Perugia," which opens Messrs. J. M. Dent's "Mediaeval Towns," for its authors, Miss Margaret Symonds and Miss Lina Duff-Gordon, are the heirs of a strong literary gift. Miss Symonds is the



MISS MARGARET SYMONDS.

daughter of the late John Addington Symonds, who spent his life over the very subject (witness his "Renaissance in Italy") which has fascinated his daughter. Her collaborator has a remarkable ancestry in literature, as you will note by this little table—

JOHN AUSTIN The great writer on Jurisprudence, 1790-1859.	=	SARAH TAYLOR, Translated Ranke's Works, 1793-1867.
Lucie, Lady		Duff-Gordon (1821-1883), wrote "Letters from Egypt."
Janet (Mrs. Ross), wrote "Three Generations of Englishwomen."		Sir Maurice Duff-Gordon, LINA DUFF-GORDON, Joint Author of "The story of Perugia."

To return to "The Story of Perugia," the book has not only charming literary qualities of its own, but is a little masterpiece from the point of view of the experienced bookmaker. The authors have very happily stated in the preface their intention of treating their subject as the heroine of a romance, not with a flourish of heavy tomes and authorities, but daintily, as one who, looking over some long-forgotten correspondence, will linger on the trifles which show character rather than on the mere chain of events. And a beautiful heroine the old hill-city is. To visit Perugia and her Tuscan sister, Siena, is to join the inner brotherhood of travellers in Italy. These twin cities stand now within their perfectly preserved walls and towers as unspoiled relics of the great days. Strong enough formerly to maintain their independence and commercial individuality, they have not suffered, as Milan, Bologna, or Florence, the civilisation of nineteenth-century towns. I can well remember the supreme delight caused by my first impression of Perugia. Our dilatory Italian train from Florence had crawled all day up the valley of the Arno, past Arezzo and Cortona, the home of Luca Signorelli, and along the wooded shores of Trasimene. We were coming near to our destination about sundown, and, looking out of the train-window with the sun behind me as our way made a bend eastwards "upon a mild declivity of hill," I saw a white crown of buildings just touched with the setting sun rise slowly out of the ground. Really, owing to our gradual change of position, the slope of the hill in front was receding sideways from the field of view to reveal the towers of Perugia; but the contrary illusion was complete, and the city seemed to be rising upwards into the sky. On the right first appeared the monastery and slender campanile of San Pietro; next came the grim, battered tower of San Domenico, and,

highest of all, the whitewashed Prefettura, built on the commanding site of Paul Farnese's demolished citadel.

The authors have preserved all the past and present charm of their subject in the historical sketch. Right up to the time of its final subjugation by Pope Paul III., the narrative is carried forward with fervid interest, and with a unity of style remarkable in the work of two heads. Miss Symonds makes use of one or two effective passages from her father's "Sketches in Italy," but the book does not depend for its value on a pot-pourri of quotations. If one may suggest an improvement, it would be to ask for a greater simplicity of style, especially in the chapters dealing with the art of Perugia. The Umbrian school of painting is accepted with too few reservations, and something of Perugino's easy sentiment creeps into the appreciation of his work. On the other hand, one of the great revelations of Perugia, the polychrome sculpture of Agostino di Antonio Duccio, or Ducei, as he is called, is too summarily treated. The illustrations by Miss James are tasteful and in the key of the book, but suffer in reproduction from being too much reduced in scale. If one is right in thinking, from a passage in the book, that the publishers propose to devote a subsequent volume of the series to the neighbouring Assisi, the home of St. Francis, it may be hoped that the work will fall into equally sympathetic hands.

THE MUSIC OF "THE PRESS BALLET."

M. Leopold Wenzel has published the score of his "Press Ballet," now being performed at the Empire Theatre, and by so doing he advances fresh claim and title to the recognition and appreciation that come to him from all sides. To properly appreciate his accomplishment, it is necessary to consider the difficulties attendant upon its achievement. The Ballet affords very little scope for imagination. Papers are too prosy for treatment by a poet; to set them to music is a task that may well baffle a musician of more than average skill. Then, again, M. Wenzel is handicapped by the fact that, being a foreigner, he is not in touch with the policy or significance of the bulk of the newspapers, and cannot readily express or differentiate their policies in musical form. When these facts are remembered, the most captious critic will be compelled to render high praise to the score. Scholarly to an extent that makes it worthy of careful consideration, the music of "The Press Ballet" exhibits all the composer's mastery of orchestral resources, his intimate acquaintance with the exact capacity of each instrument and set



MISS LINA DUFF-GORDON.
Photo by Miss Alice Hughes, Gower Street.

of instruments, his power of giving colour, light, and shade to the leading themes, and of presenting delightful melody in orthodox form. Seeing the difficulties the composer had to face, failure would have been no disgrace, success is all the more creditable. Needless to say, the score will be the despair of the amateur whose eyes and fingers cannot keep pace with the composer's thoughts, but the music deserves and repays study.

Fig. 3.6

Page from [Anon.], 'All About Perugia', Sketch (4 May 1898), 75



Fig. 3.7

Unknown photographer

J. Speakman in the smoking-room of the Hotel Anglo American, Rome, January 1899

January 1899

Photograph

Clayton Special Collections, Monash University, Clayton, Australia
(inv. 820.8 G739 A6/T)



Fig. 3.8

Edizioni Brogi

Palazzo Pollini, Siena

c.1915–20

Albumen print mounted on cardboard

Archivi Alinari-Archivio Brogi, Florence

(inv. 16076)

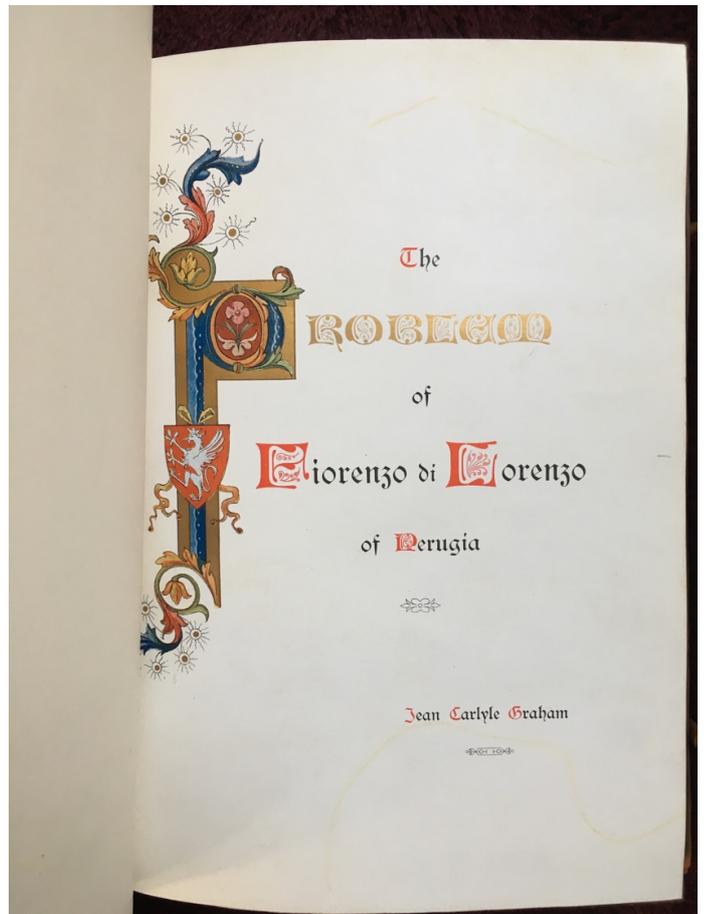


Fig. 3.9
Leather binding (left) and title page (right) of Jean Carlyle Graham, *The Problem of Fiorenzo di Lorenzo of Perugia*, 1903
No. 193 of 300 copies
Author's copy



Fig. 3.10
Fiorenzo di Lorenzo (1440–1522)
Architectural niche of San Francesco al Prato
1487
Tempera and gold on panel
238 x 188 x 47 cm
Galleria Nazionale Umbria, Perugia
(inv. 32)



Fig. 3.11

Domenico Anderson (1854–1938)

Madonna and Child with Saints Peter and Paul by

Fiorenzo di Lorenzo (1440–1522)

c.1901

Photograph, silver salt gelatine on card

26 x 19.9 cm

Fototeca Zeri, Bologna

(inv. 49520)

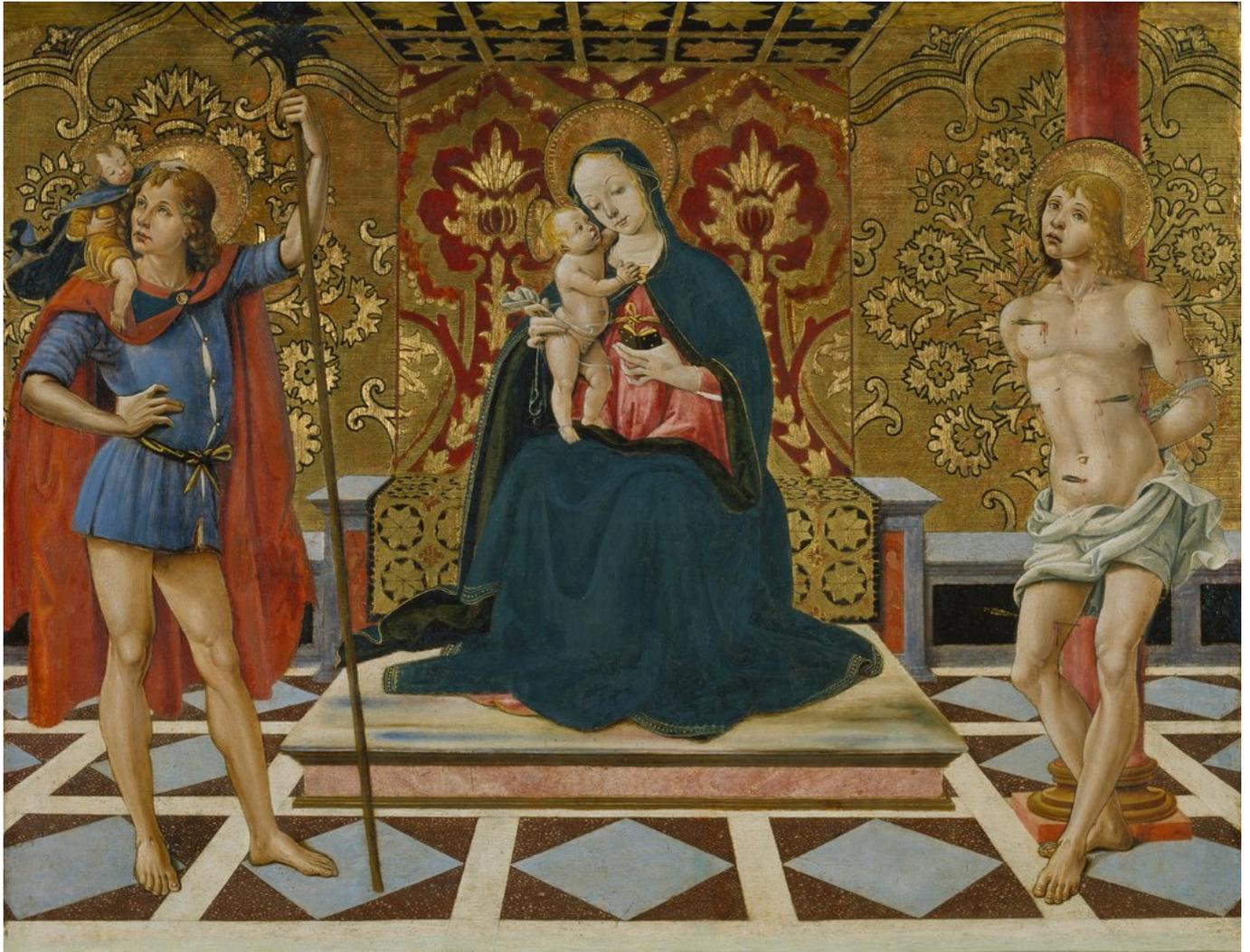


Fig. 3.12

Fiorenzo di Lorenzo(?) (1440–1522)

Virgin and Child Enthroned with Saints Christopher and Sebastian

c.1498–1525

Oil and tempera on panel

37.7 x 49.9 cm

Städel Museum, Frankfurt am Main

(inv. 1078)

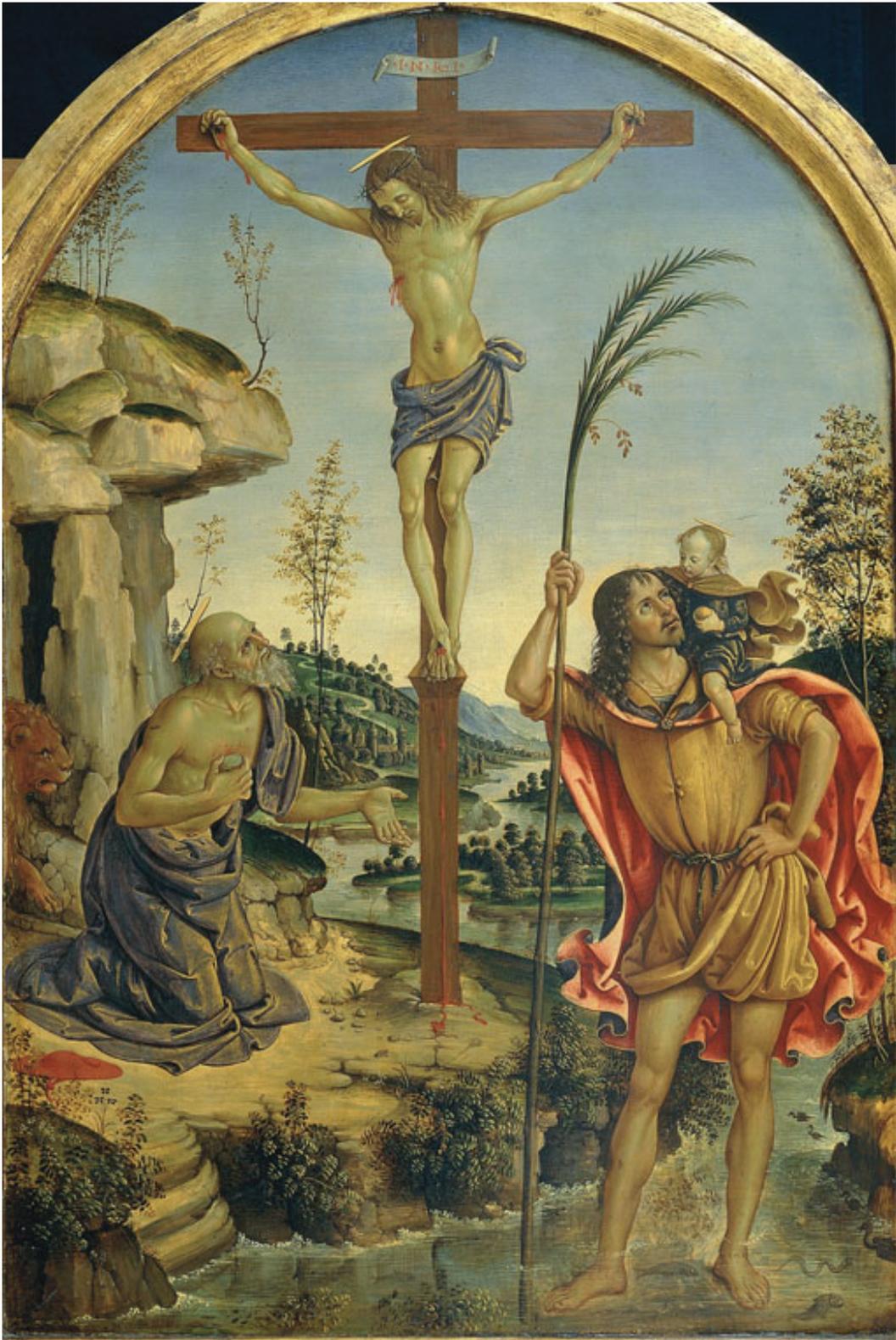


Fig. 3.13

Pintoricchio (c.1454–1513)

The Crucifixion with Saints Jerome and Christopher

c.1471

Oil on wood

59 x 40 cm

Galleria Borghese, Rome

(inv. 377)



Fig. 3.14
Odoardo Borrani (1833–1905)
Alla Galleria dell'Accademia
c.1870
Oil on canvas
42 x 37 cm
Galleria dell'Accademia, Florence
(inv. [1890] 10107)

THE MORRIS-DANCE ROUND ST. MARK'S.



Fig. 4.1

'The Morris-Dance Round St Mark's', *Punch* (10 January 1880), 2



Fig. 4.2
Unknown photographer
*Mercato Vecchio before 1881 with the Torre dei Caponsacchi (top);
Piazza della Fonte, l'antico Ghetto di Firenze, before 1885 (bottom)*
Reproduced in Piero Bargellini, *Com'era Firenze 100 Anni Fa* (Florence:
Casa Editrice Bonechi, 1998), pp. 8, 18, author's copy



Fig. 4.3

Unknown photographer

The old centre of Florence — the demolition of the Mercato Vecchio, 1898

1898

Photograph

Fototeca Musei Comunali, Florence

(inv. 10.1976)



Fig. 4.4

Unknown photographer

Piazza della Repubblica in 1893 following the demolition of the Mercato Vecchio. To the back on the left Vasari's Loggia dei Pesce can still be seen in its original location. In the front the Colonna dell'Abbondanza remains (top); Piazza Vittorio Emanuele II (today Piazza della Repubblica), in 1895 with monument to Vittorio Emanuele II, inaugurated in 1890 (today found in Piazza Vittorio Veneto) (bottom)

Reproduced in: Piero Bargellini, *Com'era Firenze 100 Anni Fa* (Florence: Casa Editrice Bonechi, 1998), pp. 10, 15, author's copy



Fig. 4.5

Edizioni Brogi

*Chiesa di S. Biagio, già S. Maria sopra Porta, e Palazzo di parte Guelfa,
Firenze*

1890–99

Albumen print on card mount

2.1 x 3.0 cm

Raccolte Grafiche e Fotografiche del Castello Sforzesco, Civico Archivio
Fotografico, Fondo Raccolta Luca Beltrami, Milan

(inv. RLB 991)



Fig. 4.6

Edith Teresa Hulton (1890–1972)

Linda Villari (1836–1915) at Villa Mier

1906

Photographic paper attached to card page of album

8.0 x 6.9 cm

Photograph 120 of 134 contained in Volume Two of Costanza Hulton's personal photograph albums (1901–06), Attingham Park, Shropshire

National Trust Collections

(inv. NT 610168.121)



Fig. 4.7

The 'Arcone' or triumphal arch of piazza della Repubblica, Firenze

May 2018

Inscribed: L' ANTICO CENTRO DELLA CITTÀ / DA SECOLARE
SQUALLORE / A VITA NUOVA RESTITUITO

(‘The ancient centre of the city / from age-old squalor / restored to new life’)



Fig. 4.8

Unknown photographer

Torre dei Foresi (double-fronted tower at centre) visible across from ongoing demolition works

Late nineteenth century

Unidentified original

'Firenze nei Dettagli' blog

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The bibliography is organised into four sections. ‘Section One: Archives’ lists all the archives I have consulted in Italy and the UK. ‘Section Two: Individual Author Bibliographies’ comprises individual bibliographies for the principal writers featured in this thesis, with as complete a list as possible of their published work which I have identified to date.¹ Providing a scholarly resource for future study, this section is intended to complement the bibliography I edited for the *19* special issue ‘Old Masters, Modern Women’ (2019) <<https://19.bbk.ac.uk/article/id/1471/>>. Section Three lists all other primary sources consulted in my research, and Section Four lists the secondary literature. Sections Two, Three, and Four are organised alphabetically according to author surname, and for each author publications are listed in publication date order. Where more than one work is cited within any one year, books precede articles, and journals are listed alphabetically if no further specific chronological data is available.

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Letters of Lina (Duff Gordon) Waterfield to Mary Berenson, Folders 35–36

¹ The only exception being the individual author bibliography for Vernon Lee, whose work has been catalogued in several existing bibliographies elsewhere, and for whom therefore I have listed only those texts referred to in the thesis. The bibliography found online at ‘The Sybil: A Journal of Vernon Lee Studies’ is the most complete, and is regularly updated: <<https://thesybilblog.com/bibliography/>>.

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