



## In her own words:

### The many forms in which women played with writing between the Middle Ages and the early modern period

International workshop  
Paris, 27<sup>th</sup> May 2026

In recent years, interdisciplinary studies have confirmed how, in numerous disciplines, women's contributions were decidedly more relevant than clichés and outdated historiography claim. In-depth research and new interpretations have brought the prominence of the role played by women in literature and the arts to light, and has shown how women were able to contribute to the enrichment of the cultural context to which they belonged, in several ways. While the sophistication of their training may have varied and their educational paths may have been original or unconventional, the testimonies left by women in prose, poetry and even in texts like treatises offer an important addition to our knowledge of the artistic and literary landscape of their century, often interweaving their experiences with the most eminent names in each field. But it is not only artists, religious or intellectual women who capture our attention, as those of lesser ambitions and simpler horizons have also left written records capable of fascinating scholars. These include manuals and advice for the upbringing and education of children, diaries, recipes for cooking, artistic techniques, cosmetics or botany, and thoughts or excerpts of life. They were able to immortalise them in any medium, even on one as delicate and refined as embroidery cloth.

The organisers of the workshop, Maddalena Bellavitis (C2RMF ; Saprat, EPHE - PSL) and Carolina Naya, propose an occasion for reflection and dialogue on the literary and non-literary works of women authors from the Middle Ages to the 18th century, with the intention of welcoming original and unpublished papers that can contribute to enriching current knowledge and advance research on the themes, modes and forms of women's writing. There will be a focus on lesser-known figures and contributions related to the activity of as yet not-famous women.

Lectures will be in English and those who are interested in taking part in the workshop are requested to send a proposal of up to one page for a 20-minute contribution and a short bio in English in a single pdf file by 14<sup>th</sup> March 2026 ([maddalena.bellavitis@gmail.com](mailto:maddalena.bellavitis@gmail.com)). The final selection will be notified by the end of March.