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Women's Private Practices of Knowledge Production in Early Modern Europe

Edited by
Natacha Klein Käfer
Natália da Silva Perez

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Situating Women's Private Practices of Knowledge Production in the Early Modern Context

Natacha Klein Käfer and Natália da Silva Perez

Abstract This chapter introduces the book *Women's Private Practices of Knowledge Production in Early Modern Europe* by exploring the interplays of gender, knowledge-making practices, and notions of privacy in the broader early modern European context. Paying heed to recent development in the historiography of women's intellectual works in relation to their association to the private realm, this chapter proposes an understanding of privacy as a privilege—although under constant negotiation—that elite women could instrumentalize in their knowledge pursuits, a notion that the following chapters flesh out in their nuanced case studies.

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Keywords Women • Privacy • Practices of knowledge production • Early modern • Gender

Creating knowledge is a social endeavour. While it is true that individuals need time alone to ponder and reflect on their ideas, they also need a community of knowledge-making peers with whom to exchange and discuss these ideas. Women have always been a part of these social dynamics of knowledge-making, whether as interlocutors or as producers of knowledge.[1] Historiography of intellectual practices, however, has traditionally focused on contributions made by men.[2] In recent decades, this has begun to change, and women's practices of knowledge production have received more careful attention.[3] This volume will contribute to this growing interest by tackling how women's knowledge production intersects with privacy studies. Here, we focus on the private knowledge practices of five elite women to elucidate how they fostered knowledge in their domestic spaces. We also unveil how their private knowledge practices constituted a form of social privilege that enabled them to engage in knowledge-making and navigate knowledge circles.

Women have reflected on the conditions of efficacy for their knowledge practices all through history. A paradigmatic example is *The Book of the City of Ladies* (1405),[4] where Christine de Pizan defended women's capacity to create knowledge, argued for the importance of providing women with a proper education, and praised her intellectual foremothers for serving as her role models. In the context of the *Querelle des femmes*, Pizan's example would be followed in numerous philosophical, theological, and social debates throughout Europe, which increased in number with the turn of the sixteenth century.

[1] Zinsser, Judith P. *Men, Women, and the Birthing of Modern Science*. Northern Illinois University Press, 2005.

[2] Pender, Patricia, ed. *Gender, Authorship, and Early Modern Women's Collaboration*. Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2017, 1.

[3] Hunter, Lynette and Hutton, Sarah. Women, Science and Medicine, 1500–1700: Mothers and Sisters of the Royal Society. Stroud: Sutton, 1997; Ebbersmeyer, Sabrina, and Gianni Paganini, eds. Women, Philosophy and Science: Italy and Early Modern Europe. Vol. 4. Women in the History of Philosophy and Sciences. Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2020; Boyle, Margaret E, and Sarah E Owens. *Health and Healing in the Early Modern Iberian World a Gendered Perspective*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2021.

[4] De Pizan, Christine. *The Book of the City of Ladies*. 1405. Trans. Rosalind Brown-Grant. London: Penguin, 1999.

With the development of humanist currents of thought, thinkers started to resituate women's contributions to knowledge and society as a whole. Erasmus of Rotterdam, Juan Louis Vives, and Thomas Elyot famously supported the spiritual equality of women, although they had different opinions on their social and political standing.[5] Henricus Cornelius Agrippa shook the print market when his lecture *Declamation on the Preeminence and Nobility of the Female Sex* reached the press in 1529, in a public claim of feminine superiority,[6] a position followed in 1553 by Charles Estienne, the famous sixteenth-century anatomist, in his *Paradoxes*.[7] Marie de Romieu produced translations and poetry, writing on women being a source of learning in her *Brief discours: Que l'excellence de la femme surpasse celle de l'homme*. Marie de Gournay and Mary Astell defended the education of women and stressed women's contribution to the development of new knowledge. Nevertheless, as inseparable as women are from the historical processes of knowledge production, medieval and early modern women's intellectual work is still deemed distinct, marked by something that separates it from their male contemporaries.

This distinction mostly derives from what we see as women's more difficult access to 'publicity' for the knowledge they produced. While women's knowledge—especially practical knowledge dedicated to everyday situations[8]—was perceived as necessary, valuable, and commendable, it mostly circulated in contained networks marked by interfamilial, local, and domestic dynamics.[9] When women's intellectual work reached a wider audience via print, it usually depended on a combination of their status, connections, and how well their ideas fit into expected norms and scholarly traditions. Women's publications raised conflicting reactions, from

[5] Davies, Stevie. *The Idea of Woman in Renaissance Literature: The Feminine Reclaimed*. Brighton: Harvester, 1986.

[6] Agrippa, Henricus Cornelius. *Declamation on the Preeminence and Nobility of the Female Sex*. 1529. Trans. Ed. Albert Rabil Jr. Chicago; London: The University of Chicago Press, 1996.

[7] Pomata, Gianna. "Was There a Querelle Des Femmes in Early Modern Medicine?" *ARENAL* 20, no. 2 (2013): 334–5.

[8] Havard, Lucy J. "'Preserve or Perish': Food Preservation Practices in the Early Modern Kitchen." Notes and Records: The Royal Society Journal of the History of Science 74, no. 1 (March 20, 2020): 5–33.

[9] Leong, Elaine Yuen Tien. *Recipes and Everyday Knowledge: Medicine, Science, and the Household in Early Modern England*. Chicago; London: The University of Chicago Press, 2018.

negative stereotypes of 'public women' to praise and exemplarity.[10] Women were commended for their self-effacement, and their avoidance of public attention was often praised.[11] Having their knowledge recognized and respected depended on women carefully navigating the complex rules of decorum of their social environments.

Decorum was expected of any woman, regardless of social position. In order to receive respect from others, women were expected, for example, to dress and behave modestly, to display obedience towards the male figures of authority in their lives, and to fulfil their obligations as primary caregivers of their families, as mothers and wives. The example of the young Lady Lumley discussed by Natália da Silva Perez shows a student learning how to practice deference to figures of authority in her life. In the hortatory letters to her father explored in Silva Perez's chapter, we see a pupil eager to demonstrate her knowledge of Latin, Greek, and political themes in order to make her father proud. Silva Perez demonstrates how this exercise prepared the young Lady Lumley for potentially writing deferential letters to other authority figures that could become patrons to her knowledge. Her ability to hone that skill in private before making her writing available to selective publics enabled her to explore her own ideal while engaging with classic texts.

The realm of knowledge for women in pre-modern times is often assumed to have been circumscribed to the private domain, away from the intellectual public—unless stringent parameters were met. Yet, elite women did not always take this association with the private as a restriction, but rather turned it into a strategy to lend their knowledge production an air of exclusivity, even exceptionality, thereby raising its status. Recent scholarship has delved deeper into women's writings navigating intellectual publics[12] and has demonstrated how privacy could be performed in

[10] Eger, Elizabeth; Grant, Charlotte; Gallchoir, Cliona O.; Warburton, Penny (eds.). *Women, Writing and the Public Sphere 1700–1830*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001, 2.

[11] Ullyot, Michael. *The Rhetoric of Exemplarity in Early Modern England*. Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2022, 17.

[12] Eger; Grant; Gallchoir; Warburton (eds.). *Women, Writing and the Public Sphere 1700–1830*; Williamson, Fiona. "Public and Private Worlds? Social History, Gender and Space: Social History, Gender and Space." *History Compass* 10, no. 9 (September 2012): 633–43; Dzuback, Mary Ann. "Gender and the Politics of Knowledge." History of Education Quarterly 43, no. 2 (2003): 171–95.

female authorship in their process to achieve publicity.[13] This entanglement of privacy, domesticity, and publicity when it comes to women's writings has been carefully examined in the context of England and the Low Countries by Martine van Elk in a contrasting study of how women writers expressed and crossed the blurry lines between the public and the private.[14] These recent works have complexified how women traversed the porous thresholds of private life and public visibility, showing us that thinking of women simply as associated with the domestic world—and of those that became published authors as exceptional examples—smooths out a lot of the complexities involved in early modern women's practices of knowledge production and how they instrumentalized the label 'private' to support their knowledge endeavours.

We will add to this discussion by demonstrating how privacy played a role in how women were able to achieve knowledge, their strategies to disseminate and cross-pollinate their thoughts, and how they legitimized their practices. As Ronald Huebert stated, "privacy mattered to a great many early modern people—all the more so, I suspect, because of the religious and social pressures to conform and the efforts taken by authorities at various levels to monitor personal behaviour."[15] As historical agents under specific gendered scrutinies, women were very aware of the importance of privacy as a way to regulate what could be known and how to become someone in the circles of knowledge. Victorine de Chastenay, as shown here by Isabelle Lémonon-Waxin, had to carefully navigate her contacts with the members of the learned community in the institutional spaces of eighteenth-century France. Her skill in manoeuvring these expectations granted her access to exclusive spaces where women were commonly not welcomed.

Considering this power of manoeuvrability of the thresholds along the public/private spectrum, we will work here with a broad understanding of what privacy could mean to early modern women and how it intersected with practices of knowledge-making. Previously, we have explored privacy as "the ability that people might have to regulate, adjust, or control access

[13] Trull, Mary E. *Performing Privacy and Gender in Early Modern Literature*. Early Modern Literature in History Ser. London: Palgrave Macmillan Limited, 2013.

[14] Elk, Martine van. *Early Modern Women's Writing: Domesticity, Privacy, and the Public Sphere in England and the Dutch Republic*. Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2017.

[15] Huebert, Ronald. *Privacy in the Age of Shakespeare*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2016, 8.

to themselves or to their material and immaterial resources"[16] or "a constant and iterant compromise which depended on practices of concealment, consolidation or dissolution for social bonds, and unspoken agreements (a turn of the head to allow someone some discretion, using one's own body to shield another person's actions, and daily instances of 'don't ask, don't tell')."[17] In this volume, we add to this understanding of early modern privacy by dissecting how gender factored in how those strategies could be employed by knowledge makers. Our aim is to untangle the processes of how women produced knowledge, how this knowledge circulated, and how it was received by different audiences.

It seems straightforward to assume that, because of their common association with the domestic realm and their challenge to have their voices heard in public, women would have more moments in private to explore different knowledge practices. However, these domestic spaces were constantly populated by a myriad of people—relatives, servants, guests, and a variety of other folks depending on the social status of the household.[18] Therefore, having the possibility to regulate access to spaces of knowledge was crucial to performing the activities and maintaining the infrastructure necessary for knowledge production. Duchesses Elisabeth Sophie Marie's and Philippine Charlotte's exquisitely kept private libraries were an integral part of their domestic spaces. At the same time, they were clearly delineated areas for their book collections, curated via the Duchesses' own tastes and funds. These designated spaces create opportunities for social encounters between agents of knowledge, consolidating and amplifying these noblewomen's networks.

A moment of privacy was something that needed to be created, adapted, and negotiated in particular situations.[19] If we start from the idea that privacy was something that individuals needed to establish by themselves on a daily basis—as a *practice*—we notice that it was not necessarily easier

[16] Silva Perez, Natália da. 'Privacy and Social Spaces', *TSEG - The Low Countries Journal of Social and Economic History* 18, no. 3 (29 November 2021): 5–16.

[17] Klein Käfer, Natacha, 'Dynamics of Privacy at Sea: An Introduction to Privacy Studies in Maritime History' in Klein Käfer, Natacha (ed.). *Privacy at Sea: Practices, Spaces, and Communication in Maritime History*. Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2023, 2.

[18] Orlin, Lena Cowen. *Locating Privacy in Tudor London*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007.

[19] Fennetaux, Ariane. "Women's Pockets and the construction of Privacy in the Long Eighteenth Century", *Eighteenth-Century Fiction*, 20:3 (2008): 307–334.

for women.[20] The boundaries of these created instances of privacy were porous and malleable and hardly ever respected by default. As such, carving out a moment in private to develop one's practices of knowledge production depended on agreements, strategies, and constant concern over social expectations.[21] The case of Camilla Herculiana, discussed here by Jelena Bakić, is a clear example of these negotiations. She was a woman from a merchant family, whose father invested in her education, but that did not have as high of a status as compared to the other women studied in this book. Therefore, she had to stress that she prioritized her womanly duties over her knowledge pursuits, which implied her compliance with the gendered moral standards expected of her.

Knowledge comes in many forms. In this volume, we will explore different forms of knowledge as *practice*. Early modern practices of knowledge production would include observation, collection, categorization, repetition, note-taking, experimentation, crafting, cataloguing, reading, reflecting, as well as other related activities, such as travelling, dialogue, or meditation. Pamela Long has explored how openness and secrecy played a crucial role in the long-term history of craft traditions, opening up a discussion about the entanglements of knowledge creation, revelation, and control.[22] Knowledge, therefore, depended on the ability to explore trial and error in private, but also on the exchange of experience and technique in a wider network of people 'in the know.' Women—especially members of the nobility[23]—were part of knowledge networks and even created their own, exchanging knowledge they considered the most relevant for their experience in the early modern world.[24]

As such, we are less concerned about *what kind* of knowledge women produced but *how* they went about their processes of knowledge creation

[20] Klein Käfer, Natacha and da Silva Perez, Natália, "Privacy and knowledge production: historical potentials and challenges", *KNOW: A Journal on the Formation of Knowledge*, forthcoming.

[21] Klein Käfer, 'Dynamics of Privacy at Sea'.

[22] Long, Pamela O. *Openness, Secrecy, Authorship: Technical Arts and the Culture of Knowledge from Antiquity to the Renaissance*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2001.

[23] Rankin, Alisha Michelle. *Panaceia's Daughters: Noblewomen as Healers in Early Modern Germany*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2013.

[24] Neighbors, Dustin and Klein Käfer, Natacha. "Zones of Privacy in Letters Between Women of Power: Elizabeth I of England and Anna of Saxony". *Royal Studies Journal* 9:1 (2022), p. 60–89; Tarbin, Stephanie, and Susan Broomhall. *Women, Identities and Communities in Early Modern Europe*. Aldershot; Burlington: Ashgate, 2008.

and how privacy factored into their practices. We notice that what stands out about early modern women's knowledge production is not that they are on different subjects than men's, or the implied value of their knowledge.[25] The main difference comes from the strategies that they had to implement in order to fit into the expectations of intellectual circles at the same time that they upkept those of their gender and status. By focusing on their practices, we will highlight these rhetorical strategies, their particular knowledge networks, access to books, and how they went about cataloguing, note-taking, letter-writing, and engaging with specialists without crossing decorum norms.

This volume explores privacy in relation to knowledge practices in a gendered historical context. The cases chosen to exemplify women's knowledge-creation processes come from a historical context—namely early modern Western affluent social circles—that was privileged enough to have left historical traces of such processes. We acknowledge that these cases are historically circumscribed and cannot necessarily be generalized as representing the practices of actors from lower social strata, of migrants, or of actors that stemmed from a broader geographic and ethnic background. Rather than seeing this focus on elite women as a limitation, we take the opportunity to study the private knowledge practices of these elite women to unveil how this private knowledge-making was a condition for them to claim exclusivity and status for their practice. In other words, there seemed to be a conflation between something being private and therefore being elite or high quality. Nonetheless, we believe that the cases studied here can help expand the way we think about privacy in relation to women's knowledge. These examples can also help tease out patterns and strategies of private knowledge activities that can then be compared and contrasted, in future research, with the practices of women from different groups and social backgrounds.

In this volume, we will discuss knowledge practices by five women from different European contexts. Our chapters document, analyse, and discuss how women employed practices of privacy to pursue knowledge that did not necessarily conform with the curriculum prescribed for them. The practices of Jane Lumley in England, Camilla Herculiana in Padua,

[25] Hunter, Lynette. "Women and Science in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Century: Different Social Practices, Different Textualities, and Different Kinds of Science" in *Men, Women, and the Birthing of Modern Science* edited by Judith P. Zinsser. DeKalb, Illinois: Northern Illinois University Press, 2005.

Victorine de Chastenay in Paris, as well as Elisabeth Sophie Marie and Philippine Charlotte in Brunswick-Wolfenbüttel, will help us to exemplify the delicate balance between audacity and obedience that women had to employ to be able to explore science, literature, philosophy, theology, and other types of learned activities.[26] Our cases range from the sixteenth to the nineteenth century, presenting continuities and discontinuities across temporal and geographical lines of the strategies that women used to protect their knowledge production and retain intact their reputations as good Christian daughters, wives, and mothers. We will see how having access to privacy—having the ability to regulate access to themselves while studying and learning—was a crucial condition for the success of the knowledge activities these women pursued.

In the chapters that follow, the reader will encounter discussions of the notebooks of Lady Jane Lumley filled with translations of works from the humanist canon; of the letters by Camilla Herculiana containing apothecary knowledge, and of her published book containing natural philosophy; of the scientific research notebooks produced by Victorine de Chastenay; and finally, of the opulent, rich private libraries gathered by Elisabeth Sophie Marie and Philippine Charlotte. These are all material testimonies to the practices of knowledge that these women conducted. Their analysis enables us to reconstruct a corner of the history of knowledge that is often left in second plan and elucidate the role that practices of privacy had in enabling these women to pursue their knowledge activities.

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[26] Straznicky, Marta. *Privacy, playreading, and women's closet drama, 1550–1700*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004, 9–11.

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Lady Jane Lumley's Private Education and Its Political Resonances

Natália da Silva Perez

Abstract In this chapter, Natália da Silva Perez focuses on Lady Jane Lumley, who lived in England in the middle of the sixteenth century. As a young member of a noble household close to the throne, her study practices were fomented and shaped by her family's political aspirations and alignments, all the while remaining within the private circle of her family. In what follows, Silva Perez maps ideas that Lady Lumley articulated through translations and letters that she wrote for her father as a young woman. In her texts, the private, the political, and the public appear not as distinct categories but are rather co-constructed as mutually interdependent.

Keywords Lady Lumley • Drama • England • Knowledge • Education • Translation

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Introduction: Education at a Noble Household

Lady Jane Lumley was the daughter of the Earl of Arundel, Henry Fitzalan, and Catherine Grey (who died in 1542, when Jane was a child).[1] Lord Arundel was an important Catholic noble who was close to the royal circle.[2] He "had served as Lord Chamberlain in the households of Henry VIII and Edward VI until 1550" and, after a period where he had fallen out of grace with the royal family, he was instrumental in Mary I's accession to the throne in 1553.[3] In the midst of a succession controversy following the death of King Edward VI, Lady Jane Grey was crowned and reigned for nine days, thanks to the manoeuvres of the Duke of Northumberland.[4] Jane Grey was a cousin of Lord Arundel's first wife, so at first he supported her as the lawful queen, even though she was a protestant.[5] A politically clever Catholic, when a chance presented itself to him, Arundel led a party against the Duke of Northumberland and turned against Jane Grey, helping Mary I ascend to the throne, consequently becoming one of those responsible for Jane Grey's imprisonment.[6] Later, Jane Grey was executed for high treason after having spent some time at the Tower of London.

Arundel's allegiance to Mary I gained him the sympathy of the Catholic queen, who would "continually demonstrate her gratitude to Arundel in little favours."[7] For example, when Mary I took power in 1553, Protestant Archbishop Thomas Cranmer was imprisoned in the Tower of London

[1] Hodgson-Wright, Stephanie. 'Lumley, Jane, Lady Lumley (1537–1578)', in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford University Press, 2008).

[2] About Henry Fitzalan, Nichols quotes "Illustrious Portraits" by Mr. Lodge saying: "devoted with the most faithful and unbending resolution to a religion which he saw alternately cherished and proscribed…" Anonymous and Nichols, John G. 'Life of the Last Fitz-Alan, Earl of Arundel', *The Gentleman's Magazine* 103, no. 1 (1833): 10.

[3] Jayne, Sears Reynolds and Johnson, Francis Rarick, eds., *The Lumley Library: The Catalogue of 1609* (London: British Museum, 1956), 3; Anonymous and Nichols, 'Life of the Last Fitz-Alan, Earl of Arundel'.

[4] Goodrich, Jaime. 'Autonomous Political Agents: Jane Lumley and Mary Clarke Bassett', in *Early Modern Englishwomen as Translators of Religious and Political Literature, 1500–1641* (ProQuest, 2008), 218–20.

[5] Goodrich, 219.

[6] Anonymous and Nichols, 'Life of the Last Fitz-Alan, Earl of Arundel'; Wynne-Davies, Marion. 'Introduction: Women Writers and Familial Discourse in the English Renaissance', in *Women Writers and Familial Discourse in the English Renaissance: Relative Values* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 7.

[7] Jayne and Johnson, *The Lumley Library*, 3.

and his property confiscated.[8] The queen's sympathy towards Arundel eventually secured him possession of Cranmer's library, adding the archbishop's books to Arundel's already "substantial collection of some 400 volumes, representing three different interests."[9]

Acquiring books and developing a prestigious humanist learning was part of noble people's practices of religious and political views.[10] It was part of their way to perform politics, not simply as a conspicuous display, but in the sense of 'perform' that encompasses both the idea of displaying something and of bringing about a certain reality.[11] Given the symbolic value of education, it is not surprising that even those families who were not aspiring to foster direct successors to the throne also sought to follow the advice from hortatory books on education, like Erasmus of Rotterdam's *Institutio principis Christiani*. In 1516, *Institutio principis Christiani* was published by Froben Press in Basel, making this practical manual on humanist education available to a wide public of readers.[12] In principle,

[8] Selwyn, David Gordon. *The Library of Thomas Cranmer* (Oxford Bibliographical Society, 1996), xxvi.

[9] Though there is no record of Arundel's purchase of Cranmer's library, Selwyn agrees with Jayne and Johnson in their interpretation that the earl must have received the books as a royal favour from Selwyn, Mary I. xxviii; Jayne and Johnson, *The Lumley Library*, 3.

[10] Charlton, Kenneth. *Women, Religion and Education in Early Modern England* (Routledge, 2002); Straznicky, Marta. 'Jane Lumley: Humanist Translation and the Culture of Playreading', in *Privacy, Playreading, and Women's Closet Drama, 1550–1700* (Cambridge University Press, 2004), 19–47; Jardine, Lisa. 'Introduction', in *Erasmus: The Education of a Christian Prince with the Panegyric for Archduke Philip of Austria*, ed. Lisa Jardine (Cambridge University Press, 1997).

[11] Commenting on the Earl of Arundel educating his daughters, Diane Purkiss writes: "In giving his daughter a strong classical education, [Arundel] was not giving her a voice so that she might embark in a career as a writer or express herself fluently. He was buying a commodity, or, rather, he was following the standard practice of Renaissance nobles in turning his daughter into a sign of his own wealth, prestige, power and fashionableness." Purkiss, Diane. 'Introduction', in *Three Tragedies by Renaissance Women* (Penguin, 1998), xi–xxxix; In the article Diane Purkiss, 'Blood, Sacrifice, Marriage: Why Iphigeneia and Mariam Have to Die', *Women's Writing* 6, no. 1 (March 1999): 27–45 Purkiss expresses a similar opinion, this time commenting more specifically on the existence of The Tragedie of Euripides Called Iphigeneia: "The play Jane Lumley produced is itself both a display of that wealth and prestige invested in her—a profitable return on her father's investment—but also an ornament, a display of classical learning which signifies her father's wealth. It is more than that, in the context of the family, as we shall see. But that is why it exists at all." My discussion below will show that Purkiss' remarks tell only part of the story.

[12] Erasmus, *Erasmus: The Education of a Christian Prince with the Panegyric for Archduke Philip of Austria*, ed. Lisa Jardine, trans. Neil M. Cheshire and Michael John Heath (Cambridge University Press, 1997), xvi.

the book addressed the educational needs of rulers; Erasmus dedicated it to Prince Charles of Spain on his accession to the throne of Aragon and later also offered a hand-illuminated copy to Henry VIII.[13] In the book, Erasmus asserted that it is "the spirit that distinguishes king from tyrant, not his title."[14]

This is the type of humanist education that Lady Jane Lumley and the other young people in her family received at her father's house. The young people of the Earl of Arundel's household, boys and girls alike, received a strong and erudite education.[15] They made use of the rich holdings of the ever-expanding Arundel library and also contributed their own manuscripts of translations to the collection.[16] Mary, Jane, and Henry, the Fitzalan children from the Earl of Arundel's first marriage with Catherine Grey, and John Radcliff, their stepbrother, who came to live at their home after Arundel's second marriage to Mary Radcliff, all left manuscripts of translations, which were in their majority offered as New Year's gifts to their father.[17] When the young Henry Fitzalan went to Cambridge, he became friends with John Lumley. John Lumley eventually also came to live in the Arundel household when, at about the age of 17, he married Jane, who was about 13 years old at the time.[18] Shortly after their marriage, John translated *Institutio principis Christiani* and offered it as a gift to Lord Arundel, signing it "your Lordeshippes obedient sone, J. Lumley, 1550."[19] Within the private sphere of the Arundel household, the young people of the family were carefully educated for their future in politics.

[13] Erasmus, xvi, xxi.

[14] Erasmus, 33.

[15] Lock, Julian. 'Fitzalan, Henry, Twelfth Earl of Arundel (1512–1580)', in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford University Press, 2008), http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/9530?docPos=1.

[16] McCutcheon, Elizabeth. 'The Sententious Writings of Mary Arundel, Duchess of Norfolk', in *Art, Literature and Religion in Early Modern Sussex: Culture and Conflict*, ed. Dr. Matthew Dimmock, Professor Andrew Hadfield, and Dr. Paul Quinn (Ashgate Publishing, Ltd., 2014), 153–54.

[17] McCutcheon, 'The Sententious Writings of Mary Arundel, Duchess of Norfolk'; Anonymous and Nichols, 'Life of the Last Fitz-Alan, Earl of Arundel'.

[18] Hodgson-Wright, "Lumley, Jane, Lady Lumley (1537–1578)."

[19] John Nichols explains that "Lord Lumley had lost his own father in 1537; so this was evidently addressed to his father-in-law, who wrote his name, Arundel, on the first page. Lord Lumley was seventeen years of age in 1550." Anonymous and Nichols, 'Life of the Last Fitz-Alan, Earl of Arundel', 495.

The gift of *Institutio principis Christiani* by John Lumley to his father-in-law is symbolic of the intellectual interests fomented at the Earl of Arundel's household, centred as they were in the appropriate conduct for political actors. *Institutio principis Christiani* counsels the leader to rule by consent. Lisa Jardine explains that Erasmus believed it was better to maintain stability in the political order to avoid "discord and social disintegration," in accordance with his support for European monarchies.[20] For Jardine, *Institutio principis Christianis* had as its purpose "to ensure that those born to rule are educated so as to govern justly and benevolently, and so that the prince's rule never degenerates into oppression."[21] Indeed, these ideas are echoed in Lord Arundel's speech in defence of Mary I being the queen:

> I am onely hereto induced for the safety of the com'on wealth and liberty of this kingdome, wheareto we are bounde noe lesse then to ourselves, both by the lawe of God and nature, as likewise through remorse of conscience, seeing the Lady Maryes right, lawfull successor to this Crowne, by an other possessed, and thearby all we like to be deprived of that liberty w^{ch} we have so longe enjoyed under our lawfull Kings and Princes.[22]

Erasmus's advice on princely education was complemented by his references to the type of Christian philosophy that he had developed earlier in *Enchiridion militis Christiani (1501),* and to the rhetorical strategies that he suggested in his *De Utraque Verborum ac Rerum Copia (1512)*, which included the use of translation. He did not simply recommend translation but showed how his own learning owed much to translating Greek works into Latin. Through Erasmus's influence, translation became a cherished exercise in humanist curricula.

The Private, the Public, and the Political in Lady Lumley's Writings

Most of Lady Jane Lumley's extant texts were translations. Dedicatory letters addressed to her father, several translations from Isocrates's texts, and an entry she copied from an encyclopaedia appeared in Latin. *The*

[20] Jardine, 'Introduction', vii.
[21] Jardine, vii.
[22] Anonymous and Nichols, 'Life of the Last Fitz-Alan, Earl of Arundel', 119.

Tragedie of Euripides Called Iphigeneia is the only text that appeared in English. Translated sometime after 1553, this play was both the first instance where an Ancient Greek tragedy appeared in English, as well as the earliest extant drama by a woman in England.[23]

Three separate volumes of Lady Jane Lumley's writings survive: the first two volumes seem to be clean copies, each containing only one translation and its corresponding letter-preface, while the third volume seems more like a commonplace notebook, containing varied works in more casual handwriting:

- "Oratio Isocratis quem Archidamus inscribitur", which is prefaced by an "Argumentum" in the form of a letter signed "Filia tua dominationi tue deditissima, Joanna Lumleya" (BL MS Royal 15 A i);
- "Evagoras, Oratio quarta Isocratis ad Nicoclem regem Cypri, versa e graecis in latina per Dominam Lumleyam", which is prefaced by a letter to her father "Epistola ad dominum patrem" (BL MS Royal 15 A ii);
- A commonplace notebook containing multiple texts (BL MS Royal 15 A ix):

  - "Oratio prima Isocratis ad Demonicum" (incomplete);
  - "Epistola", adressed to her father;
  - "Oratio Isocratis 2ª ad Nicoclem";
  - "Nicocles 3ª Oratio Isocratis";
  - "Epistola", a draft copy of the above mentioned "Epistola ad dominum patrem";
  - "Evagoras, Oratio quarta Isocratis ad Nicoclem," a draft copy of above-mentioned presentation volume;
  - "Argumentum Orationis Isocratis quam in laudem pacis scripsit";
  - "Oratio Isocratis in laudem pacis";

[23] Euripides and Lumley, Jane. *The Tragedie of Euripides Called Iphigeneia Translated out of Greake into Englisshe*, ed. Harold Child (Malone Society: London, 1909), v, https://archive.org/stream/iphigeniaataulis00euriuoft/iphigeniaataulis00euriuoft_djvu.txt; Greene, David H. 'Lady Lumley and Greek Tragedy', *Classical Journal*, 1941, 537; Cotton, Nancy. *Women Playwrights in England, c. 1363–1750* (Bucknell University Press, 1980), 28; Hodgson-Wright, Stephanie. 'Jane Lumley's Iphigenia at Aulis: Multum in Parvo, or, Less Is More', in *Readings in Renaissance Women's Drama: Criticism, History, and Performance 1594–1998*, ed. S. P. Cerasano and Marion Wynne-Davies, vol. 1 (Routledge, 1998), 129; Beilin, Elaine V. *Redeeming Eve: Women Writers of the English Renaissance* (Princeton University Press, 2014), 153.

- "The Tragedie of Euripides called Iphigeneia translated out of Greake into Englisshe", accompanied by "The Argument of the Tragedie";
- A single sentence, "acerba audire tolerabilius, quam videre", which appears upside down on the verso of folio 98;
- Two pages written by someone other than Lady Lumley (judging by the headings indicating dates, they seem like book-keeping entries, perhaps by John Lumley);
- And finally, once again in the handwriting of Lady Jane Lumley, a copy of the entry on "Lapis Aquilae" from the encyclopaedia of medicaments *Pandectarum Medicinae*, compiled by Mattheus Silvaticus in the fourteenth century.

Most of the texts contained in Lady Lumley's volumes—*The Tragedie of Euripides Called Iphigeneia*, the orations by Isocrates, and her letters—share the concern with principles of good conduct for rulers, common among those living in the Arundel household. The play *The Tragedie of Euripides Called Iphigeneia* is an example of this concern with political themes. It dramatizes a crucial moment in the life of a political family, an instance when the cliff between the private and public realms comes crumbling down. It is the story of a young woman who, by choosing to give up her life in a sacrifice, claims responsibility for the destiny of her country.[24]

The only exception to the political themes is the last text of the list above, a copy of an encyclopaedia entry on the substance *Lapis Aquilae*. Extracted from an encyclopaedia of medicine, this entry is interesting on its own merits for presenting information from a medieval scholarly source about a remedy to help pregnant women during labour, relieve pain, and help prevent miscarriages.[25]

The first translation that appears in Lady Lumley's commonplace notebook, "Oratio prima Isocratis ad Demonicum," is incomplete, but it ends in a passage about hortatory discourses, indicating that Lady Lumley

[24] Gamel, Mary-Kay. 'Iphigenia at Aulis', in *Brill's Companion to the Reception of Euripides*, ed. Rosanna Lauriola and Kyriakos N. Demetriou (BRILL, 2015), vv. 1397–1399, https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004299818; Euripides and Lumley, *The Tragedie of Euripides Called Iphigeneia*.

[25] *Pandectarum Medicinae* is not present in the Lumley Library catalogue of 1609. Perhaps the reason why Lady Lumley had to copy the entry in her notebook is that her father's and husband's library did not contain this book. She might have borrowed it from a family friend or perhaps consulted it at another family's library. Sylvaticus, Matthaeus. 'Lapis Aquile', in *Pandectarum Medicinae*, ed. Ottaviano Scotto (Venice: Bonetus Locatellus, 1498).

might have been aware of the role they could play in shaping the personality of political leaders:

> Now those who compose hortatory discourses addressed to their own friends are, no doubt, engaged in a laudable employment.[26]

These lines resonate closely with Erasmus's words below, indicating a possible source from where Lady Jane Lumley might have learned that the seemingly private practices of studying and writing had a role in politics:

> …those who believe panegyrics are nothing but flattery seem to be unaware of the purpose and aim of the extremely far sighted men who invented this kind of composition, which consists in presenting princes with a pattern of goodness, in such a way as to reform bad rulers, improve the good, educate the boorish, reprove the erring, arouse the indolent, and cause even the hopelessly vicious to feel some inward stirrings of shame.[27]

Indeed, from what Lady Jane Lumley tells her father in a dedicatory letter written in hortatory style, she enjoyed her studies and took pride in improving her skills, something that she could hone because she had at her disposal the privacy and resources of a noble household concerned with education:

> I was impelled by this good and honourable motive, most distinguished father, to present to you these two short orations, which I have translated from Greek into Latin, as a sort of mark of my devotion, partly because I know you are especially pleased by such things and are zealous of knowledge, and partly so that I might hone my skills by working with Greek and Latin at the same time.[28]

[26] "Illi nero qui ad amicos suos adhortatorias faciunt orationes aliquid certe proficiunt non tamen circa optimam philosophiae partem." The English translations from the Greek are by George Norlin, 'Nicocles or the Cyprians', in *Isocrates with an English Translation in Three Volumes* (London: Harvard University Press, 1980), 3.

[27] Erasmus, *Erasmus*, 114.

[28] "Qua probabili et honesta ratione, pater ornatissime, ego impulse eram, ut duas has breves orations quas e grecis in latina converti, quasi specimen alignad studii mei tibi dono offerrem: Partim qûod te huiusmodi rebus precipire delectari et doctrina studiosum esse cognoni: partim etiam, ut me graeca cum latinis coniungendo exercerem." Transcribed from Lady Jane Lumley, 'Translations from Isocrates and Euripides' (n.d.), fol. 4, British Library; Translated from Latin by Jonathan Entwistle, in Marie Loughlin, Sandra Bell, and Patricia Brace, 'Lady Jane (or Joanna) Lumley', in *The Broadview Anthology of Sixteenth-Century Poetry and Prose* (Broadview Press, 2011), 181.

Lady Lumley cited Cicero when she told her father that she was dedicating herself to the study of Greek literature. She told Lord Arundel that Cicero had urged his own son to "mix Greek with Latin more often, because in this way [the son] could get more enjoyment and benefit from [these languages]."[29] As she wrote about Cicero, she recognized in her father a similarity with this Roman writer she admired and took for herself the advice the philosopher gave to his son. Furthermore, she demonstrated that one day she could do the same for her own children.[30]

Lady Jane Lumley was a young woman preparing herself for her noble, genteel life. This would include having children, and it was expected that she would play a role in her future children's education, as many educated noblewomen did. Historian Kenneth Charlton cites the example of Margaret Roper, daughter of Thomas More, to comment on the role that noblewomen had in the education of their children. Margaret Roper had been described by her father's biographer as having had a crucial role in her children's education: "To her children, she was a double mother, one not to bring them forth only into the world, but instructing them herself in virtue and learning."[31] It is safe to assume that Lady Lumley was expected to follow a similar path.

Lord Arundel had high stakes in promoting a humanist education for all his children because, in addition to preparing the young nobles for political life, a good education was also a sign of wealth and prestige. Diane Purkiss, in the introduction to the volume *Three Tragedies by Renaissance Women* where *The Tragedie of Euripides Called Iphigeneia* is included, goes so far as to affirm that:

[29] Translated from Latin by Jonathan Entwistle, in Loughlin, Bell, and Brace, 'Lady Jane (or Joanna) Lumley', 182. In the original manuscript, it reads: "ut gracea cum latinis sepius misceret quod ex illis plus fruitus atque utilitatis capere potuisset."

[30] She would never have the opportunity to do so; all of Jane and John Lumley's three children died in infancy. Anonymous and Nichols, 'Life of the Last Fitz-Alan, Earl of Arundel'.

[31] Cited in Charlton, *Women, Religion and Education in Early Modern England*, 203. Kenneth Charlton explains that "In a thoroughly patriarchal society it would be reasonable to assume that, in the privacy of the home, the major agent of such education would be the father. But this would be to ignore the large amount of evidence showing the part played by mothers in that situation, where they took on the responsibility of instructing their children and the children of others, and this notwithstanding all kinds of biblical constraints which emphasized their membership of the 'weaker sex', and which insisted that they should not usurp the rights of the husband as the superior being."

> In giving his daughter a strong classical education, [Lord Arundel] was not giving her a voice so that she might embark on a career as a writer or express herself fluently. He was buying a commodity, or, rather, he was following the standard practice of Renaissance nobles in turning his daughter into a sign of his own wealth, prestige, power and fashionableness.

Indeed, education signified prestige and wealth, it is undeniable; it required expensive resources like books, tutors, privacy, and time—perks unavailable to those belonging to the lower layers of society. But we should not understand receiving an education as the result of mere 'fashionableness,' not even for a girl. Far from being educated only because her father was "turning his daughter into a sign of his own wealth, prestige, power and fashionableness,"[32] Jane Lumley would also have an important practical role in the education of her children with Lord John Lumley when she became a mother. Given her own father's example, Lady Lumley must have been aware that parents had an important role in their children's education.

Moreover, her education seems to have had more immediate, practical uses. I make this conjecture from the entry in her commonplace book where she copied the medical properties of *Lapis Aquilae*. As I mentioned above, *Lapis Aquilae* was a remedy to relieve pain during pregnancy, avoid miscarriages, and help during labour. Lady Lumley's sister, Mary, in 1557 at about the age of 16, died two months after giving birth to her first child.[33] Perhaps Lady Lumley's interest in the obstetric medicinal properties of the substance *Lapis Aquilae* has its origin in her sister's difficulties during labour. Perhaps she was researching the medicine for other reasons, such as preparing herself for the prospect of her own pregnancy. Of course, I cannot know why she copied that encyclopaedia entry, and it might have been simply to satisfy her curiosity, but even if it was just curiosity, this is already a practical use of her education for purposes beyond those stated by Purkiss's rather confined historiographical valuation.

When Lady Lumley expressed her admiration for Isocrates's works, she hinted at the alignment of some of Isocrates's teachings with her father's

[32] Purkiss, 'Introduction', xv.

[33] McCutcheon, 'The Sententious Writings of Mary Arundel, Duchess of Norfolk'.

political interests. In the letter to her father that prefaces her translation of "Evagoras", she wrote that the text "shows that Evagoras was not so concerned with expanding his realm as with ruling it most virtuously and scrupulously."[34] Indeed, to rule in this way, a ruler has to have a comprehensive education, and Erasmus, too, wrote that literature is useful not only as a source of pleasure but can be a source of wisdom for the Christian ruler:

> Whenever the prince takes a book in his hands, let him do it not for the purpose of enjoyment but in order that he may get up from his reading a better man.[35]

In "Nicocles 3ª Oratio Isocratis," Lady Lumley's translation reads:

> Moreover, it is passing strange if the fact has escaped them that we reverence the gods and practice justice, and cultivate the other virtues, not that we may be worse off than our fellows, but that we may pass our days in the enjoyment of as many good things as possible.[36]

Another of Lady Lumley's translations also expressed a similar opinion about literary works, namely, that these activities done in one's own private time are not mere entertainment, but serve the function of self-improvement. In "Oratio Isocratis 2ª ad Nicoclem," we can read:

> For when men are in private life, many things contribute to their education: first and foremost, the absence of luxury among them, and the necessity they are under to take thought each day for their livelihood; next, the laws by which in each case their civic life is governed; furthermore, freedom of speech and the privilege which is openly granted to friends to rebuke and to

[34] Translated from the Latin by Jonathan Entwhistle Loughlin, Bell, and Brace, 'Lady Jane (or Joanna) Lumley', 182. The transcription from the original reads "Postremo Evagoram non tam dilatasse quam sanctissime religiosissime que regnum suum gubernasse ostendit."

[35] Erasmus, *Erasmus*, 64.

[36] "Ad haec absurdum est hoc eos latere nos deum pie colere, justitiam exercere, ac reliquas virtutes amplexari, non ut reliquis hominibus in istis rebus inferiores essemus, sed ut vitam omnium bonorum plenam degeremus." Norlin, 'Nicocles or the Cyprians', 2.

> enemies to attack each other's faults; besides, a number of the poets of earlier times have left precepts which direct them how to live; so that, from all these influences, they may reasonably be expected to become better men.[37]

Lady Lumley's writings reflect the influence of humanist scholarship in general, but of Erasmus in particular. Erasmus recommended reading Greek authors through *philosophia Christi*, a reading strategy that her translations seem to follow. *Institutio principis Christianis* explicitly recommends pondering what one learns from ancient Greek writers by thinking it through "the standard of Christ." There, Erasmus wrote:

> Demetrius Phalereus shrewdly recommends the prince to read books, because very often he may learn from these what his friends have not dared to bring to his attention. But in this matter he must be equipped in advance with an antidote, as it were, along these lines: 'This writer whom you are reading is a pagan and you are a Christian reader; although he has many excellent things to say, he nevertheless does not depict the ideal of a Christian prince quite accurately, and you must take care not to think that whatever you come across at any point is to be imitated straight away, but instead test everything against the standard of Christ.'[38]

Her translation *The Tragedie of Euripides Called Iphigeneia* does precisely that. The play shares political themes with Lady Lumley's other works, with interests observed in other members of her household (that is, the most adequate conduct for political leaders), and as the translation of a poet's work, it also exemplifies what Isocrates said about the usefulness of literature in providing examples of good behaviour. Importantly, *Iphigenia at Aulis* showed Lady Lumley that what can be learned from literature is not only for men; women too can find exemplary behaviours in literature

[37] "Multa enim sunt quae instruant homines privatos, atquem imprimis ne delitiis at fenant sed cogantur singulis diebus devictu laborare: ad haec leges habent quibus singuli cives parere astringantur: preterea libertas loquendi llis data est, liberum namque est iis cum amicos delinquentes objurgare tum cum inimicus palam invadere. Ad haec veterum poetarum quaedam sunt precepta quibus subditi diseant, quomodo officio fungatur at regibus nihil tale contingit: Sed hii quos oportet pre aliis optimis preceptis institutisque imbui, postquam ad imperium ascenderint, absque consiliariis vitam degunt. Maior enim pars hominum illorum aditu secluditur et qui familiaritate eorum utuntur omnia ad gratiam eorum aucupandam agunt." Norlin, George. 'To Nicocles', in *Isocrates with an English Translation in Three Volumes* (London: Harvard University Press, 1980), 2–4.

[38] Erasmus, *Erasmus*, 60.

and can also be examples of good behaviour. Iphigenia's story puts focus on the intersections between political, family, and—particularly in Lady Lumley's version—religious matters. The character of Iphigenia is an excellent example: a virtuous woman stepping up into the role of benevolent ruler to put the welfare of her country above her private concerns. Euripides's version was missing the "standard of Christ." With the aid of Erasmus's Latin version, Lady Lumley noticed this lack and endeavoured to correct it in her English version.

Lady Lumley's *The Tragedie of Euripides Called Iphigeneia*

The Ancient Greek myth of Iphigenia survives in numerous versions with different details.[39] In the fifth century BCE, the Athenian tragedians turned their attention to this myth in the version familiar to us: a war depends on a girl's sacrifice, and this, in turn, depends on her father, King Agamemnon, deciding to go ahead with his daughter's sacrifice.[40]

Aeschylus, for example, mentions the myth in passing when he uses it as background to the tragedy *Agamemnon*, where the king's destruction is an outcome of his decision to take his daughter's life. In Aeschylus's version, Iphigenia's sacrifice explains the revenge that Clytemnestra exacts against her husband: after murdering Agamemnon, Clytemnestra tells the

[39] George Adam Kovacs explains that "in the earliest sources of the myth the very name and identity of Agamemnon's first-born daughter is unstable. Three variations are attested in major literary works of the period… These three names are all connected by the initial Ἰφι-,'might' or 'strength'… The Cypria is the only archaic epic source to use the name Iphigenia, though of course we have only the late summary of the work by Proclus, and so the possibility of revision or interpolation is high. The Cypria summary in fact records both Iphigenia and Iphianassa, for separate individuals, but this could be work of the epitomizer, since the latter name occurs in Homer. Multiple daughters with the same name is also a possibility… there is cause for doubt about whether Homer, in his use of the name Iphianassa, is alluding to, or even aware of, the sacrifice at Aulis… Hesiod's Iphimede, who we are told is sacrificed by the Greeks (and perhaps saved…), is clearly the same daughter of Agamemnon that we see in later versions." Kovacs, George Adam. 'Iphigenia at Aulis: Myth, Performance, and Reception' (University of Toronto, 2010), 49, https://tspace.library.utoronto.ca/handle/1807/32938.

[40] According to Gamel, there were plays named Iphigenia written by Sophocles and Aeschylus, of which only fragments are now extant. Gamel, 'Iphigenia at Aulis'.

Chorus that "He paid by the sword for what he himself began."[41] Crucially, when the chorus describes the scene of the sacrifice at the beginning of that play, "Iphigenia is gagged so that she cannot curse her father."[42] In *Agamemnon*, the story of Iphigenia's actual sacrifice is a contextual clue; it serves to explain Clytemnestra's murder of her husband as soon as he returns home from his conquering mission in Troy.

In *Iphigenia in Aulis,* Euripides's treatment of the myth actively opposes Aeschylus's. The drama is organized around the wavering, undecided Agamemnon, who is presented with an ethical conundrum when the goddess demands Iphigenia's sacrifice. Agamemnon goes back and forth between, on the one hand, accepting the goddess's request to kill Iphigenia, and on the other, preserving the integrity of his family by giving up on the war. In Menelaus's words, Agamemnon's "plans are crooked: now one way, now another, soon a third."[43] In Euripides's play, there is greater attention to Agamemnon's hesitation in facing the choice between his daughter's life and his army sailing to Troy. George A. Kovacs highlights that in *Iphigenia at Aulis*, Euripides "chooses… to explore the psychological effects on the father of Iphigenia as he struggles to validate desires for kleos [renown] at the expense of philia [love]."[44]

In doing so, Euripides also shifted more agency into the female characters of Iphigenia and Clytemnestra. Iphigenia is not silenced; she speaks at length on her own behalf. Clytemnestra fights until the end to try and save her daughter. At the end of the play, Clytemnestra's scepticism and silence seem to foreshadow her murder of Agamemnon when he returns from Troy. Kovacs explains that such "mythographic decisions made in adapting a myth are a fundamental element in deriving meaning from the work of any Greek poet;" in the case of Euripides even more so because he was fond of "innovation and challenge to generic norms."[45] Euripides wrote

[41] Aiskhylos, 'Agamemnon', in *An Oresteia: Agamemnon by Aiskhylos; Elektra by Sophokles; Orestes by Euripides*, trans. Anne Carson (Faber & Faber, 2009), 68.

[42] Gamel, 'Iphigenia at Aulis', 16; In Anne Carson's translation of Agamemnon by Aeschylus, the verses read as follows: "Her prayers and cries of Father! her young life they reckoned at zero, those warloving captains. Her father said a prayer and bid them seize her high above the altar like a goat with her face to the ground and her robes pouring around her. And on her lovely mouth—to check the cry that would have cursed his house—he fixed a bridle." Aiskhylos, 'Agamemnon', ll. 164–172.

[43] Euripides and Gamel, Mary Kay. 'Iphigenia at Aulis (Play)', in *Women on the Edge: Four Plays by Euripides*, ed. Ruby Blondell et al. (Routledge, 2002), 339.

[44] Kovacs, 'Iphigenia at Aulis', 53–54.

[45] Kovacs, 47.

the play shortly before his death and was posthumously "awarded first prize for *Iphigenia at Aulis* at the Festival of Dionysos in 405 or 404."[46]

Written during the Peloponnesian war, this is a play about how private concerns become political. It brings to the fore Euripides's questioning of commonplace assumptions regarding acceptable motivations for war. The play highlights the complicated nature of the division between private and public affairs and performs a thorough problematization of ideological justifications for military action. In Euripides's treatment of the myth, a crucial element of the story occurs for the first time: Iphigenia's willingness to volunteer for sacrifice for the good of her own country.

Euripides made Iphigenia into someone who chooses to die for the glory of saving her country, and Erasmus's verse-by-verse translation into Latin gave this story a Romanized, closer to Christian, inflection.[47] Lady Lumley's translation into English, in turn, adds a particular dimension to Iphigenia's altruistic-religious-patriotic act: Iphigenia's immediate concern for her family.

From the textual evidence, we know that Lady Lumley must have used a Greek text alongside the Latin version of *Iphigenia at Aulis* by Erasmus.[48] When Lord Arundel received the book collection of Protestant Archbishop Thomas Cranmer shortly after Mary I became queen in 1553, both a Greek and a Latin copy of *Iphigenia at Aulis* came with it. Euripides's works had been made available for a broad European audience with the *editio princeps* by the Aldine press for the first time in 1503. Erasmus's translations into Latin of *Hecuba* and *Iphigenia in Aulis* first appeared in print by 1506.[49] The collection that the Earl of Arundel received contained

[46] Gamel, 'Iphigenia at Aulis', 16.

[47] Miola, Robert S. 'Early Modern Receptions of Iphigenia at Aulis', *Classical Receptions Journal* 12, no. 3 (1 July 2020): 279–98, https://doi.org/10.1093/crj/clz031; Kovacs, 'Iphigenia at Aulis'.

[48] According to Diane Purkiss, thanks in part to Erasmus Latin translation, Iphigenia at Aulis would become the most popular choice of Greek tragedy for translation into English during the sixteenth century. Purkiss, Diane. *Three Tragedies by Renaissance Women* (Penguin, 1998), 168.

[49] "The only Latin translation of the play during the sixteenth century was that of Erasmus, published in 1506, at Paris, and subsequently at Venice by Aldus in 1507, and by Froben at Basle in 1518 and 1524. […] in the edition of 1524, […] Erasmus' Greek text was published alongside his Latin translation. It was, of course, the Musurus text. The only other translations of the play in the sixteenth century, so far as can be discovered, were the French of Thomas Sebillet in 1549, at Paris, and the Italian of Ludovico Dolce in 1551, at Venice." Greene, 'Lady Lumley and Greek Tragedy', 539.

the Greek language volume *Euripidis Hecuba Iphigenia tragediae graece*, edited in 1520 in Louvain, and also a companion Latin translation by Erasmus.[50] These were likely the texts that Jane Lumley used; she must have been between 16 and 18 years old when she translated the play.

Given the influence of Erasmus on the way that education was organized in Lady Lumley's household, it is not surprising to note his influence on Lady Lumley's translation of the play. Her rendition of *Iphigenia at Aulis* reads very much like an instance where she was checking what she learned from Euripides against the "standard of Christ." *Iphigenia at Aulis* is concerned with themes of religion and politics in their intersection, indeed with the untenability of a strict categorical separation between private and public interests. Euripides was a "pagan" whose teachings should not be "imitate[d] straight away" but rather read through the "standard of Christ." This is precisely what Lady Jane Lumley accomplished in her version of Iphigenia's story.

Comparing Translations of Iphigenia at Aulis

To give the reader an idea of what emerges from Lady Lumley's translation choices, below is a comparison of *The Tragedie of Euripides Called Iphigeneia* with another translation of *Iphigenia at Aulis* into English, done by Mary-Kay Gamel. I am contrasting Lady Lumley's text with this other translation into English to highlight some of the effects of her textual changes.[51]

Three kinds of effects arise from Lady Lumley's translated version of the play:[52] variations in context, action, and characterization. By variations in context, I mean that the place, space, or time of the scenes implied in

[50] Jayne and Johnson, *The Lumley Library*; Purkiss, *Three Tragedies by Renaissance Women*, 168.

[51] I used the annotated translation by classical scholar Mary-Kay Gamel, rendered in prose, which follows the Ancient Greek version verse by verse. This text allows those of us who do not know Ancient Greek to have an approximation of Euripides's text. Euripides and Gamel, 'Iphigenia at Aulis (Play)'.

[52] For different approaches to close-readings of Lady Lumley's translation of Iphigenia at Aulis, see for example: Garwood, Sasha. Defiance, and Death: Jane Lumley and Euripides' Iphigineia', *Genre - An International Journal of Literature and the Arts* 28 (2007): 109; Straznicky, 'Jane Lumley: Humanist Translation and the Culture of Playreading'; Hodgson-Wright, 'Jane Lumley's Iphigenia at Aulis: Multum in Parvo, or, Less Is More'; Crane, Frank D. 'Euripides, Erasmus, and Lady Lumley', *The Classical Journal* 39, no. 4 (1 January 1944): 223–28; Greene, 'Lady Lumley and Greek Tragedy'.

one version of the play is different from what is implied in the other. For example, both prologues happen at a time of the day when it is dark outside, but while in Gamel's translation of Euripides, the scene happens in the very early morning, before dawn, in Lady Lumley's version, the prologue happens late at night. In Gamel's translation, the Old Man says that Sirius is "still sparkling in mid-heaven" and that "it's still quiet here at Aulis," implying that it is too early for Agamemnon to be already up writing letters. But in Lady Lumley's prologue, Senex says "it is not yet midnighte, as it may be iudged by the course of the seuen stares" and "What is the cause, O kinge, that at this time of nighte, thou comeste abrode?" with which the servant seems to be implying that it is too late for Agamemnon to be still out working.

There are also variations in action, by which I mean that the lines of the characters in one play presuppose a different type of activity, behaviour, or reaction to their interlocutor, compared to the lines in the other play. For example, when Menelaus intercepts the servant who is bringing the second letter to Clytemnestra, in Gamel's translation of Euripides's play, it is implied that Menelaus has already gotten a hold of the letter and has opened its seal, but the lines the servant says in Lady Lumley's version imply that his struggle with Menelaus for the letter is happening as they speak. In Gamel's translation, the first thing we see the Old Man say to Menelaus is "Menelaos, you're doing something terrible. You should not commit such an outrage!"[53] According to a translation note by Gamel, the word 'outrage' here refers to the act of opening the letter.[54] In Lady Lumley, we hear him saying: "Thou striueste in uaine, Menelaius, for I will not deliuer my letters to the," to which Menelaus responds "If thou wilte not deliuer them to me I will breake thy hede withe my mace."[55] Only towards the end of the scene, Menelaus prevails and gets the letter. The relevant difference is that, in Lady Lumley's, this struggle for the letter happens in front of the public.

Finally, there are differences in characterization. For example, when Agamemnon talks to his servant about Paris in the prologue, this helps us have an idea of who Agamemnon is and who Paris is. In Gamel's translation of Euripides, Agamemnon emphasizes to the Old Man the fact that Paris is a foreigner, something that would ensue implications for an

[53] Euripides and Gamel, 'Iphigenia at Aulis (Play)', 303.
[54] Euripides and Gamel, n. 47.
[55] Euripides and Lumley, *The Tragedie of Euripides Called Iphigeneia*, fol. 70.

audience in Ancient Greece, because of the tendency to xenophobic feelings they expressed. Paris's identity as foreigner is almost conflated with him being lowly and villainous:

> And then, from the East, he came,
> the one who judged the goddesses (or so the story has it)
> to Sparta, blooming in his fancy getup,
> sparkling with gold—Oriental pansy!
> He lusted after Helen, she after him.
> Since Menelaos was away, he snatched her up,
> went back to the cowbarns of his native land.[56]

In Lady Lumley's version, Agamemnon describes Paris as a noble young man whose personal characteristics are morally acceptable in her environment. He does not lust after Helen but falls in love with her. He does not snatch her, he takes her "priuelye" away:

> Paris, whoo, as the cõmon uoice saithe was iudge betwene the goddes of their bewtie, came to Lacedemon and he beinge a goodlie yonge man, and of noble parentage, began to fall in loue withe her and so takinge hir priuelye awaye, broughte hir to a litle uillage, uppon the hill Ida.[57]

Though the changes made by Lady Lumley seem small, sometimes timid, together they make a difference for the overall interpretation of the play, giving it a particular coherence in her cultural context. Indeed, all the characters seem to be functioning fully within a Christian world.

Like its Ancient Greek source, Lady Lumley's *The Tragedie of Euripides Called Iphigeneia* is also concerned with Agamemnon's ethical conundrum. The translation also resolves it via Iphigenia's decision to take upon herself the responsibility for Greece's freedom. The "lawfull cause" behind the need for her death is the "destruction of Troie and the welthe of grece:"

> Consider I praie you mother, for what a lawfull cause I shalbe slaine. Dothe not bothe the destruction of Troie, and also the welthe of grece, whiche is the mooste frutefull countrie of the worlde hange upon my deathe?[58]

[56] Euripides and Gamel, 'Iphigenia at Aulis (Play)', ll. 71–77.
[57] Euripides and Lumley, *The Tragedie of Euripides Called Iphigeneia*, fol. 67.
[58] Euripides and Lumley, fol. 90.

What is specific to Lady Lumley's abridged version of the story is that a different network of motivations emerges for Iphigenia's decision to die. Though Iphigenia still overtly says her motivation for volunteering to die is the glory of bringing the welfare of Greece, Lady Lumley's translation points also to a set of more immediate concerns. For example, when Iphigenia is about to leave for the temple of the goddess, in Gamel's translation, she says to her mother "You brought me up to be a light for Greece. I do not reject dying,"[59] while in Lady Lumley's version the emphasis on Greece is removed, and the focus is shifted to her mother's feelings: "I wolde not haue you to mourne for my cause, for I will not refuse to die."[60] An apparent small change, but which has important implications for the relationship between mother and daughter. In the first example, Clytemnestra's feelings are not of concern. In the second, Iphigenia shows empathy with her mother, noticing her suffering, even as she remains resolute in her decision to die.

Both versions of *Iphigenia at Aulis* dramatize the contradictions of a social contract that imposes a sharp division between private and public interests, and they do so by telling the story of a ruling family in conflict.[61] But each play does so from slightly different angles. In Gamel's translation of Euripides, Iphigenia starts off as a girl, playful, naïve, carefree—something that it shares with other translations, too. For example, when Iphigenia and Clytemnestra arrive at Aulis, Iphigenia calls Agamemnon "daddy,"[62] and a little while later blatantly asks him to ignore his obligations as a king: "Be with me now. Don't focus on your responsibilities."[63]

Lady Lumley's Iphigenia, on the other hand, starts already as a young adult who shows awareness of the unrealistic nature of the promises

[59] Euripides and Gamel, 'Iphigenia at Aulis (Play)', l. 1503.

[60] Euripides and Lumley, *The Tragedie of Euripides Called Iphigeneia*, fol. 94.

[61] Catherine Belsey asserts that "A discursive instability in the texts about women has the effect of withholding from women readers any single position which they can identify as theirs. And at the same time a corresponding instability is evident in the utterances attributed to women: they speak with equal conviction from incompatible subject-positions, displaying a discontinuity of being, an 'inconsistency' which is seen as characteristically feminine." This instability is precisely what the character of Iphigeneia embodies when she decides to give herself up for sacrifice for the sake of her country and her family. Belsey, Catherine. *The Subject of Tragedy: Identity and Difference in Renaissance Drama* (London & New York: Methuen, 1985), 149.

[62] 'Greetings! You did the right thing by bringing me here, Daddy.' Euripides and Gamel, 'Iphigenia at Aulis (Play)', v. 642.

[63] Euripides and Gamel, v. 646.

offered by that social contract dividing public from private. For example, when daughter and father first meet at her arrival in Aulis, Agamemnon gives her an obscure explanation about why he appears worried instead of happy, and Iphigenia shows an understanding of the unspoken "sondrie causes" that "disquiet" her father as a ruler:

> Agamemnon: You knowe daughter, that he whiche rulethe an hooste shall haue diuers occations to be trobled.
> Iphigeneia: Althoughe in dede a captaine ouer an hooste shall be disquieted withe sondrie causes, yet I praye you set aside all soche trobles, and be merie withe us whiche are therfore come unto you.[64]

In Gamel's translation of Euripides, Iphigenia's transition into adulthood comes only much later in the drama, when she, having learned the cruel rules of that tacit social contract that separates private from public interests, decides to accept them, attempting to claim these rules for herself, and trying to convince her mother that the glory of dying for Greece is the most desirable outcome[65]:

> Listen, Mother, what sorts of things have come to me as I've been thinking.
> Death has been decreed—for me and by me.
> I want to carry out this same act
> in a glorious way, casting all lowborn behavior aside.
> Look at it this way with me, Mother, see how well I reason:
> All of Greece, great Greece, is looking at me now!
> In me lies the setting forth of the ships, the ruin of the Trojans,
> and women, in the future, even if barbarians try something,
> never again to allow them to rob those happy women from Greece,
> once they have paid for the theft of Helen, whom Paris stole.
> I will fend off all these things by dying, and my glorious fame,
> as the woman who made Greece free, will become blest.
> Also, I should not love my life too much.
> You bore me as something shared with all Greeks, not just for yourself.[66]

[64] Euripides and Lumley, *The Tragedie of Euripides Called Iphigeneia*, fols 78–79.

[65] Burgess, Dana L. 'Lies and Convictions at Aulis', *Hermes* 132, no. 1 (2004): 37–55; Walsh, George B. 'Public and Private in Three Plays of Euripides', *Classical Philology*, 1979, 303–4.

[66] Euripides and Gamel, 'Iphigenia at Aulis (Play)', vv. 1373–1386.

Lady Lumley's Iphigenia, on the other hand, with a resilience that shows Christian undertones, still chooses to abide by that tacit social contract, which she senses is bound to fail, but does so in an attempt to save her family from further harm:

> Herken O mother I praye you unto my wordes for I perceiue you are angrie withe your husband, whiche you may not do, for you can not obtaine your purpose by that meanes […] Againe remember how I was not borne for your sake onlie, but rather for the cõmodite of my countrie, thinke you therfore that it is mete, that suche a companie of men beinge gathered together to reuenge the greate iniurie, whiche all grece hathe suffered shoulde be let of their iournye for my cause. Suerlie mother we can not speke againste this, for do you not thinke it to be better that I shulde die, then so many noble men to be let of their iournye for one womans sake?[67]

There is spiritual strength implied in Iphigeneia's formulation, a sense of altruism in being able to calmly reason about her mother's feelings—"I perceiue you are angrie withe your husband"—when her own death is imminent.[68] In reasoning with Clytemnestra, Iphigenia is once again showing her concern for her mother: this is the context for her reasoning. Iphigenia does not want her mother to be angry with her husband because that will not have good consequences for anybody involved. The end of this excerpt also points to a parallel between a woman's death for the greater good of "so many noble men," and Christ's death for the good of humankind. Diane Purkiss explains that this was a fairly common reading of the story of *Iphigenia at Aulis* in the sixteenth century.[69] This passage shows that Lady Lumley was considering Iphigeneia's reasoning within the discursive horizon available to a Catholic noblewoman in the sixteenth century such as herself.

Many cuts that Lady Lumley makes to background information also help emphasize Iphigenia's impulse to protect her family from being harmed as the main justification for the abruptness of her decision to die. In Lady Lumley's version, we have no access to many of the mythical clues that would justify Iphigenia's desire for glory. In the absence of these mythical explanations, her implied altruism takes more prominence.

[67] Euripides and Lumley, *The Tragedie of Euripides Called Iphigeneia*, 92.
[68] Euripides and Lumley, 92.
[69] Purkiss, 'Introduction'.

In Lady Lumley's version, Achilles's reaction to Iphigenia's announcement supports this reading as well. Expressing himself with a temperate, polite vocabulary, he acknowledges Iphigenia's choice as stemming from her pondering the best option, and stands by Iphigenia:

> Trulie I wonder gretelie at the bouldenes of your minde. And bicause you seme to be so willinge to die, I can not speake againste you: yet neuertheles I will promise to helpe you still, leste you shulde happen to chaunge your minde.[70]

In Gamel's version, Achilles is much less nobly behaved; he is almost condescending to Iphigenia. He says that he thinks she will change her mind once she sees where she got herself into—"You will take me up on my words, perhaps, when you see the knife close to your throat"—implying that Iphigenia does not realize what she is doing in choosing to die. He makes himself available to save Iphigenia from herself, from her own "thoughtlessness:"

> Brave spirit! I have nothing more to say in answer,
> since this course seems right to you. Your thought
> is noble. Why shouldn't someone speak the truth?
> Nevertheless, you might still, perhaps, change your mind about this.
> So you can understand the things I've said,
> I will go now and place my arms near the altar,
> so as not to let it happen, but keep you from dying.
> You will take me up on my words, perhaps,
> when you see the knife close to your throat.
> I won't allow you to die because of your own thoughtlessness.
> I will go now, with these arms of mine, to the goddess's altar,
> and there I'll watch carefully for your arrival.[71]

Aristotle in his *Poetics* called attention to the fact that Iphigenia's character starts off having almost exclusively personal interests and then changes to having exclusively political ones, and this assessment is corroborated in Gamel's translation. Aristotle criticized this change as a lack of consistency:

[70] Euripides and Lumley, *The Tragedie of Euripides Called Iphigeneia*, 92.
[71] Euripides and Gamel, 'Iphigenia at Aulis (Play)', vv. 1421–1432.

> [the character] should be consistent. Even if the original be inconsistent and offers such a character to the poet for representation, still he must be consistently inconsistent… An example of … inconsistent character [is] *Iphigeneia in Aulis*, for the suppliant Iphigeneia is not at all like her later character.[72]

Classical scholar Dana L. Burgess analyses the "play's concentration upon the formation of convictions from lies," explaining the shift in Iphigenia's character through a more generous lens.[73] For Burgess, Iphigenia renounces her well-being because she acquires the (unwarranted) conviction that her death will ensure the welfare of her country. Aristotle's interpretation is very famous, and Burgess's is better argued, but Lady Lumley's text opens yet another possibility: perhaps Iphigeneia does appear inconsistent, or deluded, but this is due to her contingently manoeuvring the options she had available to keep her family safe, and help her father save the country.

In Lady Lumley's text, Iphigeneia's sudden choice to die is of course still present, but it is further complicated by her understanding that her personal and political concerns are entangled beyond her ability to separate them. She takes responsibility for a public duty that is her father's, and does so while also claiming ownership of the glory that will come with it, but she never gives up on her concern for her family. In fact, her family, particularly her mother, seems to be very much at the centre of her sudden decision, standing almost as the trigger for it. In other words, Iphigeneia's decision to die is tied to her desire to protect both her family *and* Greece, tied to her desire for glory *and* for a Christian virtue of selflessness.

By introducing Iphigenia as a volunteer for sacrifice, Euripides's made her into the bearer of the solution to Agamemnon's conundrum. She steps in and takes on her father's responsibility for ensuring that the army sails. Within Euripides's logic of the story (due to our knowledge of the treatment of the rest of the myth in other plays), we know that her volunteering for sacrifice will be a very provisory solution to the danger her family is under: Clytemnestra will murder her husband as a consequence of her having lost her daughter. But we have no indication that Lady Lumley knew the outcome of the myth for Clytemnestra, as other plays by

[72] 'Aristotle, Poetics, Section 1454a, English Translation', accessed 24 July 2014, http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus:text:1999.01.0056:section=1454a

[73] Burgess, Dana L. 'Lies and Convictions at Aulis', 55.

Euripides did not enjoy the same popularity as *Iphigenia at Aulis* and *Hecuba* did following their translations by Erasmus.[74] Thus we can infer that Lady Lumley was likely working with the story of *Iphigenia at Aulis* as a self-contained narrative, which makes Iphigenia appear like a selfless, Christ-like figure in Lady Lumley's view.

As Lady Lumley reshaped the text within her sixteenth-century, familial, Christian framework, especially through cuts and abbreviations, Iphigeneia's motivations for giving herself up for sacrifice are expanded and acquire an added nuance. What in Euripides's text could be understood as an intrinsically bad choice—that of allowing one's own death based on poorly supported convictions, as Burgess indicates—becomes, in Lady Lumley's version, a more complex, situated one.[75]

In Lady Lumley's version, Iphigeneia finds in her love for her family and in her implied Christian convictions the strength to convince herself to take up the task to save her country. Lady Lumley's version of the text complicates the plot's gendered opposition of personal and political interests; in fact, it complicates the definition of what constitutes a good choice between these two types of interest.[76] In this logic, Lady Lumley's translation presents a story where glory for Iphigeneia comes from her decision based on Christian principles, and is something rightly deserved from a religious point of view.

It is in slight shifts that Lady Lumley's particular inflections come into play to shape a version of the story that intersects with Euripides's but also has its own distinct implications, notably an implied religious framework that seems to sustain the drama, shaping the conceptual space where the characters act. In Lady Lumley's historical context, these motivations seemed utterly plausible, and even desirable, as the forces driving the story forward.

As Catholic nobles, the relationship between politics and religion was ever-present for those in the Arundel household; they could not really manifest separately from one another. That Lady Lumley translated the play into English might in part be explained by her father's possible interest in the themes treated in *Iphigenia at Aulis*. Arundel had a reputation for not being fond of foreign languages, preferring to conduct his affairs

[74] Purkiss, 'Introduction'.
[75] Burgess, Dana L. 'Lies and Convictions at Aulis'.
[76] Belsey, *The Subject of Tragedy*, chap. 6.

in English.[77] But he seemed to have been able to read fluently in Latin, as his book collection prior to the addition of Cranmer's, as well as the letters from Lady Lumley, suggest. The play could have been read aloud among the family members, which could explain not only the translation into English but also the adaptations Lady Lumley performs as she abridges the text of the play.[78]

In Conclusion

As is evident from the writings Lady Lumley produced, her education process was far from being a one-way street.[79] She received an education appropriate to her ranking and family, and in turn, she started to perform her own version of it through her choices and attitudes. She started to think for herself through the tools that this education brought to her. Through her process of translation, Lady Lumley was performing the type of political-religious thought fostered at the Arundel household. Indeed, today education theory widely accepts that education can never be simply a matter of transfer of knowledge from a knower to a learner, but a process

[77] George Puttenham cites this anecdote about the Earl of Arundel: "For on a time passing from England towards Italie by her maiesties licence, he was very honorably enterteined at the Court of Brussels, by the Lady Duches of Parma, Regent there: and sitting at a banquet with her, where also was the Prince of Orange, with all the greatest Princes of the state, the Earle, though he could reasonably well speake French, would not speake one French word, but all English, whether he asked any question, or answered it, but all was done by Truchemen. In so much as the Prince of Orange maruelling at it, looked a side on that part where I stoode a beholder of the feast, and sayd, I maruell your Noblemen of England doe not desire to be better languaged in the forraine languages. This word was by and by reported to the Earle. Quoth the Earle againe, tell my Lord the Prince, that I loue to speake in that language, in which I can best vtter my mind and not mistake." Puttenham, George. *The Arte of English Poesie* (Project Gutenberg, 2005), chap. XXIII, https://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/16420.

[78] For further discussion of this hypothesis, see Wynne-Davies, Marion. 'Representations of Relations on the Political Stage within the Fitzalan/Lumley Household', in *Women Writers and Familial Discourse in the English Renaissance* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 63–88.

[79] Or what educator Paulo Freie called the "banking system of education" where the teacher deposits knowledge into the receptacle, that is, the student. In the case of Lady Lumley, we can appreciate the active role that Freie credits pupils to have in their own education. Freire, Paulo and Ramos, Myra Bergman. *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (Continuum Publishing Company, 1970).

where the subject matter is constantly reworked, performed.[80] In her private practice of knowledge production through translation and letter writing, Lady Jane Lumley could bring classical texts into her own environment, engaging her educational background in her creative process in the context of sixteenth-century English political, public, and private expectations.

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[80] Freire writes: "Problem-posing education affirms men and women as beings in the process of becoming—as unfinished, uncompleted beings in and with a likewise unfinished reality. Indeed, in contrast to other animals who are unfinished, but not historical, people know themselves to be unfinished; they are aware of their incompletion. In this incompletion and this awareness lie the very roots of education as an exclusively human manifestation. The unfinished character of human beings and the transformational character of reality necessitate that education be an ongoing activity." Freire and Ramos, 84; See also Claudia W. Ruitenberg's discussion of performativity in education. Succinctly put: "If the subject is both constrained and enabled by the discourses in which it emerges as subject, then in order to understand the possibilities for agency, the subject has to understand the genealogy and functioning of these discourses. Since the development of agency is at the heart of education, I would argue that education generally ought to be more attentive to the inherited nature of subjectivity. Educators must conceive of students, and students of themselves, not as autonomous agents, nor as passive recipients of tradition, but rather as subjects whose actions and identities both depend on, and can make changes to, discourses that precede and exceed them." Ruitenberg, Claudia W. 'Discourse, Theatrical Performance, Agency: The Analytic Force of "Performativity" in Education', *Philosophy of Education*, 2007, 265–66.

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Camilla Herculiana (Erculiani): Private Practices of Knowledge Production

Jelena Bakić

Abstract This chapter analyses the paratextual and epistolary rhetorical strategies connected with private practices of knowledge production used by the sixteenth-century Paduan natural philosopher, apothecary, and writer Camilla Herculiana (Erculiani). To legitimize her authorship, she used different rhetorical strategies, but her self-portrayal as a woman, housewife, mother, and wife, and her references to household maintenance, solving daily problems, and being free to learn only in the hours of the night, furnish fruitful terrain for a rhetorical-cultural analysis. Such an analysis will shed important light on the relationships between the private and public spheres, gender hierarchies, and the meaning of privacy in late sixteenth-century knowledge-making.

Keywords Camilla Herculiana • Natural philosophy • Sixteenth century • Gendered rhetorics • Paratext • Epistolary strategies

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> *The work of* caring for my children, *the burden* of running my household, my obedience *to my husband, and* my fragile *health—none of these weighs on my decision* to publish *so much as the knowledge that many malicious minds will condemn my efforts, and writings, and consider them* frivolous and worthless just as they consider women of our age to be such.
> *(Camilla Herculiana e Greghetta, 1584)*[1]

In 1584, a book by Camilla Herculiana was published in Kraków, entitled *Lettere di philosophia naturale, di Camilla Herculiana, speciala alle tre stelle in Padoua, Indirizzate alla Serenissima Regina di Polonia: nella quale si tratta la natural causa delli Diluvij, et il natural formatione dell'Arco celeste. In Cracovia. Nella stamperia di Lazaro, nel'Anno 1584.*[2] It was written in Italian, by a woman from Padua, and as we can read already from the title, she wrote about themes not so typical for women: the theory of the natural origins of the Great Deluge, the natural disposition of man, and the natural formation of the rainbow. It might have been a limited edition, as only four examples of this book can be traced to this day.[3]

Herculiana's book was forgotten for centuries, and the first detailed analysis appeared only in 2013. Eleonora Carinci reconstructed the life and work of the author and provided highly important insights into the

[1] *Herculiana, 1584. Translated in Ray, Meredith Kennedy.* Daughters of Alchemy. *Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2015, 120–121. Herculiana: "Né il far questo mi dà noia ancor ch'io habbia il travaglio d'allevar figliuoli, il peso del governo della casa, e l'obedienza al marito, e la mia complessione non troppo sana, quanto mi dà noia il conoscere che da molti velati da spirito maligno saranno queste mie fatiche, o scritti biasimate, e tanto più saranno tenute vane e di poca stima, per esser tenute tali le Donne de nostri tempi." Itallics are mine.*

[2] *Letters on Natural Philosophy, by Camilla Herculiana, an Apotechary at "Tre stelle" in Padua, addressed to the Most Serene Queen of Poland, in which is discussed the Natural Cause of the Flood, and the natural formation of the rainbow.* In Krakow. In publishing house Lazaro, in 1584. All translation in this chapter are mine, if not otherwise specified.

[3] Carinci, Eleonora, "Una speziala padovana: Lettere di philosophia naturale di Camilla Erculiani (1584)", *The Society for Italian studies,* Manchester, 2013, 206. She mentions that only four copies of the book have been identified, in the Biblioteca Civica, Padua, the Biblioteca Alessandrina, Rome, the Houghton Library, Harvard University, and the Biblioteca PAN, Kórnik. For Italian libraries see: edit16.iccu.sbn.it/web_iccu/imain.htm. I have used a digitalized copy of the Kórnik library, available at: https://www.wbc.poznan.pl/dlibra/publication/395210/edition/308563, last access on 1 November 2021.

cultural practices connected with female literary and scientific production.[4] Following her main findings, important works have been done in English and Italian.[5] In 2021, the first English translation of her letters was published.[6] In 2020, Sandra Plastina provided an important philosophical and historical analysis of letters on natural philosophy by Camilla Herculiana and Margherita Sarrocchi, demonstrating that women authors contributed to a great extent to science in early modern period, against traditional historiographic and philosophical commonplace assumptions.[7] In 2016, Maude Vanhaelen discovered two letters sent from the Venetian patrician Sebastiano Erizzo (1525–1585) to Camilla Herculiana in 1584, the same year her book was published.[8] These letters clearly refer to other works of hers, works that have been lost and as yet remain unknown to us.

At the very beginning of *Lettere di philosophia naturale*, Camilla Herculiana represented the opposition between her domestic life and her intellectual pursuits. On the one hand, there is a sense of privacy from her home and her obligations within this space: running the household, raising children, and taking care of her husband, to whom she needed to be obedient. On the other hand, there is her decision to publish her work, produce knowledge, enter into scientific debates, and enter the sixteenth-century 'public sphere.'[9] These two spheres, the private as well as the public are defined and shaped by her female gender and her exposure to the male eye—who might condemn her writings.

Her writings indeed brought forth suspicion. The archival documentation, as shown by Carinci,[10] shows that in the period between 1585 and 1588, Camilla Herculiana was questioned by the Inquisition (probably

[4] Carinci, *Una speziala padovana*, 202–229.

[5] See: Ray, *Daughters of Alchemy*; Plastina, 2014a.

[6] See Carinci, Eleonora. *Camilla Erculiani, Letters on Natural Philosophy: The Scientific Correspondence of a Sixteenth-Century Pharmacist, with Related Texts*. The Other Voice in Early Modern Europe, the Toronto Series 77. Toronto, Ontario: Iter Press, 2021.

[7] Plastina, Sandra. "Letters on Natural Philosophy and New Science: Camilla Erculiani (Padua 1584) and Margherita Sarrocchi (Rome 1612)", in eds. Ebbersmeyer, Sabrina, and Paganini, Gianni, *Women, Philosophy and Science, Italy and Early Modern Europe*, 2020, 55–80.

[8] Vanhaelen, Maude. "Platonism in 16th-century Padua: Two Unpublished Letters from Sebastiano Erizzo to Camilla Erculiani", *Bruniana & Campanelliana. Ricerche filosofiche e materiali storico-testuali*. Pisa; Roma: Fabrizio Serra Editore, 2016.

[9] Emden, Christian J., and David Midgley, eds. *Changing Perceptions of the Public Sphere*. 1st ed. New York; Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2012.

[10] Carinci, *Una speziala padovana*, 202–229.

Paduan), because of the ideas in her only published book. The trial is documented in a book by Jacopo Menochio, *Consiliorum sive responsarum* from 1604, appearing on four pages under the rubric "Consilium DCCLXVI."[11] The outcome of the process is unknown, although, as it will be shown further, it can be assumed that she escaped this persecution.

This chapter is divided into five parts. In the first part, I provide biographical and contextual data important to better understand the author and her text within its larger historical and sociocultural framework. In the second part, I analyse the paratexts of her book, focusing on Camilla's approach to gender and knowledge and the rhetoric of modesty. I will juxtapose her knowledge production in contrast to housework, focusing on her self-fashioning as a housewife and mother side-by-side with her framing of herself as a philosopher. The same approach will be applied to the third part of this chapter, dedicated to Camilla's letters. In the fourth part, I briefly present two unpublished letters by Sebastiano Erizzo, a Venetian humanist and numismatist, to Camilla Herculiana. The last part focuses on the Inquisitional trial, which shows how philosophical and natural philosophy knowledge was received and interpreted when coming from Camilla Herculiana. The aim of this chapter is to show that by applying the historical approach and positioning Camilla and her work in a broader context: geographical (Italy, Padua, Poland), temporal (late Renaissance), familial (educated family), and philosophical (as a natural philosopher in her own right), we can open new lines for the investigation and understanding of domesticity and privacy in the history of knowledge.

Herculiana's Private Life and Connections: Biographical and Contextual Framework

Camilla Herculiana (Erculiani)[12] was born in Padua, as Camilla (Gregetta) Greghetti. The dates of her birth and death are still unknown. Neither is it known where she was buried. However, the second half of the sixteenth

[11] Menochio, Jacopo, "Consilium DCCLXVI, 766", *Consiliorum sive responsorum*, Frankfurt, Andreas Wécheli and Johann Gymnich, 1604–1616, 180–183.

[12] In this chapter, I use the version of her surname as it appears in her book, although the version Erculiani is accepted by the majority of the scholarship. To write female surnames finishing in 'a' (Herculiana) was a common practice in the sixteenth century. Camilla signed her dedicatory epistle with the two surnames, Camilla Herculiana é Gregetta.

century should be taken as the timeframe of her life. She was one of the six children of the merchant Andrea Greghetti.[13] Greghetti was a member of the guild of pharmacists, guild of pharmacists as a merchant.[14] Camilla had two brothers (one of her brothers graduated from the Faculty of Law in Padua), and three sisters. The identity of her mother is unknown. Camilla Herculiana was married twice. Her first husband was Alovisio Stella, a pharmacist at the Paduan pharmacy 'Tre stelle', located in the centre of Padua, close to the university. They had at least one child, a son called Melchiorre (Marchioro). After the death of her first husband (between 1568 and 1572), Camilla married another *speciale* or pharmacist, Giacomo Herculiani, in 1573. He was active in the guild of pharmacists in Padua from 1581 until 1601. They worked together in the pharmacy of her first husband. They had five children born in the period between 1573 and 1581. Her writings appeared in the pauses between her pregnancies, according to the dates on letters and dates of her children's baptism.[15]

Camilla Herculiana did not have an aristocratic background, but she managed to combine her profound interest in philosophy with practical knowledge, which was something that she insisted upon in her writings. It is probably mainly thanks to male members of her family and later, thanks to her two marriages, that she gained access to education and knowledge. Her father, Andrea Greghetti, was a merchant, a profession that in the early modern period included vast education and different interests, from economy to science. Other early modern women writers had merchant fathers, being the daughters of educated men, such as a Venetian Lucrezia Marinella (1571–1653), English Aphra Behn (1640–1689), and English Mary Astell (1660–1731). Merchants were expected to live an exemplary life, to serve as a model to others, and, as Cox puts it, "their culture often leaned towards the vernacular, rather than Latin. Writing was a key element in the merchant's skill-set."[16] As such, educating their daughters was in line with their professional ethos.

Another merchant, the economist, scientist, diplomat, and humanist, Benedetto Cotrugli (1416–1469), in his book about trade and the perfect

[13] Carinci, *Una speziala padovana*, 205.

[14] See Carinci, *Una speziala padovana*, 206.

[15] Carinci, *Una speziala padovana*, 217. It is unknown if Camilla was a member of the guild.

[16] Cox, Virginia. *A Short History of the Italian Renaissance*. London: I. B. Tauris, 2016, 134.

merchant, *Della mercatura e del mercante perfetto* 1458,[17] apart from instructions on trade and prescribed roles for a merchant, gives advice about other aspects of life, such as education, religious practices, and marriage. He explained in detail the reasons why he decided to educate his daughters. After praising the power of knowledge, calling it "the salt of the soul," he explains that although many reproached him because of his decision to educate his daughters and provide them with the opportunity to learn grammar and Virgil's verses in Latin, he decided to do so not only to make them good grammarians and rhetoricians, but to make them reasonable and wise, with a good, solid, and healthy memory, which is the highest dowry one can have.[18] The fact that he needed to defend the act of educating his daughters is not unique; humanists whose daughters were educated explained the importance of Christian reading for them, and not rarely would they send them to the convents where they would gain an education.[19] The rhetoric used by Cotrugli to defend this idea related to the 'dowry,' as the literacy and education in women's cases made it easier to enter into marriage.[20] Greghetti likely followed a similar logic to instil the passion for knowledge in Camilla. Moreover, it seems that Camilla was the eldest of the children, which might be another reason she received a humanist education. It was common for the eldest to receive education in order to help their fathers in household management.[21]

Besides her education as a merchant's daughter, Camilla's two husbands were crucial to her intellectual formation. Her identity as a wife and her marriage relationship with both her husbands, in the context of household and pharmacy management, are important in order to understand

[17] Cotrugli, Benedetto (Kotrulj, Benedikt). *Libro del arte dela mercatura: Knjiga o vještini trgovanja* (1573), edited and translated Zdenka Janeković-Romer. Zagreb: HAZU, 20091573. Although the book was written in 1458, the first printed version appeared in 1573 in Venice.

[18] Cotrugli, *Libro del arte*, 309: "Et pero multi me anno ripresso peche io faccio impare le mee figliole gramaticha etrecitare multi versi di Virgilio a mente. Faccio non solamente per farle perfecte gramatiche et retoriche, ma per farle prudente, savie, e di bona, salda et sana memoria, dele qual cosse nulla po essere magior dote a chi a sentimento, beato lo giovene chi visse abate".

[19] See Whitehead, J. Barbara, ed. *Women's Education in Early Modern Europe. A History 1500–1800*. New York: Garland Pub., 1999.

[20] See "Learning the Virtues: Convent Schools and Female Culture in Renaissance Florence," in *Women's Education in Early Modern Europe: A History, 1500–1800*, ed. Barbara J. Whitehead. New York: Garland, 1999, 3–46.

[21] See Whitehead, *Women's Education*.

her public acting. Herculiana's work in the apothecary shop, close to the University of Padua, offered a unique place for a woman to exchange knowledge in a public space. Sixteenth-century Padua was indeed a hub of knowledge, and Italian culture "showed an openness towards the participation of women in intellectual discourses that was hardly matched in any other European country of the period."[22] Already one century before Herculiana's book appeared, Cassandra Fedele gave a public speech in praise of arts and sciences at the University of Padua in 1487.[23] A century after Herculiana's book, Elena Lucrezia Cornaro (1646–1684) became the first woman to receive a doctoral degree in philosophy in 1678.

As a *speciala* working at such a well-located apothecary shop, Camilla was in a great position to collect and share knowledge. The usual English translation of the word *speciale* and the feminine form *speciala* is 'apothecary,' but the meaning of this noun is broader, and it refers to "spicer-apothecaries, indicating those who made and sold botanical and pharmaceutical remedies (which often included spices)."[24] *Gli speciali*, in fact, needed to possess a vast education, from botany to Latin, and today there is the expression in Italian 'to write using letters of speziali,'[25] which means to write and to express ideas clearly.

Camilla took pride in her knowledge, and in her book, she presented herself as a natural philosopher. Natural philosophy at the time was the phrase used to denote the study of nature and the physical universe, closer to science, physics, biology, and philosophy. In its broader sense, it was dominated by Aristotelianism and influenced by Hippocrates's humoral theory—and Galen's reinterpretation of it. It also included the philosophy of Plato, and some occult sciences, such as cabala, magic, astrology, and alchemy. *Philosophia naturalis* was taught for the first time at the University of Padua in 1577, and Professor Giacomo Zabarella (1533–1589) held it until his death.[26] Camilla Herculiana enters directly into the philosophical discussion on natural philosophy with her contemporary Alessandro

[22] Ebbersmeyer, Sabrina, and Gianni Paganini, eds. *Women, Philosophy and Science: Italy and Early Modern Europe*. Vol. 4. Women in the History of Philosophy and Sciences. Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2020, vii.

[23] Fedele, Cassandra. *Oratio pro Bertucio Lamberto*.Modena: 1487.

[24] Ray, *Daughters of Alchemy*, 115.

[25] In Italian: "Scrivere a lettere da speziali".

[26] See: Wallace, William A. "Zabarella, Jacopo," in *Encyclopedia of the Renaissance* (Vol. 6), edited by Paul F.Grendler. New York: Scribner, 1999, 337–339.

Piccolomini and with, in Camilla's words, the "second part of his natural philosophy" in the second book.[27]

Camilla Herculiana é Gregetta, *Lettere di philosophia naturale* (1584)

The book *Lettere di philosophia naturale* (1584) was published in Kraków, Poland. The reasons for publishing the work there most likely relate to the cultural connections between Padua and Poland. According to Carinci,[28] it might also be the strategic authorial decision to escape the censorship. Herculiana's book was published at the printing house Stamperia di Lazaro, which was also known under the name Officina Lazari. It was run by Jan Januskowski, a former Paduan student.

The responsibility for the title of the book was mainly in the printer's hands in the early modern period. However, it is unknown how the title of "Letters of Natural Philosophy by the *speciala* Camilla Herculiana" came to be. Such a framing emphasized how she entered the public space as a female author, philosopher, and apothecary. It became a statement that Herculiana's knowledge was recognized beyond the apothecary shop where she worked with her husband and that she had an intellectual presence as an author dedicated to scientific and philosophical issues. Her book managed to meaningfully contribute to several different debates, from the *querelle des femmes*[29] (debate about gender roles and identities) to natural philosophy.

As the title implies, the core of the book consists of epistolary writings. Herculiana corresponded on philosophical and scientific subjects with Giorgio Garnero (1577), a learned Frenchman who lived in Venice (according to the closure of the letter), and with the Hungarian intellectual Martino di Berzevicze (1581) Márton Berzeviczy (1538 – 1596).

[27] Herculiana, no pagination: "Come benissimo dichiara Alessandro Piccolomini nella seconda parte della sua philosophia naturale nel secondo libro".

[28] Carinci, *Una speziala padovana*, 215.

[29] Literature concerning women and their roles within the society appeared in Italian context mainly in the sixteenth century. For general ideas about *querelle des femmes*, see Zimmermann, Margarete. "The *Querelle des Femmes* as Cultural Studies Paradigm" in *Time, Space, and Women's Lives in Early Modern Europe*, edited by Anne Jacobson Schutte, et al. Kirksville: Truman State University Press, 2001, 23. Currently is underway an important project on male voices in the debate *querelle des femmes, see: https://menforwomen.es/en* (last accessed 1 November 2021).

The book consists of four letters, three of them written by Herculiana. While she decided to exchange philosophical letters with men, she chose to dedicate her book to another woman, the Polish Queen, Anna Jagiellon, in her dedicatory epistle.

Paratextual Analysis

Herculiana's *Lettere di Philosophia* consists of several different parts. It starts with the dedicatory poem "To Students of Philosophy." The poem is followed by a two-and-a-half-page dedicatory epistle dedicated to Queen Anna of Poland, dated 25 February 1584. Next comes two pages of the dedicatory text "to the reader," which can be read both as a dedicatory epistle and a preface. Then, there is another poem, a Latin encomiastic writing by Andreas Schonaeus (Andrea Eumorphus Glogovicen), a Silesian scholar who studied philosophy in Padua. Finally, we have the four letters, of which three are signed by Herculiana.

The book's first poem is an unsigned dedicatory of ten verses called "To Students of Philosophy," following the rhyme scheme ABA ABC BB BB. Although there is no claim of authorship, it might be assumed that it was written by Camilla Herculiana, as was common in the case of dedicatory verses at the beginning of books. The prefatory function of this poem should be highlighted, as already the first page of the book limits its readership—students of philosophy. If we consider that students of philosophy were mainly men, then the male readers are requested to acknowledge the significance of Camilla Herculiana, and to spread the fame, to "make praises to be heard, such as are worthy of Camilla, and of you too."[30] If the addressees are students of philosophy, it indicates that the author is actually one of them, as she goes on to write on such topics.

After the dedicatory poem, there follows a two-and-a-half-page long dedicatory epistle signed by Herculiana entitled "To the Most Serene Queen Anna Queen of Poland, Grand Duchess of Lithuania, etc."[31] It was signed in Padua on 25 February 1584. The dedicatee is a woman, Anna Jagiellon, who was Queen of Poland and Grand Duchess of Lithuania,

[30] Herculiana, Camilla. *Lettere di philosophia naturale, di Camilla Herculiana, speciala alle tre stelle in Padoua, indirizzate alla serenissima Regina di Polonia: nella quale si tratta la natural causa delli diluuij, et il natural temperamento dell'huomo, et la natural formation*. Cracovia: stamperia di Lazaro, 1584, no pagination: "Fate che di Helicona, e fonti suoi, / Da gli Hesperi, a gli Eoi / Lodi si sentan poi, / Di Camilla che sien degne, e di voi".

[31] Herculiana, *Lettere*, no pagination: "Alla serenissima regina Anna, Regina di Polonia, Gran Duchessa di Lihuania etc".

from 1575 to 1586. The public dedicatee[32] becomes the guarantor of the quality of the book and the protector of her work, ready to "defend this work from malevolent people."[33] Moreover, the protector is also the monarch, as Herculiana mentions that her previous intention was to dedicate the book to his Majesty the King, Queen Anna's husband, but "knowing that he was occupied in the wars, I did not want to give him this labour."[34] Using the topoi of the gift and modesty at the same time, she writes how she decided to recommend to her "these few efforts of mine, believing in your generosity, which will not despise this small gift: being by a woman who wants to illustrate those contemporary women, which is, in fact, my wish."[35] In Herculiana's words, her intent was to show that women are as capable as men in *science*.[36] In order to prove her statement, what follows is a rhetorical strategy of exempla of significant women.[37] Herculiana refers to Mirthis as a giant woman, mentioning that she is put together with seven Lydian kings because of her eloquence and knowledge. She further mentions Nicostrata, Evander's wife, for her erudition, Cornelia (c.189–110 B.C.), Roman princess, mother of Gracchi brothers, Tiberius and Gaius Gracchus, for her doctrine. In fact, Nicostrata was Evander's

[32] Genette, Gerard. *Paratexts: Thresholds of Interpretation*. Translated by Jane E. Lewin. Literature, Culture, Theory. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997, 131. Genette distinguishes two types of dedicatees: private and public. "By private dedicatee I mean a person, known to the public or not, to whom a work is dedicated in the name of a personal relationship, or other […] The public dedicatee is a person who is more or less well known but with whom the author, by his dedication, indicates a relationship that is public in nature—intellectual, artistic, political, or other".

[33] Herculiana, *Lettere,* no pagination: "a difendere questa opera da malivoli".

[34] Herculiana, *Lettere,* no pagination: "ma conoscendo la occupata nelle guerre, non ho voluto darli questo travaglio."

[35] Herculiana, *Lettere,* no pagination: "Ho voluto raccomandargli queste mie poche fatiche, fidandomi nella generosità sua, che non sprezzerà il piccolo dono: benché di donna che desidera di illustrare quelle de suoi tempi, che tale in vero è il desiderio mio."

[36] Herculiana, *Lettere,* no pagination: "far conoscere al mondo, che noi siamo atte a tutte le scientie, come gli huomini."

[37] Lists of exemplary women both past and contemporary were usually taken from previous texts, such as Boccaccio and his *De claris mulieribus* (c.1380), who in turn based his work on Valerius Maximus, Livy, Hyginus, Tacitus, and Plutarch's *Mulierium virtutes*. Herculiana refers to Mirthis, Nocostrata, and Cornelia, all elevated because of their knowledge, wisdom, and erudition. Likely source for these exempla might *be Reloj de Principes and Libro Aureo,* by Antonio de Guevara. The Italian translation appeared in 1544, under the title *Vita, gesti, costumi, discorsi, lettere di M. Aurelio imperatore, sapientissimo filosofo & oratore eloquentissimo, Vinegia*, 1544.

mother. They are elevated because of their *knowledge, wisdom, and erudition*. By using classical examples of women as carriers of knowledge, Herculiana demonstrated that she was not alone in claiming the space for women in the intellectual milieu. Together with the exempla, the topos of the offering works as a gift, typical in a dedicatory genre, also served as a performative act. The offering of the book as a present to a person who had some kind of power was often highly important for the author, as it was difficult to guarantee the outcome of the book.[38]

The *narratio* continues with the *topos* of the gift: "I wanted to send under the shadow of your majesty these my *few eves*, being convinced *by many of your compatriot*s, that you would like it, as you are very virtuous and a lover of sciences."[39] She refers to her work as her "few eves" or later "my efforts", hoping that if the dedicatee reads it, she would find in this book "things worthy of beautiful intellects,"[40] where the reader can learn much about "*the truth* of the flood, *the reason* why people mutated, and *the true reason* for the appearance of the rainbow."[41] However, all these themes should be considered by "illustrious persons and those who reign the world."[42] The attempt to justify the book's publication by reference to the truth was one of the most frequently employed strategies in the early modern period, together with the rhetoric of modesty.

Camilla refers to her work, in line with the rhetoric of modesty, as few badly composed lines, few lines, small gift, few efforts, few eves, and she portrays herself as a knowledgeable woman who discussed with Polish intellectuals ("your compatriots"). She is the one who produced the scientific work, with the knowledge that it might be found inappropriate by authorities and, as such, it was strategically double-protected by the Queen and King of Poland. The rhetoric of modesty was based "on a simple inversion: the less physical, social, or political power one presents oneself

[38] Braida, Ludovica. *Stampa e cultura in Europa tra XV e XVI secolo*. Roma; Bari: Laterza, 2000, 72: "da questo punto di vista, la dedica se inscrive in una logica di restituzione di un dono (elargito dal mecenate) e rivela i rapporti di potere e le modalità attraverso le quali si regge l'ancora fragile repubblica delle lettere".

[39] Herculiana, *Lettere,* no pagination: "Ho voluto mandare sotto l'ombra di V.M. queste mie poche vigilie, essendo fatta certissima da molti delli suoi creati, che li seranno grate, per conoscerla virtuosissima, et amatrice delle scinetie." Italics are mine.

[40] Herculiana, *Lettere*, no pagination: "Li trovarà cose degne di belli intelletti."

[41] Herculiana, *Lettere,* no pagination: "Della verità del diluvio, della causa della mutatione delli huomini, et la vera causa dell'apparitione del arco celeste" (emphasis mine).

[42] Herculiana,*Lettere,* no pagination: "cose tutte degne da essere considerate da persone illustre, et che reggono il mondo."

as having, the more rhetorical power one has."[43] Gender, however, has implications for this rhetorical power. For women, modesty was an expected quality, so downplaying her own work served a double function to Herculiana, at the same time latching to the recognizable rhetoric of modesty and showing that she understood her place as a woman stepping into a territory in which she might be seen with suspicion. Threading carefully was crucial for her argument, as Camilla Herculiana entered in the debate of *querelle des femmes* with this dedicatory letter, taking the position of the defender of female equality with men in the sciences, exposing herself and the dedicatee as examples of women of her time, as a logical continuation to the list of learned women from the past.

The dedication "To the readers"[44] is the most intriguing part of Herculiana's paratext in the context of privacy and knowledge production. The dedication to the reader, that is, to the real private addressee of the work, has two functions in this case: it is a dedicatory epistle while still fulfilling the prefatory function. This peritext, almost two pages long, opens with a clear use of the rhetorical device *causa scribendi*, and the *topos* of modesty regarding the work. It shows us how Camilla Herculiana understood the female public role and how she positioned herself and her work within the relation private/public:

> It will without doubt marvel somebody that *I, a woman,*[45] decided to *write and publish* things which do not belong *(according to customs of our time)* to a woman: but if *they* want to consider, with good judgement and without any affection, *the change with the times and states, and people, and the material of which they are made;* they will understand that the woman *does not lack those providences and virtues which it is possible to find in men*: and it is clear that they can marvel a lot that I *without seeing the book*s, decided to publish these few badly composed lines, beginning from the middle of the subject.[46]

[43] Dunn, Kevin. *Pretexts of Authority: The Rhetoric of Authorship in the Renaissance Preface*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1994, 6.

[44] Herculiana, *Lettere,* no pagination: "A lettori".

[45] Emphasis mine.

[46] Herculiana, *Lettere,* no pagination: "Parrà senza dubio maraviglia ad alcuno, ch'io donna mi sia posta a scrivere e dare alla stampa cose che non s'appartengono (secondo l'uso de' nostri tempi) a donna, ma se vorranno, con buon giuditio, e senza affettattione considerar la mutatione de tempi, e delli stati, e de gl'huomini, e con qual materia sian creati; trovarà che non è la donna priva di quelle providenze e virtù che si sian gli'huomini: è vero che si potranno molto maravigliar ch'io senza veder libri, m'abbia posta a dar fuori queste quattro mal composte righe."

Just in this quote, different relations can be traced: public/private divide, gender, power, Camilla's positioning within the certain system, and the notion that "every individual can tackle philosophical speculation if it is expressed in language that she or he knows 'beginning from the middle of subject," as expressed by Sandra Plastina.[47]

Being a woman, Camilla Herculiana needed to defend her appearance in print, and she included this statement in the *exordium*. The gendered language is obvious; she highlighted her belonging to the female sex. What is interesting here is the rhetorical usage of the parenthetical device in order to point out the fact that it was according to the custom of the present day, of the contemporary moment, and it might mean that before it was not like that, and also it might introduce hope that in the future it would be different. Her female agency is defended, and she answered to the cultural shift of the contemporary moment when the female-authored book was seen as a rarity. Following the rhetoric of *querelle des femmes*, she opposed 'me—a woman' to 'them'—men, who hopefully will understand that the context changed and that women, too, have their own right to knowledge production. Applying the *topos* of modesty typical for the dedicatory epistle, she demonstrated her limitations, but even "without seeing the books," Herculiana nevertheless decided to publish this book.

At the same time, she felt the need to defend the very idea of this publication. Herculiana explained that she would prefer not to print her book at this specific moment. She would rather wait and publish it when God wanted it to be done. But she introduces her act of justification by claiming a private reason which prompted her to publish this book. The person she trusted and sent her work to decided to print the work under his name.

> I would not have chosen to send these letters to the press now, but I had trusted and shown them to someone who then went elsewhere (so I hear) to print them under his name, something that vexed me since if I had not been able to publish these, I would have lost all my labours. And I would not be so bold as to publish these works if doing so did not give me the opportunity to affirm the intellectual worth of the women of our times, which in truth I greatly desire.[48]

[47] Plastina, *Letters*, 59.

[48] Herculiana, *Lettere,* no pagination: "Le quali piacendo alla Maestà d'Iddio voglio quando sarà tempo mandar' in luce; ne avrei poste hora queste alla stampa, s'io non mi avessi fidata di farle vedere a persona che poi e sta alrove (come odo) a stampare sotto suo nome, cosa ch'a me è molto spiaciuta, percio ch'io non potrei dar fuori il rimanente, ma havrei perso

The same explanation can be found in many contemporary works, and it should be understood as the modesty *topos*—the "reluctance to appear in print."[49] She fashioned herself as naïve and having only good intentions. But she also decided to bring out her work because, with book publishing, she has the possibility to prove the intellectual value of women's knowledge production.[50] Immediately after these words, she introduces the important information about the work on the soul she is preparing and that she will publish once this book is accepted.

> And I would also like to explain what is the nature of the soul, if it pleases God, and in other letters to expound what, and where, and when, and with which characteristics our soul is generated. It will seem without a doubt difficult to prove this to anyone, though to intelligent people, it will not seem a thing beyond truth. And this other work will be published a short time after the present letters, if it happens that these few lines are acceptable to you and received with the same goodwill that I bring to their publication.[51]

Offering her work as a gift to the reader but saying that she also provides some ideas which are not so easy to understand, Herculiana wanted once again to present herself as an educated woman. And in undertaking this intellectual endeavour, she was often interrupted by "*travails.*" She refers to her roles as mother, housewife, and wife, adding that her health was not good. In this last paragraph, the transition from private to public

tutte le mie fatiche: Ne di queste fatiche farei io molta stima, se non mi si togliesse l'occasione di far conoscere il buon animo delle Donne de nostri tempi, cosa invero da me molto desiderata."Herculiana translated in Carinci, *Camilla Erculiani*, 111.

[49] Eckerle, Julie A. "Prefacing Texts, Authorizing Authors, and Constructing Selves: The Preface as Autobiographical Space" in *Genre and Women's Life Writing in Early Modern England*, Michelle M. Dowd and Julie A. Eckerle, eds. Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007, 101. For example, the same 'excuse' we find in Castiglione's dedicatory epistle to Don Michel de Silva. Castiglione writes that some people in Naples who saw the manuscript tried to publish it. See Castiglione, Baldassare. *Il Libro del Cortegiano.* Milano: Garzanti, 2013, 4.

[50] Herculiana, *Lettere,* no pagination: "Di far conoscere il buon animo delle donne di nostri tempi, cosa invero da me molto desiderata".

[51] Herculiana, *Lettere,* no pagination: "et a fine che si conoschi, come ancor noi sappiamo che cosa sia Anima, voglio piacendo a Dio, nell'altre mie dirvi, che cosa, e dove, e quando, et, in qual virtù, si generi l'anima nostra: Parrà senza dubbio difficile il provar questo ad alcuni, ma agl'intelligenti non parerà cosa fuori della verità; e questo si darà in luce poco dappoi queste, secondo che mi parrà, che queste poche righe siano tenute et accettate con quel buon'animo che io le dò in luce hora a voi et insieme darò con altre bellissime dechiarationi d'authori non molto facili ad intendersi." Translated in Carinci, 2021, 112).

life becomes obvious, as well as the function of the dedicatory epistle as a metaphorical bridge between private life and published word:

> The work of *caring for my children*, the burden *of running my household*, *my obedience* to my husband, and *my fragile* health—none of these weighs on my decision *to publish* so much as the knowledge that many malicious minds will condemn my efforts, and writings, and consider them *frivolous and worthless just as they consider women of our age to be such*.[52]

Her tasks as a good and devoted mother and obedient housewife, and the struggles of a woman of poor health, modest and caring, are contrasted with the image of the writing woman, a woman who takes decisions and publishes. Traditionally excluded from the public realm and power, she needed to defend her appearance in print by showing that she did not neglect her expected work as a woman. In doing this, she illustrated imposed limits, both culturally and historically, to female intellectual accomplishments. In this context, gender becomes an important category, as the personal female *ethos* depends on the social *ethos*, and if she wanted to be taken seriously, a woman needed to accept the values of her society. In other words, to "be treated as credible, a woman is expected to exemplify the community conception of femininity."[53] Traditional roles imposed on women—"the angel in the house"[54]—were used to compromise her agency in the public realm.

This dedicatory epistle is a clear example of entering the *querelle des femmes* with a positive approach, knowing that there are readers (men) who would understand that women are also capable of contributing to culture, science, and knowledge in general. Knowing that her work is something new, she finishes with the hope that she will be accepted. This valuable testimony on gender hierarchies shows "the stands taken in the relevant areas of the discussion that were topical during each period,"[55] and it offers a rich terrain for understanding the private sphere, gender, and the practice of sixteenth-century knowledge production.

[52] Herculiana translated in Ray, *Daughters of Alchemy*, 120–121. Italics are mine.

[53] Enos, Theresa, ed. *Encyclopedia of Rhetoric and Composition: Communication from Ancient Times to the Information Age*. New York: Routledge, 2009, 263.

[54] Woolf, 1931: "Killing the Angel in the House was part of the occupation of a woman writer." See Woolf, Virginia. "Professions for Women", in *Death of A Moth and Other Essays*, University of Adelaide, Australia, 2017.

[55] Zimmerman, *The Querelle,* 19.

The closure of the dedication to readers is significant, as she mentions the other contemporary women, and she hopes that her writings will stimulate their intellect ("sarò forse una causa a svegliamento agl'intelletti loro"):

> But despite all that, I do not want to stop working to recuperate some of the honour of superficial women, and perhaps I will be a cause of the awakening of their intellects. And I am certain that if these women did strive for intellectual achievements, foreign adventurers would not dare to invade this renowned city of Padua to try, with sword and lance, to accuse us of imperfection. Moreover, I am certain that many wise and intelligent readers of this work will not mock its originality, and they will admire the intention and the desire of my ideas.[56]

From the opening of the book until the very end, Camilla Herculiana did not adopt any kind of submissive role apart from using a *topos of modesty* typical for dedicatory epistles. Instead, she "had proudly claimed her intellectual independence,"[57] her practical knowledge, and her position as a natural philosopher. As we will see further, also at the Inquisitional trial, there is no proof of any kind of submissive rhetoric.

Paratexts, and especially dedicatory epistles, are marked by strong authorial self-promotion. They stand in between the public and the private and provide us with more insight into understanding the role of the author/writer. The self-promotion by Camilla included her socially accepted female roles—being a mother, wife, and housekeeper, which are connected with domesticity—as well as her public persona—a natural philosopher, a pharmacist, Camilla Herculiana e Gregetta who spoke with educated men and considered herself equal to them.

Letters' Analysis

After Schonaeus's poem, in which he compares Herculiana to the Amazon queen Hippolyta and Penthesilea, and to Semiramis, Queen of Babylon,

[56] Herculiana, *Lettere,* no pagination: "Ma con tutto ciò non voglio restar d'affaticarmi per ricuperar in parte l'honor delle spensierate, e sarò forse una causa e svegliamento agl'intelletti loro. E son sicura che s'attendessero a questo, non avriano ardire i Cavallieri esterni di venir' in questa inclita città di Padova e volere con spada, e lanza provar e tassar noi d'imperfectione: Oltre che son sicura che molti savii et intelligenti lettori di questa opera non si faranno beffe dell'inventione di quella, et ammiraranno la volontà mia, insieme con il desiderio de i miei pensieri." Translated in Carinci, 2021, 112.

[57] Plastina, *Letters,* 58.

we find the four letters on natural philosophy. As the letters are dated and signed, following the proper letter-writing protocols, we can assume that letter exchange indeed existed. The title of each letter contains information about the subject of it. The first letter, signed by Herculiana on 7 August 1577, on "the natural cause of the Flood, and the natural temper of man,"[58] is addressed to the French physician, and medical writer, Giorgio Garnero (1550–1614). It is followed by the second letter, Garnero's answer to Camilla, on the "negation of the Flood."[59] He was also the addressee of Camilla's second letter (the third in the book) about "the truth of the flood, the natural formation and appearance of the rainbow,"[60] which remained without a published answer. The importance of choosing Garnero as one of two addressees is twofold. Firstly, Giorgio Garnero published a book about the plague, which was popular at the time,[61] and secondly, he was a student at the Paduan university in 1576. That Camilla Herculiana had contacts with the university through the apothecary and through her husband's and brother's connections is also proved by Carinci.[62]

The fourth and last letter is signed by Camilla Herculiana from home on 9 April 1581. The addressee is a Hungarian, Martino di Berzevicze (1538–1596), the chancellor of King Stephen, Queen Anna Jagiellon's husband and *jure uxoris* King of Poland. Across the letters, Herculiana discusses the structure of the soul, the influence of planets, and the causes of the flood, resting on Aristotelian, Platonic, Galenic, and astrological ideas, and provides us with her own observations. For example, the human body, according to Herculiana, should be understood as "the small world" or microcosm, inseparable from the macrocosm of the world. This was the doctrine inherited from humoral theory and was popular in the Paduan context at the time. In order to convince the reader of the truthfulness of

[58] Herculiana, *Lettere*, no pagination: "All'Eccelletis. Sig. Giorgio Garnero, nel'laquale si tratta la natural causa del Diluvio, et il natural temperamento dell'huomo."

[59] Herculiana, *Lettere,* no pagination: Lettera dell'eccellentissimo Sig. Girogio Garnero a D. Camilla Herculiana, nella quale si tratta la negation del Diluvio.

[60] Herculiana, *Lettere,* no pagination: "Lettera di Camilla Herculiana all'Eccellentis. Sig. Giorgio Garnero, nellaqual si tratta della verità del diluvio, e della natural formatione et apparitione dell'arco celeste."

[61] This book is lost, but it is mentioned in de Renzi, Salvatore. Storia della medicina italiana, Napoli: Filliatre-Sebezio, 1845, 584. Giorgio Garnero, *Liber de peste quae grassala este Venetiiis* (1576).

[62] Carinci, *Una speziala*.

her words, she frequently uses indirect speech. For example, she quotes Marcus Aurelius mentioning that the person who wants to have good thoughts should have an undefiled brain and healthy bowels, and also she uses Latin when she refers to the Bible:[63]

Herculiana alludes in her letters to Plato's philosophy, and his theory of recollection expressed in *Phaedo*. As pointed out by Maude Vanhaelen, this is an important testimony that a woman used Platonist ideas, which were different from the most popular ideas of love and beauty.[64] That fact "invites us to reconsider the importance of the direct (rather than 'eclectic') transmission of a *Platone volgare* in sixteenth-century Italy, particularly in the context of female medical and scientific writings."[65] She read Plato in Erizzo's translation, but in her first letter to Garnero, she draws directly from Plato's *Phaedo*.[66]

Following a dialogical structure, she narrates the facts as they happen (i.e. "I told him and then he replied to me"). Therefore, all letters can be read as a kind of indirect dialogue between Herculiana and the unknown "illustrious sir." For example, when she agrees with Plato's theory of recollection, she provides the reader with the testimony of her discussion with an illustrious sir who mentioned Plato's theory of reminiscence and used this theory to explain why some people are better at doing one thing than the other.

> And one learns the same doctrine in Plato. According to him, all souls are wise at some point, but forget everything as soon as they are imprisoned in the veil [of the body], and then through continuous contact [with the body] they remember…In this way, my opinion is confirmed, i.e. that since man does not remember all things, but only one thing or two, all this occurs and derives from a defect of matter, which has more kinship with one element than with another, so that one person excels in one thing, whilst another excels in another.[67]

[63] Herculiana, *Lettere,* no pagination: "Nisi granum frumenti cadens in terra mortuum fuerit, ipsum solum manet: si antem mortuum fuerit multum fructum assert."

[64] Vanhaelen, *Platonism,* 140.

[65] Ibid.

[66] Ibid.

[67] Herculiana, *Lettere,* no pagination: "Et il simile s'intende secondo Platone, il qual vuole che tutte siano sapienti a un modo, ma che per esser subito rinchiuse in questo velame, si dimenticano, e poi per il longo habitar insieme si ricordano. E così viene a confermar la mia opinione, essendoché, non si ricordando l'huomo tutte le cose, ma solo una o due, il tutto

Herculiana refers to one error she made which Garnero corrected, saying that she knows "intuitively, without looking to either Galen or Aristotle."[68] Direct experience, observation, and empirical authority were mainly privileged over theoretical knowledge. In the same line, in her letter to Martino di Berzevicze , she claims her originality in writing: "I reply that I have not read this in the works of any author. I do not believe that it is a praiseworthy thing to claim the opinion of other authors as one's own."[69] Regarding her writing and attempts to provide the best picture of herself, she mentions that what she does is read other authors in order to understand and consequently to develop her own ideas. "I do not deny that I read various authors, considering their explanations…whence, marvelling at their ingenuity and the range of their opinions, I determined that I, too, should write down my own."[70]

Interestingly, Camilla Herculiana introduces some private complaints in every letter at the end. In the first letter, she first described her disagreement with a certain mister Montagnana about the movement of the Sun,[71] the treatise she is writing about theriac,[72] and its "nature, properties, and qualities of the ingredients used [in it], and how they act favourably against

aviene e procede da diffetto della materia, che tiene più d'un elemento che de l'altro, e così succede ch'uno è eccellente in una cosa et un altro in un'altra." Translated in Vanhaelen, 2016.

[68] Herculiana: "e questo lo conosco naturalmente, senza guardare Galeno ne Aristotele." Translated in Carinci, *Camilla Erculiani*, 137.

[69] Herculiana, *Lettere,* no pagination: "Rispondo e gli dico non havere apresso autore alcuno letto, né credo che sia cosa lodevole il scrivere l'opinione d'altri autori some sua propria: non nego che io non legga diversi autori speculando le diffinitioni loro, in quanto può passare il senso nostro, dove meravigliata de gl'ingegni e varie opinioni loro, mi son posta anch'o a scrivere il parer mio." Translated in Carinci, 2021, 143.

[70] Translated in Ray, *Daughters of Alchemy,* 128.

[71] Herculiana, *Lettere,* no pagination: "e altre cose che lascio di dire per non essergli più tediosa; riservandomi molte cose per un'altra mia, nella qual ho da dire la risposta, che mi diede l'Eccel. Montagnana, Medico eccellentissimo, sopra il moto del Sole, che lui dice, che riceve il calore dalla terra per il moto che fa in lei: *et io lo nego".*

[72] Theriac (and mithidrate) "two prodigious antidotes against poisons and serious illnesses devised in the ancient world and popularised by Galen, which required eighty-odd ingredients of global provenance and often uncertain appearance, such as Indian amomum and Himalayan costus", in Pugliano, Valentina, "Natural History in the Apothecary Shop", in *Worlds of Natural History.* In H A Curry, Nicholas Jardine, James A Secord, and E C. Spary. Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2018, 51. It was one of the most popular remedies revived during the Renaissance.

poison,"[73] to finally conclude with a complaint about her lack of time. She writes about her stressful life and the impossibility of writing as much as she would like, adding that together with that letter, her husband Giacomo sends to Garnero a "small jar of theriac, which *we*[74] prepared this year."[75] Her involvement in theriac's production has a personal and familiar importance. She sends it as a gift to a friend, mentioning her experience and practical knowledge. The theriac was difficult to prepare, it was subject to many controls, and it was considered the most popular medicine against the plague while also used as a preventive drug.[76] The juxtaposition of the lack of time with the gift of a very laborious medicine shows how Herculiana had to navigate between her professional duties, which she took pride in, and her private commitments as a housewife. When communicating with other scholars, she made sure to stress her busy life but also emphasized how much of her time was consumed by her studies and practical developments in the apothecary. Again, highlighting personal experience provides her with a level of intellectual authority, but she still acknowledged her private duties and the partnership with her husband.

Also in the second letter to Garnero, at the very end, she complained that she did not have enough time to dedicate to writing. At the same time, she expressed her wishes not to rush opinions, wanting to dedicate time to study the subjects in order to write her answers to relevant topics.[77] She also mentioned that she wrote something about the sun, but that she did not have enough time to copy it and send it in this letter.[78] Here Herculiana pointed out another aspect of women's knowledge production: having enough time to copy one's ideas becomes much harder when one had to compromise between fulfilling the gendered expectations of a woman of her status and engaging with the practical and intellectual endeavours of a professional apothecary. Camilla highlighted that she had

[73] Herculiana, *Lettere,* no pagination: "Hora m'affatico con il nostro Galeno, perch'io scrivo la natura, proprietà, e qualità degli ingredienti che entrino nella Teriaca, et con quali proprietà siano loro giovevoli contro i veleni."

[74] My emphasis.

[75] Herculiana, *Lettere,* no pagination: "M. Giacomo le manda un vasetto di Teriaca et è di quella istessa ch'abbiamo fatto quest'anno".

[76] Fabbri, Christiane Nockels. "Treating medieval plague: the wonderful virtues of theriac", *Early Sci Med*. 12, no. 3 (2007): 247–83.

[77] Herculiana, *Lettere,* no pagination: "Et hora è l'hora tarda, per il corriero che si parte, ne ho io tempo d'haverla potuta leggere più d'una volta, con poco tempo di considerarla, ma dimani vi prometto di studiarla bene, e darvene l'altra risposta." [my transaltion]

[78] Translated in Ray, *Daughters of Alchemy,* 227.

much more ideas than she was able to communicate in the Republic of Letters of the time, as she was not able to make the necessary copies to distribute her intellectual insights. Herculiana writes: "Concerning the letter about the Sun, I wrote it, but I do not have time to copy it, and I do not want to send it, as I do with this letter, without keeping a copy and correcting it when there is a need."[79]

Besides juggling private and professional duties, Camilla also had to deal with the limitations of her own body. In the last letter, she explains that she decided to write to her addressee because she cannot speak, "being bothered by *terzana* (tertian fever)[80] for three months already."[81] Besides illnesses, she also had to deal with pregnancies, which could be extremely time-consuming, and sometimes debilitating to the point of preventing women's work. Writing letters, however, seems to have been a way of continuing her knowledge production even when she would not be able to perform her apothecary endeavours, providing a window to continuously interact with the intellectual environment when her body did not allow for a physical engagement.

The subjects of the letters are scientific and philosophical, but some private, everyday themes appeared in both the peritext and in the letters. Metatextual data provided at the end of all of Herculiana's letters represent an important testimony on private networks and private issues, information regarding her lack of time for writing, her stressful life, the production of theriac, and also her illness. She also provided *excusatio* for not being able to write as much as she wanted. In Herculiana's letters, all the interlocutors are males, mainly addressed as friends, which is also part of the portrayal and the impersonation of the concept of *amicitia,* and another strategy to legitimate her work. Camilla Herculiana, with this letter collection, identified herself as somebody who does belong to the Republic of Letters.

The importance of this letter exchange can be seen in the subject of the woman who writes and takes responsibility for her words. Her insistence on epistolary dialogue might be understood in line with the *topos* of work exchange and the letter as the means of securing the image of being an educated, knowledgeable woman who enters into discussions with

[79] Herculiana translated in Carinci, *Camilla Erculiani,* 143.

[80] Terzana (Lat: tertanius) is the fever which appears every third day, see: tlio.ovi.cnr.it/TLIO [last accessed 1 January 2022].

[81] Herculiana, no pagination: "per esser molestata d'una terzana già tre mesi".

intellectuals. She was completely aware of the possibility that she, because of her book, might be questioned before the Inquisition, and because of that, she chose a powerful dedicatee and clearly defined her audience: students of philosophy. Initially, her book was approved by the Inquisitional authorities. However, this approval was suspended later.[82]

The two still unpublished letters by Sebastiano Erizzo (1525–1585), the Venetian humanist and numismatic, are preserved in manuscript in the Biblioteca Bertoliana in Vicenza.[83] The letters are written in the same year her book appeared, 1584. The first letter is dated 11 January, and the second 18 February. In the first letter, Erizzo thanks her for sending him one of her letters, along with "your very learned philosophical work," which might be the book of letters or perhaps some other work still unknown to us. He, like Garnero, admires her ability in philosophy, stating that he "would not have easily believed that there would be in our time a woman with such expertise in the study of philosophy, had I not read your letters."[84] What follows is Erizzo's expression of gratitude, where he states: "I should thank you for the high esteem in which you hold me and for writing that you have learnt in my works all you know about the Platonic doctrine."[85] This is evidence supporting Vanhaelen's conclusion that Herculiana read Plato from Erizzo's 1574 translation, though she did not quote it from there.

The second letter provides us with Erizzo's comments on Herculiana's ideas on the woman question, which this letter positions in the context of the *querelle des femmes*. Erizzo refers to her observations, not found in the book of letters, regarding the idea that women should only be connected with the identity of the mother, as the Bible states, that women should be treated as goddesses and not be bound to any law and that women should also be able to inherit some possessions. He defends female equality, stating that:

[82] In 1515, the institute of the imprimatur was approved, the obligation that all manuscripts needed to be approved before being printed by the "Magister Sacri Palatii" in Rome. If a book appeared without an imprimatur, the author needed to pay 500 ducats as penalty, would be suspended for one year from the activity of writing, and the printers would be excommunicated. See Frajese, Vittorio. *La censura in Italia: Dall'Inquisizione alla Polizia*. Bari: GLF Editori Laterza, 2014, 14–15.

[83] Vanhaelen, *Platonism*, 138. Manuscript G 3 8 7 (277) in the Biblioteca Bertoliana di Vicenza.

[84] Translated in Vanhaelen, *Platonism*, 139.

[85] Ibid.

> Therefore, how will we be able to reasonably argue that God's law prescribed women to devote themselves to nothing else than bearing and giving birth to human beings, and that His divine majesty exempted them from any other human preoccupations and activities? This opinion is contrary to the Sacred Scriptures, which give woman part of the dominion over the sensible world, so that she may act together with man; neither would the supreme Providence give to one of its creatures such an idle role, nor does women's exemption from any worldly activity appear to be expressed by any law in the Sacred Scriptures.[86]

Invoking the authority of Plato and his *Republic*, Erizzo states that women are and should always be considered equal to men, adding that it is known that somewhere in the north, women do the same things as men, such as in the Flanders. For the second doubt expressed by Herculiana, he writes:

> I then read in this letter [he refers to Herculiana's letter sent to him] another argument that states the following: "This being well known to these divine men, they wrote laws and statutes in favour of women, as they did not wish to force them to respect any additional theological precepts, but letting them as if they were goddesses, they did not dare to bind these women to any law." On this point, I would rather think that you are kidding me and that this is not your own opinion: but if it were, I would ask you to let me know which author, ancient or modern, has expressed this idea in his writings, and quote him as proof that what you say is true.[87]

Following this statement, he quotes words that, according to him, Camilla Herculiana wrote elsewhere that women "have decided to no longer be subjugated to man's yoke unless they are given a good part of their possessions; and they have done so to force men to treat them fairly."[88] And he answers that he would be very happy if such a law existed anywhere. Vanhaelen suggests in her latest study that the obvious lack of regard for religious propriety that can be seen in this letter might be the additional reason Herculiana was interrogated in front of the Inquisition: "The arguments she appears to have put forward to Erizzo, absent from her published work, suggest that she had little concern for religious orthodoxy. This might also explain why the Inquisition later questioned her."[89]

[86] Translated in Vanhaelen, *Platonism*, 143.
[87] Ibid.
[88] Ibid.
[89] Vanhaelen, *Platonism*, 144.

Inquisitional Trial

After the publication of her book, Herculiana was suspected of heresy and interrogated by the Inquisition. Trial documents are not extant, but there is an account by a very influential contemporary jurist, Giacomo (Jacopo) Menochio. Menochio was famous and very influential, president of the "Magistrato delle entrate straordinarie," and a member of the senate from Milan.[90] The fact that he gave his opinion about Herculiana's case, and moreover defended her, is highly important and probably depended on her private connections. Herculiana's brother, Giorgio Greghetto, was a jurist in Padua, and archival documents show that Menochio was together with him at some meetings.[91]

Camilla Herculiana, in Menochio's narrative, was accused of heresy, and he selected nine parts of her book on which the accusation was based. In general, she claimed that man would still die, with or without original sin and that the Flood happened as the consequence of constantly growing numbers and bodies of people. Moreover, she accepted the Platonic theory of recollection. She also claimed that from nothing, anything could be produced. Her statement that souls are equal in sciences and that the soul of the child has the same perfection as that of an old person was also selected by Menochio as one of the reasons for the Inquisitional trial. He analyses especially the accusation regarding astrology and her ideas that "astrologers know future things, in historical periods and in human nature."[92]

What is highly valuable in Menochio's written testimony is the fact that some of Herculiana's answers are written in Italian in the form of direct speech. She defended herself, insisting on the fact that she wrote philosophically. We read that she accepted her guilt, as that was the only way to start the procedure. According to Menochio, Herculiana stated: "I answer to these words that, man being made of four elements, he could not live eternally, speaking in the way of Natural philosophy," or "speaking philosophically, I tell you, that it is impossible to claim anything to be truthful […] In Theology, always relying on Sacral the Sacred scriptures, I confess

[90] See Frajese, *La censura,* 86.

[91] See Carinci, *Una speziala,* 222.

[92] Menochio, *Consilium,* 183: "che l'Astrologi sanno le cose future nei regni, nell'età e nella natura dell'homini". [my transaltion]

that the Biblical Flood and the death happened because of sin."[93] In this narrative, Menochio adds:

> And a little later, when she was asked whether she held the same opinion about the death of man she responded: *I tell you that, in philosophy, I do not hold any of these things to be true. In theology, I turn always to Sacred Scripture, and I affirm that the Flood and Death came about because of sin*. And she repeated the same thing after: *As I have already said, speaking theologically I affirm that sin was the cause of the death of man*.[94]

Menochio used a different argumentation and different authorities to defend her,[95] but his main defence consists of the fact that she wrote in a philosophical way and not a theological one. Among other things, according to Menochio, Camilla, being a woman, was weaker and could not think properly, as "ignorant people and women are easier to be excused."[96] This argument was quite popular at the time. When the heretical ideas were proven, three things were taken into consideration: "the quality of the person, the quality of the books, and length of retention."[97] If the person was considered more intelligent, that increased their culpability, and the danger of the book would increase with the education of the author or the reader.

Paradoxically, maybe the fact that her ideas were not treated as being as important as those expressed by men just saved her life. Camilla Herculiana probably escaped punishment by the Inquisition. Usually, if the case was very complicated, and if the death sentence was considered, it would be sent to Rome. As there is no evidence that Herculiana's case reached Rome and the Sant'Uffizio Romano, it may be concluded that Camilla was soon freed. However, this interrogation should be seen in the broader

[93] Menochio, *Consilium,* 182: "Io rispondo a queste parole ch'essendo l'huomo fatto di quatro elementi non potea vivere in eterno, parlando per via di Philosophia naturale […] Parlando Philosophicamente, io vi dico, che non si può mai affermare una cosa per vera […] In Theologia, reportandomi sempre alle sacre scritture, io confesso, ch'il Diluvio & la morte sono venuti per il peccato […] "Io he esposto parlando naturalmnente, ch'anco un diluvio possi esser universale, et naturale, et anco miraculoso". [my transaltion]

[94] Translated in Carinci, *Camilla Erculiani,* 162.

[95] See the English translation of *Consilia* in Carinci, *Camilla Erculiani* 168.

[96] Menochio, *Consilium,*181: "Quae sententia multo magis locum habet in idiotis & mulieribus, qui facilius solent excusari".

[97] Mentioned in Frajese, *La censura,* 52: "Poi si considerano principalmente tre cose: la qualità delle persone, la qualità de' libri e diuturnità della retentione".

context, as in the same period, in Venice, it is possible to find more apothecaries accused of heresy, as "the Council of Trent and Venetian Inquisition closely observed pharmacies known as centres of political and religious dissent,"[98] even though these apothecaries were males.

Before the Inquisition, Camilla Herculiana did not accept the strategy of many other women to invoke the traditionally ascribed feminine characteristics, such as ignorance, weakness, and irrationality in order to defend herself. However, Menochio used it on her behalf. A similar example is found in the defence by Giulia Gonzaga, who invoked her traditionally ascribed feminine characteristics, saying that as a woman, she was not so intelligent. Similarly, Vittoria Gonzaga and Isabella Frattina used 'ignorance' as an argument in front of the Inquisition (1568). When accused of reading heretical writings and being educated and curious, Frattina replied: "Because I am a woman who has to take care of her home, it is not convenient for me to do these studies, but rather to refer as I do, to my superiors."[99] She adopted the strategy that, as a woman, she was not meant to think about theological things. She knew Latin, but she claimed that she read only the *Little Office of Our Lady*—a popular devotional book and prayed. Such rhetoric is not possible to find in Camilla's case, who also was accused of writing a heretical book, as she defended herself stating: "I answer to these words…speaking in the way of Natural Philosophy".

Conclusion

The self-narrative present in the paratext and the text by Camilla Herculiana is connected with some historical developments in the second half of the sixteenth century. She thought about her self-representation and provided a picture of Camilla Herculiana é Greghetta, the *speciala* who lived in Padua and who lived off her work. Three identities can be read as important to her: woman, philosopher, and apothecary—the basis of her practical knowledge. Herculiana highlights her female identity and gender

[98] Carinci, *Camilla Erculiani,* 17. Carinci refers to the book Martin, John J. *Venice's Hidden Enemies, Italian Heretics in a Renaissance City.* Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993. Martin mentioned 23 Venetian apothecaries accused of heresy between 1547 and 1586.

[99] Frattina: "perché son donna che ha da tender alla cura di casa mia, ne mi si conviene far questi studi, ma riportarmi come faccio alli miei superiori", mentioned in Rambaldi, Susanna Peyronel. *Una gentildonna irrequieta: Giulia Gonzaga fra reti familiari e relazioni eterodosse.* Roma: Viella, 2012, 324–325.

consciousness frequently within the text. She defended herself as a philosopher and, at the same time, was defended by the fact that she was a woman.

The case of Camilla Herculiana is particularly important when gender, privacy, and knowledge production in the late sixteenth century is taken into consideration. Despite the overall ideas of scarce female contribution to philosophy, archival materials prove, in fact, that women did contribute to knowledge production in an original way, which, regardless of the common representation, did not obligatorily include the submissive or modest rhetoric. The Italian Renaissance culture offered more possibilities for women's participation in the production of culture than it is possible to find in some other countries. However, conceptions of gender, women's roles and culture varied from region to region, and it can be said that especially Veneto in the Renaissance context offered a fertile terrain for the birth of texts on *querelle des femmes* both by men and women. It was during the sixteenth century that the debate on women and their role in society *(querelle des femmes)* was blooming.

However, the publicity and entering into the public realm obtained by printing this book should be taken with reserve. On the one hand, we know that only four copies of her book have been found, and it might be considered that it was meant only for small audiences. But, on the other hand, the questioning in front of the Inquisition proves that, in fact, Camilla Herculiana and the publication of her book received attention from the public. In this context, my chapter has shown that the domestic sphere is not connected only with women and should be understood as a space where private and public coexist. Expanding our understanding of domesticity allows for a better understanding of women's contributions to early modern culture and politics, and Camilla Herculiana is only one example. Camilla Herculiana was affected by cultural and political shifts of the Italian sixteenth century, she questioned the social order and used her book, but also inquisitional trial to make herself heard: "make praises to be heard, such as are worthy of Camilla, and of you too."[100]

[100] Herculiana, *Lettere,* no pagination.

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From Behind the Folding Screen to the Collège de France: Victorine de Chastenay's Privacy Dynamics for Knowledge in the Making

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Abstract This chapter is an examination of Victorine de Chastenay's manuscripts through the lens of private practices of knowledge production. Victorine de Chastenay, mostly known for her *Mémoires* and a few translations, was raised in ancient French aristocracy and received an exceptional education for a nineteenth-century woman. Throughout her life, she explored various fields of knowledge, such as literature, poetry, languages, history, politics, botany, mathematics, and astronomy. Her manuscripts and parts of her *Mémoires* offer an insight into her private practices of knowledge in the making. This contribution focuses on the learning and writing techniques she used as a child and, later on, in her domestic space. As a noblewoman, the social norms of her time forced her to study in dedicated spaces at dedicated times, sometimes hidden behind a folding screen. Chastenay's manuscripts reveal her economy of knowledge in the making, highlighting the necessity of a room of her own. This study combines material, spatial, social, and emotional approaches to analyse her private knowledge production.

Keywords Science • Women • France • Nineteenth century • Knowledge practices

During the eighteenth century in France, a certain number of women, most often from socially elevated positions, practised science for their amusement and/or their passion.[1] Since they did not have to contribute to a family scientific practice, they were seldom focused on publication (either anonymously or as acknowledged authors) and thus could remain perpetual students. One of these women left a rich corpus of handwritten

[1] This enthusiasm for science is described in Anderson, Bonnie S., and Zinsser, Judith P. *A History of Their Own: Women in Europe from Prehistory to the Present*. Vol. 2. London: Penguin Books, 1990; Schiebinger, Londa. *The Mind Has No Sex?: Women in the Origins of Modern Science*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1989; and Zinsser, Judith P. *Men, Women, and the Birthing of Modern Science*. DeKalb: Northern Illinois, 2005. In 2013, Adeline Gargam referenced about five hundred and thirty-one names of learned French women, one hundred and fifty of whom were particularly invested in scientific knowledges. Most of them correspond to the category considered in this chapter: privileged women who study science out of taste without it being part of a family practice.

documents stretching from just before the French Revolution until the second Empire. This corpus displays the strategies and practices put in place by some women of this period, like Émilie Du Châtelet (1706–1749) or Geneviève Thiroux d'Arconville (1720–1805), to access knowledge-strategies sometimes also used by men.[2] Louise Marie Victoire de Chastenay de Lenty, also known as Victorine de Chastenay (1771–1855), is a character well known by historians who study the Consulate, the Empire, and the Restoration, but not for her involvement with scientific *knowledges*.[3] Indeed, her posthumous *Mémoires* have been read as an important testimonial concerning the nobility and court life during the changing political regimes of her lifetime, but have not yet been used to advance the history of scientific knowledges.[4]

Chastenay is perhaps better known in literature for having translated Ann Radcliffe's archetypal Gothic novel *The Mysteries of Udolpho* from English in 1797.[5] Nonetheless, Chastenay was not only dedicated to poetry and literature. She also broadly explored sciences—including astronomy, chemistry, physics, and mathematics—that were considered

[2] As references, see Gargam, Adeline. *Les femmes savantes, lettrées et cultivées dans la littérature française des Lumières, ou, La conquête d'une légitimité (1690–1804)*. Paris: Honoré Champion, 2013; Zinsser, Judith P. *Emilie Du Châtelet: Daring Genius of the Enlightenment:* New York: Viking, 2006; Bret, Patrice, and Van Tiggelen, Brigitte, eds. *Madame d'Arconville. Une Femme de Lettres et de Sciences Au Siècle Des Lumières.* Paris: Hermann, 2011.

[3] I chose here to talk about 'scientific knowledges' instead of 'science' to embrace the great diversity of knowledges including first and foremost the *savoirs-mondes* (González Bernaldo, Pilar, and Hilaire-Pérez, Liliane. *Les Savoirs-Mondes. Mobilités et Circulation Des Savoirs Depuis Le Moyen Âge*. Rennes: PUR, 2015) that the term 'science' encompassed in the eighteenth century, as Dominique Pestre describes ("Ecrire une histoire des sciences et des savoirs de longue durée." In *Histoire des sciences et des savoirs. De la Renaissance aux Lumières.* Paris: Seuil, 1, 2015: 9–11). For hints about history of knowledges, see Burke, Peter. "Response." *Journal for the History of Knowledge* 1, no. 1 (2020): 1–7. This expression also highlights the situated nature of science and its plurivocal history in reference to Donna Haraway ("Situated Knowledges: The Science Question in Feminism and the Privilege of Partial Perspective." *Feminist Studies* 14 no. 3 (1988): 575–99).

[4] Chastenay, Victorine. *Mémoires de Madame Victorine de Chastenay: 1771–1815. L'Ancien régime. La Révolution*. Edited by Alphonse Roserot. Vol. 1. Paris: Plon, 1896 and Chastenay, Victorine. *Mémoires de madame de Chastenay, 1771–1815: L'empire. La restauration. Les cent-jours.* Edited by Alphonse Roserot. Vol. 2. Paris: Plon, 1897.

[5] Radcliffe, Ann. *Les mystères d'Udolphe*. Translated by Victorine de Chastenay. Paris: Maradan, 1797.

masculine endeavours.[6] Chastenay represents a perfect example of the encyclopedic *savante* from the French Age of Enlightenment: a woman who was equally comfortable with writing poetry or historical narratives, reading Cicero or Voltaire, translating English novels or botanical observations, and conducting experiments on plant germination or writing up a summary of a geometry course.[7] It is this little-known portrait of Chastenay that will be sketched here from the many scientific manuscripts she has left behind, as well as from the insights provided by her *Mémoires*.[8]

The wealth of ego documents she left behind from the end of the eighteenth century to the beginning of the nineteenth century reveals a wide

[6] This representation is discussed in Schiebinger, *The Mind Has No Sex?*. Only part of Chastenay's botanical work has been published in the form of a flora calendar (Chastenay, Victorine. *Calendrier de flore, ou Études de fleurs d'après nature*. Vol. 3. Paris: Crapelet, 1803). The rest of her scientific writings remained in manuscript form. The reasons why she did not invest in public scientific authorship is unclear but might be related to gendered prejudices that abhorred ambition in women, as described by Mary Terrall in "Frogs on the Mantelpiece: The Practice of Observation in Daily Life." In *Histories of Scientific Observations*, edited by Lorraine Daston and Elizabeth Lunbeck. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011, p. 185–205 and "The Uses of Anonymity in the Age of Reason." In *Scientific Authorship: Credit and Intellectual Property*, edited by Mario Biagioli and Peter Galison. London and New York: Routledge, 2003, p. 91–112. A digital publishing project *EMAN-Les manuscrits de Victorine de Chastenay* of her (scientific and literary) manuscripts kept in the *Archives départementales de la Côte d'or* (ADCO, Dijon, France) was created in June 2020 and is in progress (https://eman.hypotheses.org/3059). As these manuscripts had never been precisely classified nor studied before 2020, this chapter is the first brick towards a reconstruction of her work and practices, based on some samples from the *corpus*.

[7] According to the *Dictionnaire de l'Académie française* (1762 and 1798), a *savant* was a man of great erudition. This erudition could be expressed in literature, art, sciences, etc. A *savante* was his female *alter ego*.

[8] The entirety of Chastenay's manuscripts counts more than four thousand pieces in *folio*, double pages, and notebooks, combining all disciplines. The inventory of this collection is in progress, thanks to the historian Cécile Robin in the *Archives départementales de la Côte d'or*. It includes letters, reading notes, course notes, scholarly papers, personal memoirs, autobiographical texts, and so on. The first estimate of the *corpus* of reading-notes by Cécile Robin counts around ten boxes of reading notes and 300–350 notes by box, which sum up to 3000–3500 titles of books/journals (of maths, botany, history, law, economy, geography, poetry, literature, theatre, physics, chemistry, Chinese, Hebrew, English, Italian, Ancient Greek, Latin, politics, astronomy, etc.).

range of knowledge practices most women could not access.[9] These practices often remained private and poorly documented because these women (much like their male counterparts) seldom became scientific authors. From a social and material point of view, these sources also reveal the use and regulation of Chastenay's private life and space related to a means of constructing knowledges that respected the social norms of her time.[10]

In this chapter, I will first describe details from Victorine de Chastenay's childhood that laid the foundations for her knowledge practices. Both from individual learning and from presentations of what she had learned from family and friends, Chastenay confronted the social and gender norms that she would have to cope with all her life in order to become a learned and respected woman. Here knowledge acquisition, gender, and context are interwoven. Next, the chapter will pay attention to Chastenay's intense focus on scientific activities beginning in 1800, when she developed new private practices of knowledge-making. This focus also shows how knowledge production, private life, and privacy more broadly, became intertwined in modifying the spatial arrangement of her home to comply with nineteenth-century rules of sociability, such as French *étiquette* defining ways of hosting. Chastenay's archives highlight not only the evolution of material demarcations to her privacy during the day, based on balancing her visitors and her work schedule, but also highlight the variety of knowledges she mobilized: gestures, observations, intellectual constructions, material products, or emotional analyses. Finally, I will show how Chastenay's private writing practices nourished public exchanges with *savants*. Chastenay shared her views and learning with both selected and

[9] As Rudolph M. Dekker summarises from the work of Jacob Presser, ego documents refer to "texts in which the author tells us something about his or her personal life and feelings" (Dekker, Rudolf M. "Ego-Documents in the Netherlands 1500–1814." *Dutch Crossing* 13, no. 39 (1989): 61–71.). In Chastenay's case, they include her lecture notes written in a very personal way, scholarly papers, personal memoirs, and autobiographical texts. I consider these notes as ego documents for I focus on her testimony about her thoughts and opinions, her comments on public and private spaces, as well as on her material and temporal ways of constructing knowledge.

[10] This importance of the rules of communal life internalized by individuals on the definition and regulation of the private space has been widely highlighted in Elias, Norbert. *La Civilisation Des Moeurs (Über Den Prozeß Der Zivilisation: Soziogenetische Und Psychogenetische Untersuchungen)*. Translated by Pierre Kamnitzer. Paris: Calmann-Lévy, 1973.

larger audiences in institutional places such as the laboratories of the *Muséum National d'Histoire Naturelle,* or the lecture halls of the *Collège de France* in Paris.

Note-Taking and Knowledge Acquisition as Private Practices

Coming from an ancient family of the *noblesse d'épée* fallen on harder economic times, Victorine de Chastenay was educated in an enlightened intellectual milieu. Her father, Erard Louis Guy, Comte de Chastenay de Lenty (1748–1830), oversaw a *salon* graced by a succession of important *savants.* He profited from this patronage by learning English, Italian, and Latin; and he benefited from science courses. His wife, Catherine Louise d'Herbouville (ca. 1750–1830), was educated at the Port Royal Abbey in Paris, where she mastered the arts of writing and of distinguishing herself with modesty in the *salons.*[11] Within this literary and learned family, Victorine and her younger brother, Henri Louis (1772–1834), would receive in Paris "an education far superior to that of the young ladies of [her] time."[12] Almost immediately, "the superiority of [her] intelligence, [her] appetite for a wide variety of studies […] rare powers of observation, straight thinking" revealed themselves to her professors as Roserot (1849–1932) posthumously presented her.[13] As early as five or six years of age, an instructor began teaching Chastenay the catechism, grammar, history, and geography. She also started learning music and drawing. Before nine years of age, she began to cite passages of books she had read in letters to her father, who would respond to her.[14] A certain Monsieur Gilbert (?-?) became Victorine's and Henri Louis's professor of mathematics.

[11] Modesty was seen as a cardinal virtue of women during the modern period (Schiebinger, *The Mind Has No Sex?*, p. 39).

[12] Fyke's translation of "une instruction très supérieure à celle des jeunes filles de son temps" (Chastenay, *Mémoires* 1896, 1: p. II). All translations by Robert Fyke, unless otherwise noted. For a complete and precise study of girls' education in eighteenth-century France, see Sonnet, M. *L'éducation Des Filles Au Temps Des Lumières.* Paris:Éditions du Cerf, 1987.

[13] "La supériorité de son intelligence, son goût pour les études les plus variées, […] un rare esprit d'observation, un jugement droit" (Chastenay, *Mémoires* 1896, 1: p. II–III).

[14] None of these notes from her childhood remain. They were destroyed during the Revolution.

Gilbert's lessons included arithmetic, then "geometry, algebra, spherical geometry, all of elementary mathematics."[15]

Around 1780, she learned Italian in secret with her brother so they could surprise their parents during a party for friends.[16] The secret learning practices of these siblings were also witnessed by a wide variety of house guests, who delighted in these children's "prodigies."[17] At ten, Victorine de Chastenay read Horace, wrote passionately about Racine's play *Britannicus*, and started learning Latin a year later. The construction of her knowledges married regular lessons with a tutor, private knowledge practices, and the social obligations tied to her rank. As she testified later: "I read a lot, I made excerpts from books, book plans, translations, even poems. I had little free time; I spent it with my brother, I chatted with my parents, I went for a walk […] in the evenings I saw a few visitors […]."[18] When she turned 14, she was granted the title of *chanoinesse*, an ecclesiastic title neither involving vows nor preventing marriage, but which allowed her to keep her belongings and gave her the honorific title *Madame de Chastenay*.[19]

De Chastenay's parents provided equal education to their children, regardless of their gender, which was quite unusual for the time and context they lived in. They furnished the siblings with the best tutors, who provided common lessons for both children in all fields of study.[20] Victorine also spent a short period in the 1780s under the tutelage of Madame de Genlis (1746–1830), who was in charge of the education of the *Duc*

[15] "la géométrie, l'algèbre, la sphère, toutes les mathématiques élémentaires" (Chastenay, *Mémoires* 1896, 1: p. 38).

[16] Chastenay, *Mémoires* 1896, 1: p. 31.

[17] Chastenay, *Mémoires* 1896, 1: p. 35.

[18] "Je lisais beaucoup, je faisais des extraits des ouvrages, des plans des ouvrages, des traductions, des poèmes même. J'avais peu de moments disponibles, je les passais avec mon frère, je causais ave. mes parents, j'allais me prénommer […] je voyais le soir quelques visites […]" (Chastenay, *Mémoires* 1896, 1: p. 49).

[19] This title ensured social and financial independence for young noblewomen. Both parents needed to belong to the ancient French nobility. There were around twenty five such congregations in France, which were ended by the Revolution. Victorine de Chastenay kept the honorific title *Madame* and the attached respectability, but she lost her ecclesiastic *benefice* (annuity) after 1790.

[20] At the time, it was exceptional for a girl to be educated the same as a boy for such a long period. Girls from privileged backgrounds studied poetry, drawing, music, literature, history and arithmetic, but very rarely algebra, geometry, science, or Latin; subjects reserved for boys.

*d'*Orléans family, including the future king, Louis Philippe (1773–1850). Chastenay judged Genlis's taste as "rather mediocre" and the Orleans family's educators as "second level […] masters in every field."[21] This criticism of the education provided by the "unofficial governess" of a *prince de sang* suggests the very high level to which Chastenay had been meticulously taught.[22] These experiences helped her to master courtly manners, and familiarized her with the most politically powerful players of the coming decades. As she was growing and taking on more and more social responsibilities (such as visits or household activities), she devoted part of her nights to reading and writing. Chastenay encountered in books and scholarly journals these endeavours in literature, poetry, history, science, politics, philosophy, and foreign languages. She wrote: "I was reading instead of sleeping. Sometimes I would get up restless and write in a journal of facts and thoughts…."[23] Here Chastenay mobilizes rhetoric to fashion herself as a fully-fledged scholarly author whose commitment to knowledges was beyond questioning.

Chastenay's habit of taking notes started when she was an infant and would last until she passed away. She wrote about her most striking thoughts concerning books and journals she had read or about important events of the day. The practice of note-taking, which was common among *savants* of the period, helped to construct and to transmit knowledges.[24] As Anne Blair has noted:

> The transmission served by personal notes most often operates within one individual's experience—from a moment of reading and note taking to a later moment when the notes are read and sometimes rearranged and used

[21] "assez médiocre"; "les maîtres en tout genre [..] de second ordre" (Chastenay, *Mémoires* 1896, 1: p. 54).

[22] "gouverneure officieuse". Princes of the blood were entrusted to male tutors around age seven. Madame de Genlis could not officially occupy this post because of her gender, but she still exercised official prerogatives because of her relationship with the future king.

[23] "[…] je lisais au lieu de dormir. Quelquefois, je me levais agitée, j'écrivais un journal de faits et de réflexions" (Chastenay, *Mémoires* 1896, 1: p. 115).

[24] For more information concerning the popularity of note-taking, and the increasing use of reading notes since at least the sixteenth century, see for example Nicoli, Miriam. *Les savants et les livres: autour d'Albrecht von Haller (1708–1777) et Samuel-Auguste Tissot (1728–1797)*. Geneve: Slatkine, 2013; Blair, Ann. "Note Taking as an Art of Transmission." *Critical Inquiry* 31, no. 1 (2004): 85–107; and Daston, Lorraine. "Taking Note(s)." *Isis* 95, no. 3 (2004): 443–448.

> in articulating a thought. But personal notes can also be shared with others, on a limited scale with family and friends and on a wider scale through publication, notably in genres that compile useful reading notes for others.[25]

In Chastenay's case, both private and public examples were present. As a young woman, she reserved certain subjects (such as botany) to private practice, while others (such as history) enjoyed wider circulation as published works. Within this context, note-taking played an essential part in some *savants*' practices, since it offered speedier access to information, aided in memorization, and participated in constructing the *savants*' credibility by referencing the knowledges of other established *savants*. The importance of note-taking for Chastenay is readily noticed: she used them systematically and gave them a standardized structure which can be divided into two parts. First, the facts: the title of the work she read, the date when she wrote, and the key notions appeared after being systematically introduced by "I have just read…."[26] Second, she expressed her thoughts about the style, her interest in the topic, and the feelings the work elicited. All were written down by Chastenay as a part of her reading notes.[27] She regularly used these notes as a reminder of what she had learned and to determine her level of progress upon rereading a text. The way Victorine de Chastenay worked was shared by many eighteenth-century scholars, both male and female, in more or less structured and recurring forms. Émilie Du Châtelet's or Jérôme Lalande's archives also present notes for further studies, with corrections and comments.[28] This form of note-taking had become common since at least the sixteenth century, as illustrated by the following pages from Ortelius's notebooks (Fig. 1).[29]

[25] Blair, *Note Taking*, p. 85.

[26] "Je viens de lire" ADCO E SUP 378/*bis*, /*ter*, /5, /6, /7, /8, /9, /10.

[27] It would also be interesting to know if Victorine de Chastenay annotated her books. Unfortunately, until now it has not been possible to reconstruct her library.

[28] Jérôme Lalande (1732–1807) was a famous French astronomer. Such notes can be found in his archive case at the Bibliothèque Interuniversitaire—Sorbonne, Fonds Victor Cousin, MSVC 99.

[29] Refer for example to Blair, Ann. "Student Manuscripts and the Textbook." In *Scholarly Knowledge: Textbooks in Early Modern Europe*, edited by Emidio Campi, Simone De Angelis, Anja-Silvia Goeing, and Anthony Grafton. Genève: Librairie Droz, 2008, p. 39–74 or Bustarret, Claire. "Usages Des Supports d'écriture Au XVIIIe Siècle: Une Esquisse Codicologique". *Genesis* 34 (2012): 37–65 to see some other samples.

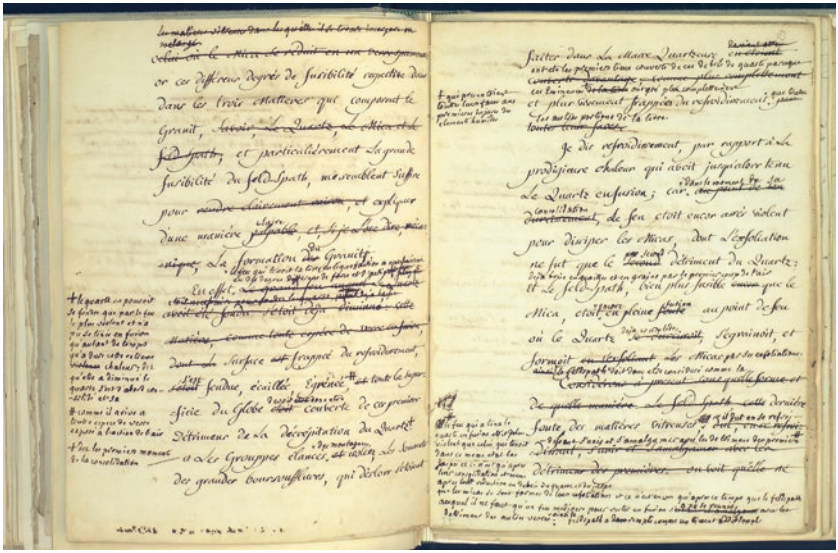

Fig. 1 Reproduction of a collection of notes by Abraham Ortelius (1527–98), already published in (Blair 2004). (Courtesy of the Museum Plantin-Moretus, Antwerp –UNESCO, World Heritage, MS 285)

Let us now analyse more deeply and materially Chastenay's practices of knowledge in the making.[30] Between 1811 and 1812, the *chanoinesse* received private courses in astronomy given by François Arago (1786–1853) from the Paris Observatory in her household. The first lesson, on 10 November 1811, followed her reading of de Bailly's *Histoire de l'astronomie*.[31] The astronomer's teaching style was based on the pupil reading a particular work and asking questions of the *savant* about those items they had failed to understand. Similar methods were used by other *savants*. Thus the outlines of the lesson were sketched from a single point

[30] This analysis is inspired by Catherine Richardson's, Tara Hambling's and David Gaimster's work on the early modern period, where one remains "curious about the things with which people interacted, the spaces in which they did so, the social relationships which cluster around their associations […] and the way knowledge travels around their associations" (Richardson, Catherine, Tara Hamling, and David Gaimster. *The Routledge Handbook of Material Culture in Early Modern Europe*. London: Routledge, 2016, Introduction).

[31] Bailly, Jean-Sylvain. *Histoire de l'astronomie Ancienne, Depuis Son Origine Jusqu'à l'établissement de l'école d'Alexandrie*. Paris:Chez les Frères Debure, 1775.

of departure: the simple presentation of a world system. After an interruption of several months, the ten lessons were finished on 4 July 1812, despite Chastenay's request for just a couple more. Each lesson was painstakingly noted in one of her many notebooks or on note paper. It generally was written on four pages, and composed into forty folios covering the entirety of Chastenay's lessons.[32] She would take notes during the lesson, and later clean them up through recopying.

The structure of her courses' manuscripts, as seen in Fig. 2, is often the same. In general, she noted on the first page the date, the number of the

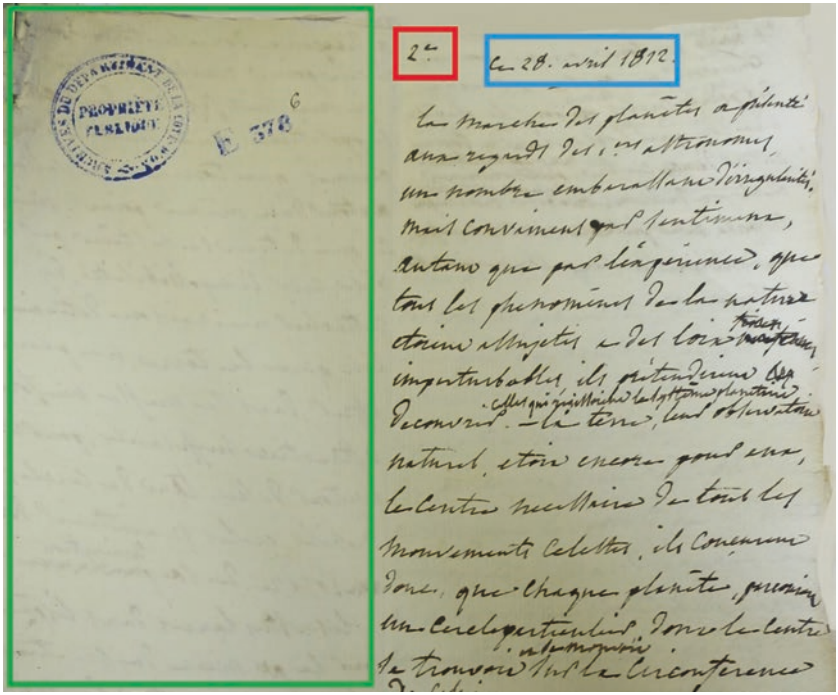

Fig. 2 Notes from Chastenay's second astronomy lesson with Arago, 28 April 1812. The blue rectangle indicates the date, and the red rectangle, the number of the lesson. The green rectangle highlights the space left free for future corrections or additions. (*Archives départementales de la Côte-d'Or,* E SUP. 378/6. Reproduction Isabelle Lémonon-Waxin, 2016)

[32] ADCO E SUP 378/6.

lesson and eventually its general title. Half of the page on the right was meant to receive her notes, while the other half was left blank, eventually to be used for corrections when necessary. In such a case, Chastenay would cross out the initial text on the right hand of the page and indicate by a cross the place where to insert the new paragraph on the left hand, as shown in Fig. 3. More study would be necessary to understand if this notebook consisted of notes taken during lessons or those she reworked and cleaned up afterwards, one or several times.[33] There are many cases of the blank half of the page having been used for corrections: added materials, references to another lesson, or improvement to the text, including multiple corrections with paragraphs being crossed out and re-written and then crossed out and rewritten again.

Most of Chastenay's notes were in the form of text. She believed in the efficiency and superiority of the "philosophical style"—using only phrases and not drawings or formulas—to explain something. As she wrote about geometry:

> I have always believed that one could discuss geometry using philosophical logic and, thus, mathematical truths would all be eligible for presentation to the mind through a series of abstract propositions of rigorous accuracy […] I know that any image would grasp this truth at a glance, but for my purposes it is enough to show howsoever one's intelligence might have grasped it.[34]

Chastenay felt that textual expressions were a sign of deeper understanding. She sometimes used drawings to show the results of her botanical observations, but Chastenay never used them in astronomy, geometry, physics, or chemistry, even when she felt a drawing might have made the explanation easier. Thus, her approach to knowledges matches better the encyclopedic vision of earlier eighteenth-century philosophers rather than

[33] A detailed analysis is proceeding as part of the digital editing of Chastenay's manuscripts, https://eman.hypotheses.org/3059. It might show the process of knowledge acquisition.

[34] "J'ai toujours cru, que l'on pourrait traiter de la géométrie dans un ordre philosophique et que les vérités mathématiques seraient toutes susceptibles de s'offrir à l'esprit, par une suite de propositions abstraites, et d'une justesse rigoureuse. […] Je sais que la moindre figure ferait saisir à l'œil cette vérité, mais il suffit au but que je me propose, que l'intelligence l'ait saisi" (ADCO E SUP 378/25).

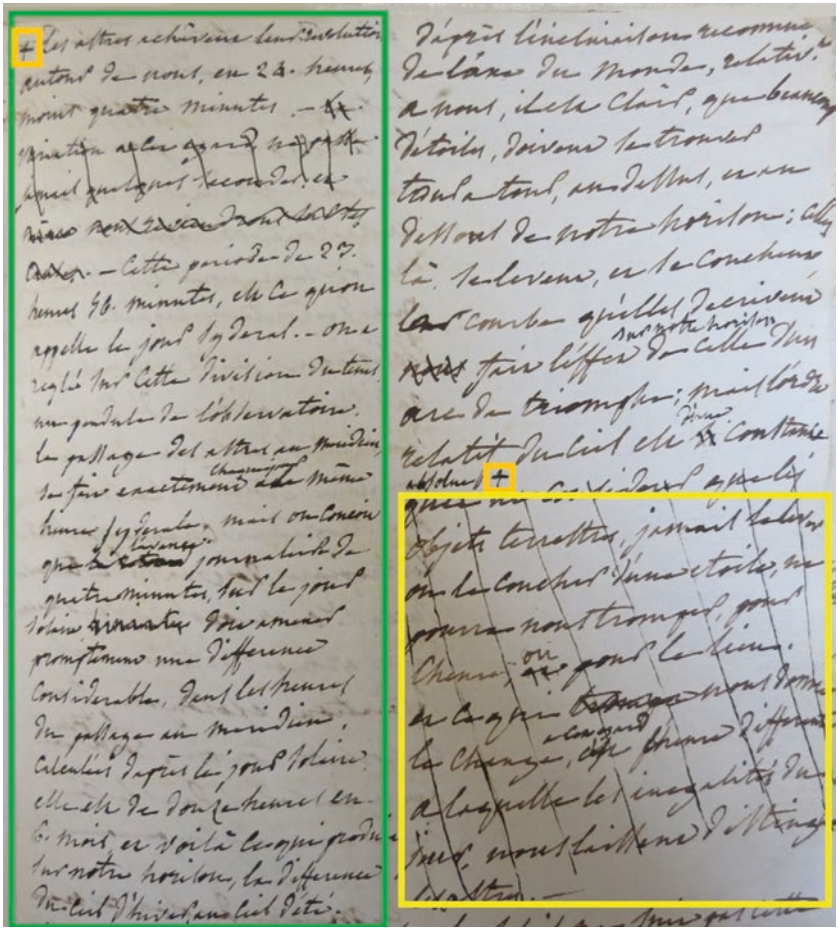

Fig. 3 Notes from Chastenay's second astronomy lesson with Arago, 28 April 1812. The yellow rectangle indicates the crossed-out text. The orange ones mark the crosses showing where the new paragraph added on the left should go on the right hand of the page. (*Archives départementales de la Côte-d'Or*, E SUP. 378/6. Reproduction Isabelle Lémonon-Waxin, 2016)

the more specialized approach of later nineteenth-century scientists. Her knowledge in the making in science derives from this vision as she testified herself:

> When I was studying them, I did not have much taste for the exact sciences […] but since I understood that these determined bases [demonstrations and elementary arithmetic] were those of a scale without term; since the earth considered in this respect, was for me no more than an observatory from which one guesses the heavens; since the natural sciences have taught me that the universal author first amuses our pride in all things with very exact consequences, in order to then suddenly rob his works of what these consequences were of more subtlety, I have considered with admiration this chain of simple truths whose ideality makes them right and which govern all matter.[35]

Chastenay used these philosophical approaches and styles, as well as a strong structuring of note-taking for many years and in many spaces. She developed this habit in the privacy of her household, and then she exported it later into institutional spaces.

Adapting the Household's Privacy to Reconcile Writing and Social Obligations

The numerous ego documents left by Chastenay act as direct witnesses to the historical period that they traverse, but they also speak to her state of mind, her emotions, and her motivations.[36] This rich documentary resource, most often written up in the privacy of her bedroom, conveys the importance of research at home for this perpetual student. Chastenay

[35] "Je n'avais pas, quand je les étudiais, beaucoup de gout pour les sciences exactes […] mais depuis que j'ai compris que ces bases déterminées étaient celles d'une échelle sans terme; depuis que la terre considérée sous ce rapport, n'a plus été pour moi qu'un observatoire d'où l'on devine les cieux; depuis que les sciences naturelles m'ont appris que l'auteur universel amuse d'abord en toutes choses notre orgueil, de conséquences bien exactes, pour dérober ensuite ses œuvres tout à coup à ce que ces conséquences avaient de plus subtil, j'ai considéré avec admiration cet enchainement de vérités simples dont l'idéalité fait la justesse et qui régissent toute la matière" (Chastenay, *Mémoires* 1896, 1: p. 38–39).

[36] Considered mainly through reading notes, personal and scientific diaries, and autobiographical writings where Chastenay often precisely described her emotions and judgements.

wrote of her youth that she "passionately loved studying."[37] She even wondered where this passion came from: "A passionate fondness for studying must support a similar [fondness] for liberty."[38] At the time of the Revolution, Chastenay rebelled against a social order that neglected women's education:

> As a member of the aristocracy, I already had to suffer ancient dowagers, and the burdens inflicted on me by mediocrity, which called itself common sense, hating knowledge for the overall nation and talent in young women […] The idea of being nothing when merit meant everything would never let me close my eyes: I would rather read than sleep […] so that I not be misunderstood, I was passionate for glory, I only wanted glory.[39]

This overheated statement represents an image seldom seen of a young noblewoman, quite distant from the timid, discrete girl who was first presented to society during the *Ancien Régime*. Merit and glory, the prerogatives of men, suddenly seemed accessible to Chastenay at the beginning of the Revolution, thanks to the unconventional level of education she had received and the pledge of independence incorporated into her ecclesiastic title. It was under the protection of private life that Chastenay felt she could indulge in such confessions, which would not be published until well after her death.[40] These words, even coming from a noblewoman, could not be accepted by the gender norms of her time, which made women the guardians of family values subject to masculine authority.[41]

[37] "J'aimais l'étude avec passion" (Chastenay, *Mémoires* 1896, 1: p. 35–36).

[38] "Le goût passionné de l'étude doit tenir quelque chose de celui de la liberté" (Chastenay, *Mémoires* 1896, 1: p. 29).

[39] "J'avais déjà eu à souffrir de l'aristocratie des vieilles douairières et du fardeau dont m'avait accablée la médiocrité, qui s'appelait bon sens et détestait le savoir dans la nation et les talents dans une jeune fille. […] L'idée de n'être rien quand le mérite allait être tout, ne me laissait pas fermer les yeux: je lisais au lieu de dormir. […] qu'on ne s'y trompe pas, c'était la gloire qui me passionnait, c'était la gloire elle seule" (Chastenay, *Mémoires* 1896, 1: p. 115).

[40] In her will, Chastenay organized the legacy of her manuscripts. She charged her executor to have her *Mémoires* published after her death, but this did not occur until 1896, by her executor's grand-daughter's husband.

[41] Fayolle, Caroline. *La Femme Nouvelle. Genre, Éducation, Révolution (1789–1830)*. Paris: CTHS, 2017, p. 23.

After the final upheavals of the Revolution had sent the Chastenay family to prison and temporarily separated the *chanoinesse* from her studies, she immersed herself once again in the delights of scientific learning. She also published her first translations of English novels, and became a close friend of Empress Josephine (1763–1814), Napoléon's first wife. Chastenay's nobility, ecclesiastic title, and education placed her within a very broad political and scientific network at the beginning of the nineteenth century. She benefited from a great level of respectability, had been raised to 'shine' at court, and knew exactly how to behave. Using her network of relationships rather than money, Chastenay became a sponsor for many scholars and friends. Her status protected her from the harsh criticisms often levelled against *femmes savantes* she faced as a teenager.[42] Thus Chastenay was able to study as much as she wanted as long as she respected social and gendered rules. One of these social gender rules was the understanding that only certain revelations from private life could be made public. For this reason, domestic spaces became key concerns in the construction of knowledges.[43] As the place where knowledges were produced, the home has become, since the 1990s, a vested interest of historians of the sciences.[44] For Alix Cooper, the home should be considered as a scientific institution, a concept to which one need not subscribe in order to grasp the importance of domestic spaces to historians of the sciences.[45] As envisioned by Deborah Harkness, the home becomes a transition space between, on the one hand, the monasteries and universities of medieval times and, on the other hand, the laboratories and academies of modern science. Within this concept, the household became, since at least the

[42] The *persona* of a *femme savante* was strongly marked by negative prejudice in France through the fictional character *Philaminte* in *Les femmes savantes* by Molière (1672); who was a symbol of superficiality and ridicule (Chastenay, *Mémoires* 1896, 1: p. 116).

[43] Ariès, Philippe. *Histoire de la vie privée*. Paris: Seuil, 1986; Chartier, Roger. *Pratiques de la lecture*. Paris: Rivages, 1985.

[44] Terrall, Mary. "Masculine Knowledge, the Public Good, and the Scientific Household of Réaumur." *Osiris* 30, no. 1 (2015): 182–201; McKeon, Michael. *The Secret History of Domesticity: Public, Private, and the Division of Knowledge*. Baltimore: JHU Press, 2006; and Algazi, Gadi. "Scholars in Households: Refiguring the Learned Habitus, 1480–1550." *Science in Context* 16, no. 1–2 (2003): 9–42.

[45] Cooper, Alix. "Homes and Households." In *The Cambridge History of Science*, edited by Katharine Park and Lorraine Daston, Cambridge University Press, 2006, p. 224–237.

sixteenth century, a space considered deeply feminine.[46] Exploring this space enables an archaeology of scientific practices of knowledge in the making: located in, for example, the kitchen, the nursery, and the garden. These practices were organized and carried out by the women and men of the household, which had become an increasingly private and intimate concept by the end of the seventeenth century.[47] The evolution of the concept of privacy between the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries led to a reconfiguration of spaces and social relations.[48] In effect, as François Simonet-Tenant notes:

> the proven need for a room of one's own, where one can protect their individual privacy, their need to fully belong, their proof of membership, and their need to construct in the material world the density of relationships maintained by a sense of self…[49]

constrained physical spaces in seventeenth-century bourgeois and noble households. At that time, the bedroom, previously considered a space both for sleeping and for socializing, slowly lost its social functions to become a space for inward-looking withdrawal. This "room of one's own", which could also become the space where a scholar or researcher would produce knowledges, was transformed by the practices performed

[46] Harkness, Deborah E. "Managing an Experimental Household: The Dees of Mortlake and the Practice of Natural Philosophy." *Isis* 88, no. 2 (1997): 247–62. I share the criticisms of this conception by Rebecca Rogers who underlines that "the house […] brings together public male and female spaces," even though it is often presented as a private female space (Rogers, Rebecca. "Le Sexe de l'espace: Réflexions Sur l'histoire Des Femmes Aux XVIIIe-XXe Siècles dans Quelques Travaux Américains, Anglais et Français." In *Les Espaces de l'historien*, edited by Jean-Claude Waquet, Odile Goerg, and Rebecca Rogers. Strasbourg: Presses universitaires de Strasbourg, 2000, p. 181–202).

[47] Oertzen, Christine von, Maria Rentetzi, and Elizabeth S. Watkins. "Finding Science in Surprising Places: Gender and the Geography of Scientific Knowledge Introduction to 'Beyond the Academy: Histories of Gender and Knowledge'." *Centaurus* 55, no.2 (2013): 73–80.

[48] Simonet-Tenant, Françoise. "À La Recherche Des Prémices d'une Culture de l'intime." *Itinéraires* 4 (2009): 39–62; Pardailhé-Galabrun, Annik. *La naissance de l'intime: 3000 foyers parisiens XVIIe-XVIIIe siècles.* Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1988.

[49] "le besoin éprouvé d'un espace à soi, d'un espace où abriter une vie privée individuelle, une volonté de s'appartenir pleinement, d'éprouver cette appartenance et de donner une existence matérielle à la densité de la relation que l'on entretient avec soi-même" (Simonet-Tenant, *À La Recherche*, p. 42).

inside of it.[50] Thus, an exploration of the home establishes interactions within and between spaces, including their overlaps and transformations. For example, a space could be used intimately among the family in the morning and become a scene for public receptions in the afternoon. The household where private and public scientific practices succeeded one another was ruled by numerous social customs, many of them gender-specific. At the beginning of the nineteenth century, these gender norms were often imposed on domestic spaces that could ensure the decency of women. Customs fixed the hours when knowledge-making practices would be appropriate; who could participate in such practices (in line with their level of recognition); the types of acceptable practices, and so forth.

Chastenay left an important testimony of this kind of regulation. Her valuable account helps to locate a great part of her learning practices in her room, a private space where she engaged alone in the individual construction of her knowledges from her childhood to her old age. She emphasized that she was "accustomed […] to finding my[her]self a main object [of thinking] in the room."[51] When she was an infant and a teenager, the *chanoinesse* would sometimes share a bedroom with her brother so that they could study together as much as possible. She "saw few people, but so many masters and of so many species that they were already a society. […she] had dinner and supper in a room with [her] brother, in order to save time."[52] From 1790 to 1800, she described the spatio-temporal organization of her days in her family's private mansion, probably located at *18 rue Royale* in Paris:

> Mom's old bedroom became a small drawing room, which, under the circumstances was quite adequate: I would dress there in the morning, study there part of the day, at my desk hidden behind a folding screen: as soon as Mom started receiving visitors [in the afternoon] I would move into her private bedroom my books and manuscripts.[53]

[50] Woolf, Virginia. *Une chambre à soi. (A Room of One's Own)*. Translated by Clara Malraux. Paris: Robert Marin, 1951.

[51] "je me trouvais si accoutumée […] à me trouver dans la chambre un objet principal" (Chastenay, *Mémoires* 1896, 1: p. 50).

[52] "je voyais peu de monde, mais tant de maîtres et de tant d'espèces étaient déjà une société. Je dînais et soupais dans une chambre avec mon frère, afin d'économiser le temps" (Chastenay, *Mémoires* 1896, 1: p. 41).

[53] "L'ancienne chambre de maman était devenue un petit salon, qui dans les circonstances était plus convenable; je m'y habillais le matin, j'y étudiais dans une partie du jour; un paravent y cachait mon bureau: dès que maman recevait du monde, je transportais dans sa chambre à coucher mes livres et mes cahiers" (Chastenay, *Mémoires* 1897, 2: p. 150).

Implicit rules clearly constrained the ways in which Chastenay could practice knowledge-making. It had to remain hidden from all but her most intimate relations (her immediate family and their servants). Was this a gendered prohibition? We need not think it was more than a custom that probably derived from the sociability norms associated with the daily visitors received by Chastenay's mother, which limited the spatio-temporal organization of knowledge production and circulation. A legacy of eighteenth-century sociability influenced the organization of space through rococo architectural styling. Based on beauty, comfort, intimacy, and elegance, it favoured exchanges between beautiful minds (*beaux-esprits*) through the development of new room types: living rooms, studies, drawing rooms, etc.[54] The pomp of courtly life gave way to the intimacy of smaller rooms in private mansions. These rooms were furnished with a number of aesthetically necessary objects.

The folding screen, of Chinese inspiration, was a frequent part of room furnishings, not least because it could be used to make adjustments to the room as required by intimacy and *decorum*. In the Chastenay mansion, a folding screen announced the multi-functional aspects of the small drawing room where the *chanoinesse* and her mother dressed, read, and received friends. Because of the folding screen, Victorine could maintain some privacy from servants and her parents (while dressing or writing, for example), or hide the mess of her books from close friends. This screen represented order that conformed to social conventions and gender norms which imposed humility and discretion on women. Chastenay was taught to respect the customs of nobility. Thus, she mobilized concealment as a social strategy that enabled her to pursue her studies. Behind the privacy afforded by a folding screen in the small drawing room, Chastenay would write in her journal that she wished for glory, freely expressing her emotions and motivations. Once in society, on the other side of that screen, she would shoulder a more public role, following conventional guidelines that she also used to her advantage.

[54] Scott, Katie. *The Rococo Interior: Decoration and Social Spaces in Early Eighteenth-Century Paris*. London: Yale University Press, 1995.

Privacy in Institutional Spaces

Parisian institutions such as the Royal College (after the Revolution, the *Collège de France*), Botanical Gardens, or the Observatory were rarely publicly open to women who acted on the construction of scientific knowledges during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. In private, women were permitted access based on a male *savant*'s introduction; and they could circulate more or less freely based on their level of recognition. Women's knowledge-making practices could be the same as men's as long as they remained informal. Women were publicly and more easily welcomed into institutions as auditors, through public courses, or during important social events such as the public Assembly of the Royal College, for example.[55]

In Chastenay's case, the doors of these institutions were also informally opened to her private practices in natural history alongside some of the most influential savants of her time. She took private chemistry lessons with Chevreul (1786–1889) in his lab and in the *Jardin des plantes* (*Muséum*) in Paris in 1814.[56] Thanks to René Desfontaines (1750–1833), director of the *Muséum*, whom Chastenay had known since infancy, the doors of the botany laboratory at the *Muséum* were opened wide. There she devoted her time to numerous observational studies in close proximity to her fellow *savants*. Around 1811 or 1812 she presented her botanical observations to her instructor, providing a precise account:

> I went to see M. Desfontaines to have him read my descriptions of the cherry or the apricot; I communicated my comments on M. de Jussieu's system of classification, and on its mixture of an artificial system [of classification] with the natural method; which most people bother with now only to pretend that they have found it [...] My remarks amused M. Desfontaines more than once, and he was helpful in having me communicate them to M. de Candolle, his favourite student; and I can remember with much fondness those mornings of instruction with two very distinguished gentlemen who greatly honoured me with their attentions, enlightening me with their intellect; and almost availing themselves of my advice. It was often in the

[55] Women's easier access to public courses since the eighteenth century is mentioned in Belhoste, Bruno. "Un espace public d'enseignement aux marges de l'université. Les cours publics à Paris à la fin du XVIIIe siècle et au début du XIXe siècle." In *Les universités dans la ville, XVIe-XVIIIe siècles*, edited by Thierry Amalou and Boris Noguès, Rennes: PUR, 2013, p. 217–236, among others.

[56] She took 34 lessons with Chevreul from 24 April to 3 December 1814. ADCO E SUP 378/25.

> laboratories of the Botanical Gardens that I would find M. Desfontaines. […] I would meet M. Mirbel there, and he would teach me to find tracheae [xylem] of new growth and in leaves.[57]

Under the tutelage of some of the most renowned botanists of her time, many of whom she could count among her closest friends, Chastenay was encouraged to continue her serious and hard-working studies in natural history. On May 1813, during a visit to the botanical laboratories when Desfontaines, Deleuze (1753–1835), and Mirbel were present, she questioned them on a number of complicated issues in botany, i.e. the acclimatization of trees and double flowers. On this occasion, she also observed for the first time the parenchyma (soft tissue) of a plant:

> The parenchyma is a marrow. M. Desfontaines, strangely enough, is the one who taught M. D'Aubenton to distinguish it, when his [D'Aubenton] attempt was unsuccessful. I, for my part, had a lot of fun seeing them. When I recognized them for the first time, I was like M. Jourdain speaking in prose.[58]

[57] "J'allais voir M. Desfontaines, je lui faisais lire mes descriptions de la cerise ou de l'abricot; je lui communiquais mes observations sur la classification de M. de Jussieu, et sur le mélange qui s'y trouvait d'un système artificiel avec la méthode naturelle, qu'on ne cherche peut-être encore que pour avoir prétendu la trouver. […] Mes remarques plus d'une fois amusèrent M. Desfontaines; il eut l'obligeance de me les faire communiquer devant lui à M. de Candolle, son élève le plus chéri, et je puis me rappeler avec un sentiment bien doux, les matinées instructives et agréables où ces hommes si distingués voulaient bien m'honorer de leurs attentions, m'éclairer de leurs lumières, et se prévaloir presque de mon suffrage. C'était parfois au laboratoire du Jardin des Plantes que je trouvais M. Desfontaines. […] J'y vis M. de Mirbel, et ce fut lui, je crois bien, qui m'appris à distinguer les trachées dans les jeunes pousses, et jusque dans les feuilles" (Chastenay, *Mémoires* 1897, 2: p. 188). "M de Jussieu" is likely Antoine Laurent de Jussieu (1748–1836), who published in 1789 his botanical classifications *Genera plantarum* based on the "natural method" of his uncle Bernard de Jussieu (1699–1777) and the "artificial system" of Carl von Linné (1707–1778). Augustin Pyrame de Candolle (1778–1841) and Charles François Brisseau de Mirbel (1776–1854) studied botany with Desfontaines and other famous botanists. I am deeply grateful to Gilles André and Marc Philippe for their invaluable insights about eighteenth century botany and graphological expertise.

[58] "Le parenchyme est une moelle. M. Desfontaines, chose assez étrange, est celui qui a appris à M. D'Aubenton [Daubenton] à les distinguer, sous ses yeux qu'elles frappaient vainement. Je me suis, pour mon compte, beaucoup amusée à en voir. Je les reconnaissais aussi pour la première fois. J'étais comme M. Jourdain faisant de la prose" (ADCO, E SUP 378/6). Louis Daubenton (1716–1799) was director of the *Muséum*. He was already dead at the time of Victorine de Chastenay's observation. M Jourdain is a fictional character from the play *Le bourgeois gentilhomme* by Molière (1670). In the course of the play, M Jourdain discovers from his philosophy teacher that he is speaking prose without knowing it.

The botanical laboratories of the *Muséum*, the pinnacle of institutional naturalist learning, were thus also a workbench for the apprenticeship of Chastenay. There she learned to implement experimental practices in botany, within a socially-limited setting initiated through her personal and privileged relationship with Desfontaines. Of course, her social position and her long friendship with Desfontaines facilitated Chastenay's integration into a clearly masculine institution, where women were excluded from all official functions.[59] However, at the beginning of the nineteenth century, her presence reveals the unofficial circulation of some women within the *Muséum*'s laboratories. Chastenay's scientific practices were spatially dynamic and can be divided into three main parts. First, she would carry out preliminary investigations on a particular subject, reading books and journals and writing reports on her readings in a quiet and withdrawn space at home. Then she would implement a more learned study, an apprenticeship with a *savant*, which was sometimes organized at her home, but quite often took place at the *savant*'s home or institution. Next, she would correct her notes at home, which would lead to further questions discussed with the *savant*.

Several examples of such practices remain in Chastenay's archives. Her notes on collaborations in the *Muséum* or in the Paris Observatory with institutional *savants* consist of narration about her visits combined with observations she made during them.[60] The structure of these manuscripts (in the sense of handwritten pages, as seen in Fig. 4) is quite different from the one exposed in Figs. 2 and 3. Only the date when she wrote appears as a title, and the text fills the entire page, without any additions or crossings-out. She indicated the visit had occurred a short time before (less than one or two days). This suggests a cleaned-up version of notes she might have taken during her observations, presented later in the form of a diary of facts and thoughts. The pressure on the quill also gives the text a temporal rhythm.[61] This comparison provides temporal evidence about her note-taking practices. This documentary and temporal evidence can be explained by the nature of the documents: between ones that are reports of visits probably written afterwards and notes taken during a lesson at home.

[59] Actually, Madeleine Françoise Basseporte (1701–1780) was officially the only woman to be part of the *Muséum*'s staff as a painter for the King's garden from 1743.

[60] References can be found in ADCO E SUP 378/25, ADCO E SUP 378/7 and Chastenay, *Mémoires* 1897, 2: p. 158.

[61] This variation in the pressure is seen between the first and the second half of the text in Fig. 4.

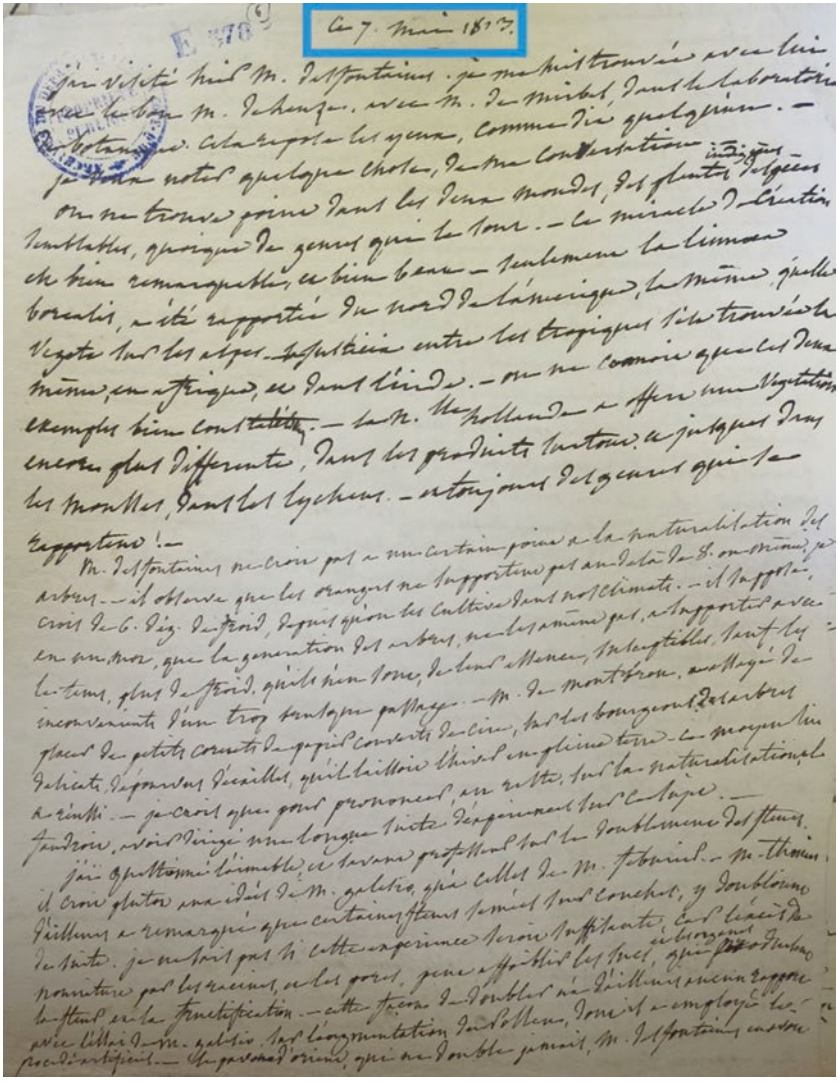

Fig. 4 Notes from Chastenay's visit to Desfontaine's botanical lab at the *Muséum*, March 7th 1813. The blue rectangle indicates the date. (*Archives départementales de la Côte-d'Or*, E SUP. 378/6. Reproduction Isabelle Lémonon-Waxin, 2016)

Chastenay's knowledge in the making seems very structured with different categories of class notes (lessons' drafts, cleaned-up lessons, and one-off lessons as diaries). Within these categories, it also appears materially and temporally organized. Further investigations would be needed to fully understand her material practices of knowledge in the making.

The structure of the *chanoinesse*'s handwritten pages is further visible in her notes from 1812–13 about Cuvier's public courses on natural history at the *Collège de France*. As she testified in her *Memoirs*, Chastenay would go to the *Collège* in the afternoon, where she would take initial notes that display signs of her note-taking strategies and methodology. She would return home at 5:00 PM, and after the evening's social visits, she would write a clean version of her lesson notes during the night from 1:00 AM onwards.[62] Thus, the intimacy of her bedroom allowed her to prepare her text and to be ready for the following public lessons. A clean version of these notes is still available in the archives.[63] It takes the form displayed in Fig. 4 (a full handwritten page without having divided, added, or crossed anything out). But at the top of the lesson, the date, the number of the lesson and the name of the professor are marked. Her note-taking activity was completed by analyses in the form of appendixes, as presented, for example, in Fig. 5 about Cuvier's classes. Here, Chastenay wrote for herself an index of the scholars quoted during the course, and the objects, century, and location of their studies. The objects are classified both by date and by disciplines, such as chemistry, medicine, botany, and mining.

Chastenay left traces in her *Mémoires* about some of the difficulties she encountered in attending public lectures. To take part in Cuvier's course on natural history at the *Collège de France*, she first contacted her long-time friend and nobleman, the botanist Louis Aubert du Petit-Thouars (1758–1831) to act as a go-between. As a woman, social norms would

[62] She wrote in 1812: "I followed M Cuvier's thirty-five lessons without missing one. M. du Petit-Thouars brought me back home, as it was nearly five [pm], and the day was already absolutely over. […] I had dinner, then came the toilet, and evenings more or less extended. Often a little tired, I confess, it was at one o'clock in the morning, when I got home, that I had to write my lesson; I wrote them all". Original text: "j'ai suivi sans en manquer une les trente-cinq leçons de M. Cuvier. M. du Petit-Thouars me ramenait, car il était près de cinq heures, et le jour était déjà absolument fini. […] je dinaîs, puis venait la toilette, et des soirées plus ou moins étendues. Souvent, un peu fatiguée, je l'avoue, c'était à une heure du matin quand j'étais rentrée chez moi, qu'il fallait écrire ma leçon; je les ai toutes rédigées" (Chastenay, *Mémoires* 1897, 2:189).

[63] ADCO E SUP 378/25.

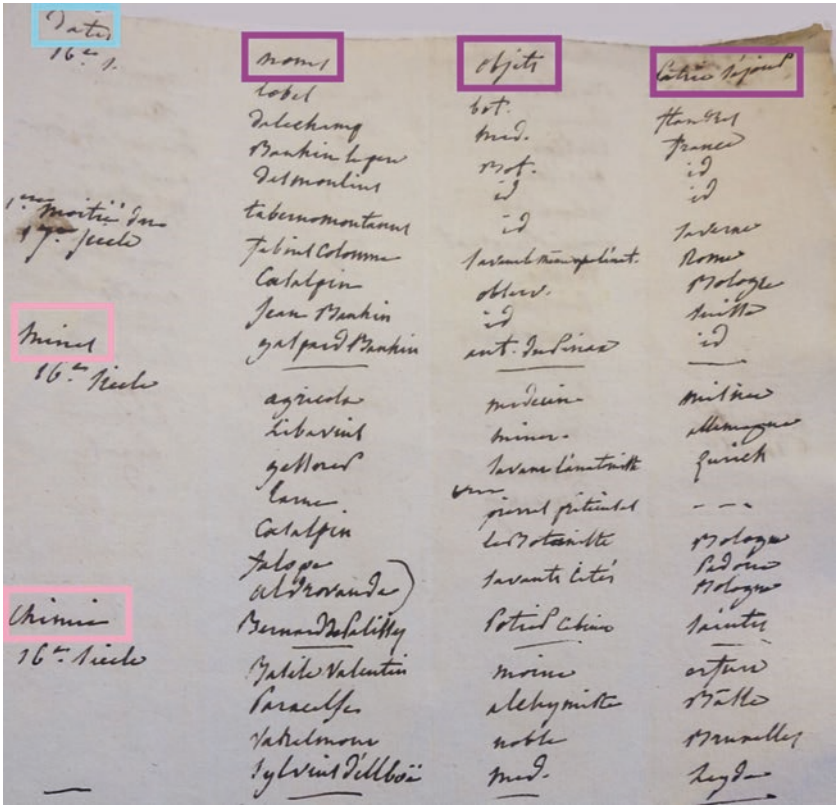

Fig. 5 Index from Chastenay's notes about Cuvier's public lessons on natural history at the *Collège de France*, written on March 26, 1813. This index is entitled *Appendices des leçons de M. Cuvier*. The light blue rectangle indicates the column of the period (here sixteenth and seventeenth centuries), and the purple rectangles the columns of names, objets, and places. From the sixteenth century onwards, the names of scientific disciplines (anatomy, chemistry, etc.) appear inside the column of the period (pink rectangles). (*Archives départementales de la Côte-d'Or,* E SUP. 378/25. Reproduction Isabelle Lémonon-Waxin, 2016)

condemn her for remaining alone with a large group of men. Cuvier, well aware of this issue, let her know that "as to propriety, […] Mme Cuvier and her daughter would also be attending the lectures," so the obstacle would be overcome.[64] Then, du Petit-Thouars escorted her to and from her home to the lectures for her reputation and safety, thus, she would not travel alone across Paris. Chastenay also mentioned the obstacles faced by a woman in her forties in 1811 making astronomical observations at the Paris Observatory at night:

> Unfortunately, you can only go in the evening or at night to visit these stars, which I always adore. I could not go alone to the Temple of Urania [the Paris Observatory], I could not even go on foot with a guide: the area is too isolated. Mother even forbade me to go there by carriage; she thought she was pleasing me several times by taking me there in her carriage, but this very complacency on her part could not be pleasing to me: I could not be sure of either the time or the day. Moreover, the talks I came to seek could not, in the presence of my mother, have the character and the kind of scope that, without saying that I was very learned [*savante*], they would undoubtedly have had for me, if I had spoken alone.[65]

Chastenay's critique of gender norms imposed on women for centuries regarding their appearance in a public space is obvious in her words. Going out alone, talking with a man in a public space at night were considered unchaste, which could ruin the good female reputation (then some references to France and female honour). These implicit gendered rules, which regulated both public and private spaces, were a major obstacle to women's investment in astronomical observational practices.

[64] "quant a la convenance, […] Mme Cuvier et sa fille suivraient exactement son cours» (Chastenay, *Mémoires* 1897, 2:189).

[65] "Malheureusement, on peut aller que le soir ou pendant la nuit rendre visite à ces astres, que j'adore toujours. Je ne pouvais aller seule au temple d'Uranie, je ne pouvais même y aller à pied avec un guide: le quartier est trop isolé. Maman m'interdisait même de m'y rendre en fiacre; elle crut plusieurs fois me faire plaisir en m'y menant dans sa voiture, mais cette complaisance très grande de sa part, ne pouvait pas m'être agréable: je ne pouvais être certaine ni de l'heure, ni du jour. De plus, les entretiens que je venais chercher ne pouvaient pas, en présence de maman, avoir le caractère et le genre de portée que, sans me dire bien savante, ils auraient sans doute eus pour moi, si j'avais parlé seule" (Chastenay Chastenay, *Mémoires* 1897, 2: p. 181).

The *chanoinesse*'s example demonstrates that, once again, the location of knowledge production through a gender analysis cannot be simply reduced to the opposition of private-feminine/public-masculine space.[66] As Pauline Schmitt-Pantell states: "The use of the concepts of 'domestic' and 'public' in the study of sex roles calls for the same criticism as that made of the use of the concepts of 'nature' and 'culture'. This opposition seems to be a new variant of the 'reduction of sex categories to their biological definition'".[67]

Conclusion

The case of Victorine de Chastenay clearly shows the extent to which "a room of one's own" was necessary to the practicing *savante*, who required some privacy equally applicable to women and men during their study period. Whatever its configuration, this space necessarily constrained the knowledges produced or acquired inside of it. Conversely, the need to evolve knowledge-making practices could also engender modifications to the original uses for which the space was designed. In this sense, cases involving female *savantes* were not inherently different from their male counterparts. On the other hand, the way these spaces were used was often gender-specific, since those uses were associated with rules of discretion and secrecy rarely applied in men's cases. Even when some women circulated within institutions of learning (such as the *Muséum*'s botany laboratories in the case of Chastenay) in order to participate in the production of knowledges, their presence often remained unofficial: a social visit rather than a scientific one. Nonetheless, the knowledges circulated easily from some women's private spaces of withdrawal into the publications of

[66] See for example, Opitz, Donald L., Bergwik, Staffan and Van Tiggelen, Brigitte. *Domesticity in the Making of Modern Science*. Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015. This opposition is also discussed through the political lens during the early modern period in Becker, Anna. "Gender in the History of Early Modern Political Thought." *The Historical Journal* 60, no.4 (2017): 843–86.

[67] "L'utilisation des concepts de 'domestique' et de 'public' dans l'étude des rôles sexuels appelle la même critique que celle faite de l'emploi des concepts de 'nature' et de 'culture'. Cette opposition paraît être une nouvelle variante de la 'réduction' des catégories de sexe à leur définition biologique". Quoted by Rebecca Rogers in (Rogers, *Le Sexe de l'espace*, note 28).

learned institutions, thanks to the relationships developed by the *savants* alongside of whom these women studied.

This familiarity with *savants*, unusual level of education for a young woman in the early nineteenth century, and high social status, all contributed to the establishment of a favourable environment for the production of Chastenay's knowledges. Respecting the social norms established by her nobility and her gender, Chastenay organized her time and private space to be able to study. She dynamically established a form of knowledge production in between the intimacy of her bedroom, where she prepared her preliminary studies; in the privacy of her home or a lab, where she received private lessons from one or a couple of tutors; and in public exchanges in scholarly institutions and salons. These dynamics were going back and forth between these experiences and locations associated with practical tools such as notebooks and reading notes. This way, Chastenay set up a very structured method to develop her knowledges through note-taking since her childhood, as had some other eighteenth-century learned and privileged women and men. The study initiated in 2020 of her manuscripts, considered for the most part as ego documents, will undoubtedly make it possible in the future to understand better the articulation of her various tools, thanks in particular to digital humanities. The identification of these tools and their uses in relation to various types of knowledges, places, and actors will certainly provide a more detailed understanding of Chastenay's knowledge in the making.

Here, it is through a woman's private practices that knowledge in the making reveals itself, despite the exclusion of her gender from scholarly institutions. However, this exclusion resulted in many learned and privileged women relying on self-censorship and forced reclusion in knowledge production. Privacy was a form of protection of status and credibility for eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century French women who were often considered ridiculous or monstrous in the exercise of knowledge. Thanks to this protection, Victorine de Chastenay left us a precious testimony of the feelings that knowledge in the making awakened in her and that she could hide in the secrecy of her manuscripts written behind a folding screen.

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“Fait à mes heures de loisir”: Women’s Private Libraries as Spaces of Learning and Knowledge Production

Joëlle Weis

Abstract The Duchesses Elisabeth Sophie Marie (1683–1767) and Philippine Charlotte of Brunswick- Wolfenbüttel (1716–1801) both owned substantial collections of several thousand books. Elisabeth’s library primarily contained theological literature, including 1200 Bibles and a unique collection of texts by Martin Luther, which she used to compose theological pamphlets. In addition, she granted access to her collection to selected scholars who, in turn, used the holdings for their research. Although more diversified, Philippine Charlotte’s library functioned as a similar meeting place for scholars of the region and beyond. Moreover, her papers offer an insight into the interaction between her book use and the writing that she did in her free time. In contrast to the usage practices of the neighbouring ducal library, Philippine Charlotte was free to consult the books she wanted in the privacy of her chambers for as long as she wanted to and, most importantly, without fear of being judged. It is

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certain that, in both cases, the privacy of the library gave the women the freedom to pursue intellectual interests, which were hard to combine with their public role as Duchesses. The fact that both women expanded their libraries considerably after becoming widows only supports the observation that private and "leisure" time could take more space. Based on these findings, this chapter argues that women's learning and knowledge production in the early modern period both benefitted from and, in many cases, needed privacy.

Keywords Private libraries • Elisabeth Sophie Marie • Philippine Charlotte • Brunswick- Wolfenbüttel • Early modern • Knowledge spaces

Not much is left of the papers of Philippine Charlotte (1716–1801), Duchess of Brunswick-Lüneburg, except two boxes of seemingly random documents.[1] The hotchpotch includes descriptions of festivities, poems, book excerpts, and short texts gifted to her by her children. Most remarkable are her writings, which disclose the duchess's main areas of interest and her reading preferences. The engagement with philosophical and historical content was a favourite pastime. But it is not only the contents of the writings which are remarkable. Especially one little detail is incredibly revealing of the significance of these writings for Philippine Charlotte's everyday life: she dated her works with the apposition "made in my leisure time" ("fait à mes heures de loisir"), justifying her activity by marking it as her private amusement.[2] The clarification must have been vital to her and shows how she made a clear difference between her official duties and her private life, following the Encyclopédie's definition of "loisir" as the empty time beyond all obligations, which can be spent guided only by one's taste.[3] For Philippine Charlotte, learning and knowledge production clearly belonged to this realm, which was far away from idleness. She did so following her time's ideals, which claimed that education needed the

[1] HAB, Cod. Guelf. Noviss. 1; 2 Noviss. 4°.

[2] On the concept of leisure and "Muße" see: Burke, Peter. "The Invention of Leisure in Early Modern Europe." *Past & Present* 146 (1995): 136–50; Hasebring, Burkhard and Thomas Klinkert, eds. *Muße. Konzepte, Räume, Figuren. Der Freiburger Sonderforschungsbereich 1015 im Überblick*. Freiburg im Breisgau: Albert-Ludwigs-Universität, 2014.

[3] See article "Loisir" in *Encyclopédie, ou dictionnaire raisonné des sciences, des arts et des métiers,* etc., edited by Denis Diderot and Jean le Rond d'Alembert, 9:680.

freedom of time. In this sense, claiming your own leisure time was an act of gaining independence, of conscious emancipation from the constraints that duty inflicted on the Duchess.[4]

According to these observations, I argue how the availability of this leisure time and the private spaces in which it could take place enhanced the making of knowledge and how especially women's learning and participation in scholarly discourse needed privacy. I will do this by using the example of the private library, which I will consider not only as a repository for knowledge but as an instrument for learning and "an institution actively engaged in the production of knowledge."[5] By doing so, I consider a wide variety of knowledge practices that allow us to shift the focus away from the big names of intellectual history towards the diversity of practices 'from the margins.'[6] In the first part, I will review the use of the term private library, which is widely adopted in historical research but only rarely discussed in depth. In a second step, I will introduce the libraries of the two Duchesses. Both the aforementioned Philippine Charlotte as well as one of her predecessors, Elisabeth Sophie Marie, owned substantial book collections, which can serve as examples for my arguments. The third subchapter is dedicated to their concrete book use as well as practices of reading and knowledge production. Finally, I will give an outlook on

[4] On this aspect see Riedl, Peter Philipp. "Die Kunst der Muße. Über ein Ideal in der Literatur um 1800." *Publications of the English Goethe Society* 80 no.1 (2011): 19–37.

[5] Nelles, Paul. "The Library as an Instrument of Discovery: Gabriel Naudé and the Uses of History." In *History and the Disciplines: The Reclassification of Knowledge in Early Modern Europe*, edited by Donald R. Kelley, 41–57. Rochester: University of Rochester Press, 1997, 41.

[6] Smith, Pamela H. and Benjamin Schmidt. "Introduction: Knowledge and Its Making in Early Modern Europe." In *Making Knowledge in Early Modern Europe: Practices, Objects, and Texts, 1400–1800*, edited by Pamela H. Smith and Benjamin Schmidt, 1–16. Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2008, 8. For diversity of knowledge practices see also Zedelmaier, Helmut and Martin Mulsow, eds. *Die Praktiken der Gelehrsamkeit in der Frühen Neuzeit.* Tübingen: Niemeyer, 2001; Holenstein, André, Hubert Steinke, and Martin Stuber, eds. *Scholars in Action. The Practice of Knowledge and the Figure of the Savant in the 18th Century.* 2 Vol. Leiden: Brill, 2003; Bödeker, Hans Erich, Peter Hans Reill, and Jürgen Schlumbohm, eds. *Wissenschaft als kulturelle Praxis 1750–1900.* Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1999; Zedelmaier, Helmut and Martin Mulsow, eds. *Die Praktiken der Gelehrsamkeit in der Frühen Neuzeit.* Tübingen: Niemeyer, 2001; Becker, Peter and William Clark, eds. *Little Tools of Knowledge: Historical Essays in Academic and Bureaucratic Practices.* Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2001; Weis, Joëlle. "Wie das Buch Buch wird. Die Entstehung der Historia Fuldensis." In *Praktiken frühneuzeitlicher Historiografie,* edited by Markus Friedrich and Jacob Schilling, 309–330. Berlin: De Gruyter, 2019.

further research, giving impulses for book collection studies that go beyond the individual and their reading practices towards a holistic view of the collections and their functions.

The Ducal Libraries: Private Collections?

The library that is known today as the Herzog August Library (HAB) was one of the most renowned book collections in seventeenth-century Europe. After Duke August's death, his successors soon lost interest in taking care of what was sometimes referred to as the "eighth world wonder."[7] Not only was maintenance too expensive, but they also preferred investing money in their personal book collections instead of the "great library," as they called it. Most of the members of the ducal family owned a substantial amount of books. The majority of these collections were bequeathed to the Wolfenbüttel library after the death of their original owners. The volumes constitute the bulk of today's historical eighteenth-century collection.[8] Together with the books came the individual manuscript catalogues, inventory lists and personal papers of the collectors, which allow us to reconstruct the collections in great detail.[9] The documents draw a multifaceted picture of book use: the volumes were consulted for personal learning, they were employed in the children's education, they were placed at the disposal of others, and, of course, they were read for pleasure.[10]

Book history and library studies usually employ the term private libraries when talking about these personal collections. Referring to German-speaking research, Wolfgang Adam characterised private libraries as the

[7] On the metaphor see Raabe, Paul. "Die Bibliotheca Augusta – eine alte Bibliothek in der modernen Welt." In *Die Herzog August Bibliothek in den letzten 100 Jahren. Vier Beiträge zur Vergangenheit und Gegenwart der Wolfenbütteler Bibliothek*, edited by Paul Raabe, 89–115. Göttingen: Bautz, 1980, 89.

[8] For the history of the HAB see Conring, Hermann. *De Bibliotheca Augusta*. Helmstedt: Müller, 1661; Heinemann, Otto von. *Die Herzogliche Bibliothek zu Wolfenbüttel*, 2nd ed. Wolfenbüttel: Zwissler, 1894; Raabe, Mechthild. *Leser und Lektüre vom 17. zum 19. Jahrhundert: die Ausleihbücher der Herzog August Bibliothek Wolfenbüttel 1664–1806*, 8 vol. Munich: Saur, 1989–1998. A new library history is currently being prepared for 2023 in the context of the HAB's 450 th anniversary.

[9] For some examples of digital library reconstructions see http://bibliotheksrekonstruktion.hab.de/ (accessed on 10 March 2021).

[10] On the concept of book use see Sherman, William H. *Used books: marking readers in Renaissance England*. Philadelphia: University. of Pennsylvania Press, 2008.

result of individual (or group) initiative in a non-institutionalised context. The composition of these collections is essentially shaped by the taste and preferences of their owners. Adam explicitly specifies that the use of the term private in this context only refers to the Latin connotation of *privatus*, relating to the fact that the collection is a separate unit.[11] This notion corresponds to early modern source terms, which do not use the word private but seem to denote this separation in different ways: in contemporary catalogues, we find the term *Handbibliothek* or *Kabinettbibliothek*. In these cases, the privacy Adam describes is primarily a spatial dimension, which seems to fit the situation at an early modern court, where the libraries were situated in their owner's apartments, separated from the official court libraries.[12] Another notion found in the research literature is the idea of private ownership as opposed to a 'public' and institutional use of books, meaning that they were available as a common good. This perception is also mirrored in the *Oeconomus prudens* by Franz Philipp Florin: princes should have a library for the "whole land's good use," and beside the "big library," they often have a "Hand-Bibliotec."[13] This usually relates to the libraries' funding, as people bought books with their own capital, making them "private property."[14] Beyond that, much research has been done on early modern private libraries that implicitly transcend these early modern definitions of "private" without actually engaging with the terminology.

[11] Adam, Wolfgang, "Privatbibliotheken im 17. und 18. Jahrhundert. Fortschrittsbericht (1975–1988)." *Internationales Archiv für Sozialgeschichte der deutschen Literatur*, Nr. 15, 1 (1990), 123–173, 125. On the discussion of the private/public opposition concerning libraries see also Montecchi, "Il privato nel pubblico."

[12] See Heißler, Sabine. "Unbekannte Lesewelten. Privatbibliotheken adliger Frauen im deutschen Reich zwischen dem 16. Und 18. Jahrhundert." *Ariadne*, Nr. 34 (1998), 4–7, Raschke, Bärbel. "Anna-Amalia von Sachsen-Weimar-Eisenach – Buchbesitz, Lektüre und Geselligkeit." In *Der Musenhof Anna Amalias*, edited by Joachim Berger, 81–105. Köln: Böhlau, 2001.

[13] Florin, Franz. *Oeconomus prudens et legalis*. Frankfurt; Leipzig: Christoph Riegels Wittib, 1751, 128.

[14] This is addressed by Gabriel Naudé in his famous "Advis pour dresser une Bibliotheque." He opposes the "contentement particulier" to the "usage public." See Naudé, Gabriel. *Advis pour dresser une bibliothèque*. Paris: Le Duc, 1644, 12–18. See also Nuovo, Angela. "Private libraries in Sixteenth-century Italy." In *Early Printed Books as Material Objects. Proceedings of the Conference organised by the IFLA Rare Books and Manuscripts Section, Munich, 19–21 August 2009*, edited by Bettina Wagner and Marcia Reed, 229–240. Berlin/New York: De Gruyter Saur, 2010, 238.

In many cases, today's notions of privacy play a considerable role in the evaluation of libraries. This is especially noticeable in the case of female-owned book collections. Private libraries usually help reconstruct their owners' biographies, showing their collection and reading preferences, apparently revealing inner constitutions.[15] On the other hand, some research reject the idea of a private sphere at an early modern court altogether, making the public library the default mode for court libraries, whatever their owners.[16] Considering the set of problems concerning the public/private divide, both approaches can best be described as unsatisfactory. Without the claim of presenting a nostrum, this chapter wants to enhance the critical discussion on private libraries and their role in the production of knowledge at early modern courts by proposing a praxeological approach, focusing on book use and personal interactions with libraries.[17] Drawing upon the specific cases of two Duchesses from the principality of Brunswick-Wolfenbüttel, such an approach can disclose the different heuristic zones in which the women operated and enable us to ask: what was private in their private libraries?

Elisabeth Sophie Marie and Philippine Charlotte of Brunswick-Wolfenbüttel

The collections of the Duchesses Elisabeth Sophie Marie (1683–1767) and Philippine Charlotte (1716–1801) of Brunswick-Wolfenbüttel combined consist of 9000 volumes, which for the most part remain at the

[15] See for example Ball, Gabriele. "Privatbibliotheken." In *Kulturen des Wissens im 18. Jahrhundert*, edited by Ulrich Johannes Schneider, 191–194. Berlin, New York: De Gruyter, 2008.

[16] See for example Berger, Joachim. "Höfische Musenpflege als weiblicher Rückzugsraum? Herzogin Anna Amalia von Weimar zwischen Regentinnenpflichten und musischen Neigungen." In *Hofkultur und aufklärerische Reformen in Thüringen: die Bedeutung des Hofes im späten 18. Jahrhundert*, edited by Marcus Ventzke, 52–81. Köln: Böhlau, 2002.

[17] On (historical) praxeology see Schatzki, Theodor, Karin Knorr-Cetina, and Eike von Savigny, eds. *The Practice Turn in Contemporary Theory*. London: Routledge, 2001; Haasis, Lucas, and Constantin Rieske, eds. *Historische Praxeologie: Dimensionen vergangenen Handelns*. Paderborn: Schöningh, 2015; Brendecke, Arndt, ed. *Praktiken der Frühen Neuzeit. Akteure, Handlungen, Artefakte*. Köln: Böhlau, 2015; Füssel, Marian. "Praxeologische Perspektiven in der Frühneuzeitforschung." In *Praktiken der Frühen Neuzeit. Akteture, Handlungen, Artefakte,* edited by Arndt Brendecke, 21–33. Köln: Böhlau, 2015.

Herzog August Library until today.[18] The collections are a real treasure trove, enabling us to observe the women's collecting practices, reading habits, and knowledge production, which have been severely neglected in collection studies for many years.[19]

The first collections I want to consider belonged to Elisabeth Sophie Marie, the daughter of the Duke of Schleswig-Holstein-Sonderburg-Norburg and Bibiana von Promnitz.[20] After her parents' early death, she was brought up at her custodian's court in Wolfenbüttel. Therefore, it is safe to say that, although not much is known about her upbringing and education, she was at least closely surrounded by books and scholarship for most of her childhood. In 1701 she married Adolf August, heir to the throne of Schleswig-Holstein-Sonderburg-Plön, who died already in 1704. She took over as regent for her infant son. Only two years later, her son died at the age of four. Elisabeth Sophie Marie lost all her official duties at court and was left with no security. The marriage to her much older cousin, August Wilhelm of Brunswick-Wolfenbüttel in 1710 was a way to gain at least some financial stability. But the Wolfenbüttel family's hopes to produce an heir through this alliance remained unfulfilled. The marriage was childless, and after August Wilhelm's death in 1731, the members of a junior branch of the family became the new rulers. Elisabeth Sophie Marie was allowed to stay in her residence in Brunswick and was mostly discharged from her obligations, which is why she could pursue her

[18] Comparing the HAB's modern online catalogue with the eighteenth-century manuscript catalogues shows that only a small percentage of the books is missing. The lost books were probably sold as duplicates and are almost impossible to trace.

[19] For studies on women's collections see Leis, Arlene, and Kacie L. Wills, eds. *Women and the art and science of collecting in eighteenth-century Europe. The histories of material culture and collecting, 1700–1950.* New York: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2021; Bracken, Susan, Andrea Gáldy, and Adriana Turpin, eds. *Women patrons and collectors.* Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2012. On practices of reading see Chartier, Roger, ed. *Pratiques de la lecture.* Paris: Payot & Rivages, 1993; Braida, Lodovica and Silvia Tatti, eds. *Il Libro. Editoria e pratiche di lettura nel Settecento.* Rome: Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura, 2016.

[20] On Elisabeth Sophie Marie see Munding, Maria, and Reinitzer, Heimo. "Elisabeth Sophie Marie." In *Biographisches Lexikon für Schleswig-Holstein und Lübeck*, Vol. 11, edited by Dieter Lohmeyer, 91–94. Neumünster: Wachholtz, 2000; Gleixner, Ulrike. "Lutherbildnisse im Dienst fürstlicher Selbstdarstellung." In *Luthermania. Ansichten einer Kultfigur*, edited by Hole Rößler, 306–309. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag in Kommission, 2017.

own interests for a long time. Elisabeth died in 1767, surviving her husband for 36 years.

As a widow, Elisabeth Sophie Marie started a collection of 1200 Bibles which she displayed in her apartments and which she bequeathed to the Wolfenbüttel library two years before she died.[21] Until then, they were her private property, financed by her fortune. In Wolfenbüttel, a separate cabinet was set up for the collection, decorated with the duchess's portrait and an inscription.[22] Still today, the Bibles form a separate collection and are exhibited in their own *Bibelsaal*. Additionally, Elisabeth Sophie Marie owned many non-biblical books that were probably arranged as a separate collection, forming the actual *Bibliotheca Sophiniana*. These books only arrived in Wolfenbüttel after her death and were soon integrated into the general holdings. Even though these collections are such an essential part of today's Herzog August Library holdings, they have never been examined systematically. Beyond seeing the Bibles as a statement of Elisabeth's strict Lutheran faith, neither the collector's motivation has been questioned, nor the logistical or financial aspects have been discussed. It is inscrutable how one of the largest and most significant Bible collections in the German-speaking lands has widely been ignored by researchers over the past 300 years.

The second ducal library that serves as an example is the one of Philippine Charlotte. She was born in 1716 as the fourth daughter of Frederick William I of Prussia and his wife Sophia Dorothea of Hannover and thus the sister of the future Frederick II of Prussia, known as Frederick the Great.[23] Like her brother and many of her other siblings, Philippine Charlotte quickly developed a particular interest in music and reading. At the age of 17, she married Karl, who was to become the ruling prince of Brunswick-Wolfenbüttel in 1735. Together they had thirteen children. In 1753 the court moved from Wolfenbüttel to its new residence, Brunswick, where Philippine Charlotte lived until her husband died in 1780. She then moved—accompanied by her books—to a smaller house in Brunswick,

[21] See Arnold, Werner. "Die Bibelsammlung." In *Herzog August Bibliothek Wolfenbüttel*, edited by Paul Raabe, 42–49. Braunschweig: Westermann 1978.

[22] Raabe, Mechhtild. *Die fürstliche Bibliothek in Wolfenbüttel und ihre Leser: zur Geschichte des institutionellen Lesens in einer norddeutschen Residenz 1664–1806*. Wolfenbüttel: Steuber, 1997, 83.

[23] On Philippine Charlotte see Arnold, Werner. "Philippine Charlotte." In: *Lexikon zur Geschichte und Gegenwart der Herzog-August-Bibliothek Wolfenbüttel*, edited by Georg Ruppelt, 126. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1992.

which allowed her to stay close to her family and enjoy the city's comfort until she died in 1801. Philippine Charlotte declared in her will that her books and her library's furnishing "with no exception" were to go to the Wolfenbüttel library.[24] This shows clearly that the books were her private property. We know that substantial parts of the collection stem from a personal inheritance,[25] some of the books were gifts.[26] But the majority of the books were probably acquired with her own money, although evidence for the funding is lacking. Compared to Elisabeth Sophie Marie's collecting practices, Philippine Charlotte's book collections were at least selectively considered by researchers over the past years.[27] Still, a profound and systematic examination of the 4000 volumes the duchess assembled throughout her life is lacking. The books of this impressive collection remain widely untouched in the Herzog August Library's stacks, all the while holding great surprises for book historians.

The Duchesses' Book Use and Knowledge Production

What the duchesses had in common, other than their status, was their substantial book ownership as well as their intense engagement with their collection. Although their main collecting focus was very different, both libraries ended up at the Herzog August Library. Moreover, accompanying papers like manuscript catalogues and personal writings found their way into the library's archives, which makes the collections compared to other female-owned libraries exceptionally well documented. All of these

[24] See Münch, Ingrid. "Testament und Begräbnis der Herzogin Philippine Charlotte v. Braunschweig-Wolfenbüttel (1716–1801). Ein Beitrag anläßlich des 200. Todestags ihres Bruders Friedrich des Großen." In *Braunschweigisches Jahrbuch,* Nr. 68 (1987), 51–82.

[25] See Boveland, Christoph. "Auf den Spuren der verborgenen Bibliothek von Mlle de Montbail." In *Wolfenbütteler Notizen zur Buchgeschichte,* Nr. 35 (2010), 71–80.

[26] See the letters she exchanged with her brother Frederic printed in Droysen, Hans. *Aus den Briefen der Herzogin Philippine Charlotte von Braunschweig 1732–1801.* Braunschweig: Zwissler, 1916.

[27] See Gleixner, Ulrike. "Die lesende Fürstin: Büchersammlungen als lebenslange Bildungspraxis." In *Vormoderne Bildungsgänge. Selbst- und Fremdbeschreibung in der Frühen Neuzeit*, edited Juliana Jacobi, Jean-Luc le Cam, and Hans-Ulrich Musolff, 207–224. Köln: Böhlau, 2010; Johns, Alessa. "The Book as Cosmopolitan Object: Women's Publishing, Collecting and Anglo-German Exchange." In *Women and Material Culture*, edited by Jennie Batchelor and Cora Kaplan, 176–191. Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007.

sources become witnesses for practices of collecting, classifying, reading, compiling, taking notes, organising, learning, and writing—in short, their book use and practices of knowledge-making.

As described above, Elisabeth Sophie Marie's collection was essentially split. Her famous Bible collection had a public scope. Not only would she guide her visitors through her "treasure", as she expressed it, but she also advertised her Bibles. In the Lutheran tradition, the Duchess was convinced that true faith could only be discovered through the study of the original Word and built her collection with this epistemological purpose in mind. Hence, she decided to have a complete catalogue of the collection published and a series of "historical-critical news" about a few hundred selected Bibles.[28] These publications were to serve the scholarly community and the advancement of exegesis and theology. In 1752, the scholarly journal *Göttingische Zeitung von Gelehrten Sachen* praised the collection, saying "that until now the whole world has not seen the like of it."[29] The fact that her collection was an essential go-to for visiting scholars from the region and beyond is also documented in her guest book.[30] As we can conclude from a series of book dedications, the books were not only admired during the visits, but quite a few scholars used the unique holdings for their knowledge production. One example of a publication that was prepared with the help of Elisabeth's collection is Johann Karl Koken's (1715–1773) new German Bible edition from 1750, for which the editor collated the different Bible texts that he could find in the collection.[31]

Not many written records relating to the Bible collection exist. The library archives hold an annotated copy of the printed Bible catalogue, which lists the Bible collections' acquisitions as far as the twentieth century.[32] This is a fantastic source for analysing growth and loss, but it only

[28] Knoch, Georg Ludolph Otto. *Bibliotheca Biblica. Das ist Verzeichnis der Bibel-Sammlung, welche die durchlauchtigste Fürstin und Frau Elisabeth Sophia Maria erst verwittwete Herzogin zu Braunschweig und Lüneburg […] in mancherley Sprachen, absonderlich der teutschen durch D. Mart. Luthern, gesammlet u. in dero Bücher-Schatz auf dem grauen Hofe, der christlichen Kirche zum Besten aufgestellet hat.* Braunschweig: 1752; Knoch, Georg Ludolph Otto. *Historisch-critische Nachrichten von der braunschweigischen Bibelsammlung.* 10 vol. Wolfenbüttel: Meißner, 1749–1750.

[29] Göttingische Zeitung von gelehrten Sachen, 1752, 99.

[30] Stammbuch der Herzogin Elisabeth Sophie Marie von Braunschweig, Wolfenbüttel, HAB, Cod. Guelf. 125.25a Extrav.

[31] Koken, Johann Karl. *Biblia, Das ist: Die ganze Heilige Schrift Altes und Neues Testaments.* Hildesheim: Altstädter Waysenhaus, 1750.

[32] Katalog der Bibelsammlung Elisabeth Sophia Marias (1752), HAB, BA I, 633.

gives scarce insights into Elisabeth Sophie Marie's collecting practices. Luckily, most of the Bibles still exist at the Herzog August Library today and can be examined physically, holding wonderful surprises like original autographs by Martin Luther or annotations by former owners. It becomes clear that the duchess was a trophy hunter, looking for exceptional pieces and spared no expense to pursue her goal of assembling a unique collection. But the collection was not only of high material value; for Elisabeth Sophie Marie, it had a significant spiritual value as well. In this sense, the most telling evidence of her relationship to her collection is a poem she wrote about her Bibles: Elisabeth states that whoever chose "god's words as treasures" could not be richer; no thief can ever steal them. God's words will always belong to her, even after her death, when they still fortify her.[33] Elisabeth, therefore, established a very personal relationship with her books that guaranteed a direct path to God.

The non-biblical part of Elisabeth Sophie Marie's book collection was probably mainly for personal use; we know that they were kept as a separate entity. In this sense, it is more critical to an analysis of private practices of knowledge-making. Unfortunately, not many sources give insight into Elisabeth's concrete collecting and working practices; the library archives do not hold personal documents. However, we have an incomplete manuscript catalogue of the collection that was written after the books came to Wolfenbüttel and which lists only the folio and quart volumes.[34] Still, it allows us to reconstruct the library at least in parts and identify the physical presence of Elisabeth's books in today's holdings. Besides, we were able to gain knowledge about the physical properties of the collected volumes. That facilitated a thorough autopsy of the Herzog August Library stacks, which so far revealed a few hundred more volumes that have been part of the *Bibliotheca Sophiniana*.

Furthermore, we can assume that the duchess used her literature for her writings. Already in 1714, she published a comparison of Tridentine and Lutheran doctrine, commenting on the dogmata with Bible passages.[35] The topic still occupied her in 1750 when she wrote a new treaty on

[33] Knoch, *Nachrichten*, VIIf.

[34] Standortkatalog der Bibliotheken der Herzogin Elisabeth Sophia Maria sowie der Prinzen Wilhelm Adolf und Ludwig Ernst (1768), HAB, BA I, 634.

[35] See Braunschweig-Lüneburg, Elisabeth Sophie Marie von. *Kurtzer Auszug etlicher zwischen den Catholiken und Lutheranern streitigen Glaubens-Lehren aus des Concilii zu Trient und der Göttl. Schrifft eigenen Worten, wie auch dem hiebey gefügten päbstl. Glaubens-Bekändtniß und Religions-Eyde treulich gefasset*. Wolfenbüttel: 1714.

Catholic doctrine, making fair use of her theological literature, citing from books that she owned.[36] Both publications show how the Duchess used the knowledge she gained from her books to contextualise her own faith, demonstrating an understanding of opposite beliefs and actively engaging with them. Her library can thus be understood as a window into an otherwise foreign world, which she used to better understand herself and those surrounding her. That way, she followed the *Advis* of Gabriel Naudé, who sees in the library a chance to gain knowledge in all arts and sciences to "deliver oneself from the servitude and slavery of certain opinions."[37]

Taking a close look at the actual book copies, we can find small hints on book use. In some sporadic cases, Elisabeth indicated the reading dates on the end paper. These show different reading speeds: for some books, she took months; others were read in only a few days. The Duchess also read a book twice in a very short interval. For the vast majority of her books, she had them bound according to her own taste in leather or vellum. Usually, she added her bookplate, decidedly marking ownership (Fig. 1).

In some cases, she compiled miscellanies for specific topics: A compelling case is the *Konvolut von Pietistica*, for which she combined 29 texts of pietist content and had them bound.[38] Some of these texts were very rare, being controversial pamphlets belonging to the realm of dissident literature and thus hard to find in other libraries. Such literature was better kept away from curious eyes, as the risk of misinterpretation and consequent judgement was omnipresent, especially for a public figure. Besides theological literature, Elisabeth had quite a significant amount of *Oeconomica*, books that concerned administration, agriculture, and the so-called *Hausväter* literature. We can assume that she used these books for her continuing education, seeing as she was known to be a gifted administrator. During her husband's government, Elisabeth had a particular influence on financial politics. After his death, she managed her allodial lands with success, becoming financially independent.[39] In this sense, the book

[36] See Braunschweig-Lüneburg, Elisabeth Sophie Marie von. *Eine deutlichere Erläuterung der Glaubens-Lehren, so in den zwölf Briefen des Jesuiten Seedorffs enthalten, nach dem Glaubens-Bekänntniß, welches die Protestanten in Ungarn, bey ihrem Uebertritt zur Röm. Kirche schweren müssen*. Braunschweig: Meyer, 1750.

[37] See Gabriel Naudé, *Advis*, 9–10.

[38] See Wolfenbüttel, HAB, BA I, 634, 35.

[39] Römer, Christof. "Das Zeitalter des Hochabsolutismus (1635–1735)." In *Die Braunschweigische Landesgeschichte. Jahrtausendrückblick einer Region*, edited by Horst-Rüdiger Jarck and Gerhard Schildt, 535–574. Braunschweig: Appelhans, 2000, 561.

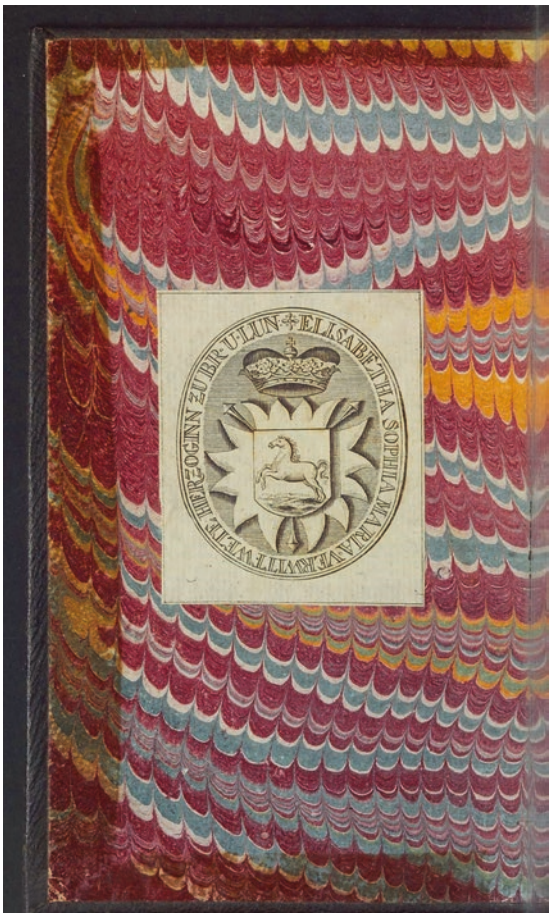

Fig. 1 Exlibris of Elisabeth Sophie Marie © Herzog August Bibliothek Wolfenbüttel http://diglib.hab.de/drucke/th-2235/start.htm?image=00002 [21.12.2022]

might be seen not only as a spiritual investment but also an economic investment in her worldly existence.

Philippine Charlotte's book collection had a different objective. Although she was in close contact with many scholars of the time whom she invited into her library—some professors from the famous *Collegium Carolinum* visited frequently—she would buy books essentially for her personal needs.[40] With her guests, she would discuss current scientific and

[40] See letters from Philippine Charlotte to Johann Joachim Eschenburg, HAB, Cod. Guelf. 597.3 Novi.

cultural topics, making her library a place for sociability. Much like Elisabeth Sophie Marie, Philippine Charlotte would personalise her books, binding them in brown leather and marking her ownership by a *supralibros* with her initials (Fig. 2).

The first sources that report on her substantial book collection are dated to 1754 when the court moved from Wolfenbüttel to Brunswick

Fig. 2 Supralibros of Philippine Charlotte © Herzog August Bibliothek Wolfenbüttel http://diglib.hab.de/drucke/te-389/start.htm [21.12.2022]

and she had a catalogue made for the new set up.[41] Considering this very practical application field, we can imagine that the catalogue served both as an inventory and a finding aid for the book's new location. That is one example of how catalogues and their structures were often the results of very practical problems; the order of knowledge was situational. The catalogue, which documents about 2000 books between 1754 and 1764, was written by Georg Septimus Andreas von Praun (1701–1786), who from 1751 onwards was the main librarian of the ducal library in Wolfenbüttel. He had a close relationship with the ducal family and Philippine Charlotte, but it is unclear if he had an official function taking care of her book collection. Although it might have been him who came up with the classification system, we can be sure that Philippine Charlotte was involved in every single step concerning the organisation and contents of her library and took care of many things herself.[42] In any case, the catalogue is a witness of the great care with which Philippine Charlotte ordered her librarian to document the collection. Together, they made efforts to combine optical criteria with systematic criteria, making the library both a place one would want to spend time in and a knowledge resource. The catalogues combine specifications about the book's location and classifications. The entries show the exact shelf positions of every book that was chosen for the new set-up. She also had thematic and alphabetic indices to ensure that users easily find what they are looking for or even discover new literature that fits their interests. Besides these finding aids, additional information is bound in the catalogue volume. For example, it includes a letter to Philippine Charlotte's book agent and a sketch of the bookcases that were specially made for the library. Altogether, the documents draw a picture of the significance the books—and also their dedicated room—had in Philippine Charlotte's life. Two later catalogues that count a total of 4000 books were made after her husband's death in 1780 and probably mirror the new arrangement in her widow's seat.[43] Although they are not systematically evaluated yet, they show acquisition strategies and a certain shift of

[41] Systematischer Katalog der Handbibliothek der Herzogin Philippine Charlotte (1754), HAB, BA I, 641.

[42] Some finding aids were written by Philippine Charlotte herself and letters show how she decided on the contents and the setup of the library. See for example HAB, BA I, 641, p.299–309; 315.

[43] Alphabet. Katalog der Bibliothek der Herzogin Philippine Charlotte (Mitte/2. Hälfte 18. Jh.), HAB, BA I, 642; Systematischer Katalog der Bibliothek der Herzogin Philippine Charlotte (Mitte/2. Hälfte 18. Jh.), HAB, BA I, 643.

emphasis. One detail seems especially interesting: Philippine Charlotte's first catalogue does not contain a single entry of a book in German. The later catalogues list a few, among them 22 works by Gotthold Ephraim Lessing, at that time librarian in Wolfenbüttel. That corresponds to her increased interest in German-language *belles lettres*, a topic that also occupied her on a more theoretical level.[44] Even more revealing to her interests than acquisitions are the books themselves. Philippine Charlotte not only invested much time in the design and arrangement of her books; she also spent her free time reading and writing. As we know from her letters, Philippine Charlotte's books were an essential part of her everyday life, and she attributed an important influence on her physical and mental well-being to them. She would read for personal edification, especially later in life "to keep her mind from rusting."[45] Similar to Elisabeth, she, therefore, considered the library as a personal sanctuary. Her books and papers combined give insight into the interaction between her book use and her writing, as I indicated already at the beginning of the chapter. She left substantial marks in many volumes, mostly by underlining relevant passages. Philippine Charlotte's selected underlining demonstrates how she used her books to extract information relevant to her and her intellectual world. Sometimes, she chose just a few sentences; other times, she marked whole passages. If we compare the books she read intensely to the notes she left in her papers, we can see that she first underlined the things that seemed important to her and, in a second step, summed them up in a structured way. Sometimes her notes are just one page long, but for the history of the French kings, she wrote close to fifty pages.[46] In Philippine Charlotte's case, we have many witnesses for her eagerness to learn and educate herself. She would not only write short essays on different topics, but she also used her library to look up unknown terms and definitions. Her papers contain lists of philosophical, geometrical, and anatomical vocabulary that she produced, most likely to fill knowledge gaps. In this context, her interest in the reproductive system is perhaps most insightful: her glossary contains the terms vagina, testicles, and sperm. Perhaps the

[44] In 1781, her friend Johann Friedrich Jerusalem wrote an essay *Ueber die Teutsche Sprache und Litteratur* (On German Language and Literature) which was inspired by conversations with Philippine Charlotte.

[45] "pour empecher de s'enrouiller l'esprit" See letter from Philippine Charlotte to Frederick II., Wolfenbüttel, Niedersächsisches Landesarchiv, N 298576 Bl.1–17, 8r-9v.

[46] See Wolfenbüttel, HAB, Cod. Guelf. 1 Noviss.; 2 Noviss. 4°; 184 Noviss. 8°. These techniques are very similar to those employed by her daughter Anna Amalia of Sachsen-Weimar. See Raschke, "Anna Amalia," 93.

library's private space was what allowed her to read up on topics that had been neglected in her formal education. What is more, many of Philippine Charlotte's efforts can be understood as strategies to gain better self-knowledge, which included an understanding of her own body, mind and soul—topics that frequently return in her writings and correspondence.[47]

Private Knowledge Spaces: Concluding Remarks

Research on the libraries of the Wolfenbüttel Duchesses is still in an early stage. Maybe due to gender biases, their knowledge production and contribution to scholarship were mostly overlooked or downplayed with terms such as 'dilettante' or 'amateurism'—contrasting them to professionals and experts. Although the term private library has frequently been used to describe the Duchesses' and their family members' libraries, the spaces have never been systematically analysed with a specific heuristic concept in mind. It is evident that the Duchesses' libraries correspond to Wolfgang Adam's definition of a private library. They were segregated and specifically dedicated spaces as well as an integral part of their own households. However, I would argue that the term private can be used in a more specific way in these cases.

On the one hand, it seems that the question of funding is an essential one. In contrast to the Wolfenbüttel library, both Duchesses' books were their personal property and not funded by official budgets. Like with other personal objects such as jewellery, they were free to dispose of the books in whatever way they wanted. With their respective decisions to hand the books down to the Wolfenbüttel library, they initiated the transformation of private property into publicly available holdings. Indeed, using the Wolfenbüttel library, which was very close to the castle Philippine Charlotte lived in for almost twenty years, was apparently not a favoured option. Book ownership seems to have been an essential advantage for women. In contrast to borrowing or consulting books at the public Wolfenbüttel library, private books could be used in accordance with personal needs: highlighting, adding marginalia or taking notes was only possible in one's own copies. Moreover, the Duchesses were free to consult their books whenever and for how long they wanted, reading passages repeatedly or

[47] On Early Modern practices of self-knowledge making see Deckker, Rudolf. "Watches, Diary Writing and the Search for Self-Knowledge in the Seventeenth-Century." In *Making Knowledge in Early Modern Europe: Practices, Objects, and Texts, 1400–1800*, edited by Pamela H. Smith and Benjamin Schmidt, 127–142. Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2008.

looking up words. These practices were favourable to the women's learning, making the possession of books an essential element of their knowledge production.

Even though the Duchesses both opened their libraries to a selected public, they were used as retreats. Elisabeth Sophie Marie and Philippine Charlotte invited private guests; they designed the spaces to their own needs and bought the books according to their personal taste. Especially the analysis of the women's book use reveals how they perceived their libraries as informal spaces. As pointed out at the very beginning of the chapter, Philippine Charlotte would spend her free time—unbothered by official representational duties—with her books. The women did not only use their libraries for their purely intellectual or spiritual advancement but were eager for practical, i.e. medical or economic knowledge, which complemented their formal education and might not have been freely available elsewhere. We can safely assume that the availability of private space and leisure time was an essential intensifier for the women's possibility to participate in public discourse.

Moreover, we have seen that the books had a part in their edification, their well-being, and, finally, their physical and mental health, for both Duchesses. Looking at their respective age, using their collections as a cure against "rustiness" seems to have been very successful. Besides, gaining and producing self-knowledge was a central function of the libraries. The book collections were part of a *Selbstbildungsprozess*[48] in a double sense: They were part of the women's self-education as well as their emancipative subjectification. The concept of privacy at court and its relationship to the public is currently widely discussed; twilight zones must be frequently supposed. Still, I would argue that the libraries were spaces of privacy, where the duchesses could be alone and were able to write, read, and think unobserved—or to receive visitors and talk freely to them. It is probably not a coincidence that both women expanded their libraries considerably after becoming widows and making the libraries central spaces of their new residences. For the Duchesses, it was precisely this realm of informality and privacy that allowed them to pursue their intellectual interests, which were hard to combine with their public roles.

Based on the two case studies' preliminary findings, three aspects seem to be especially promising for future research on private libraries and practices of knowledge-making. Firstly, although the two examples presented

[48] Gleixner, "Die lesende Fürstin," 224.

here represent two substantial collections, similar female libraries existed in significant numbers. These libraries are quite often well known in terms of their contents, reading preferences, and critical areas of interest have been identified. That is an essential first step but cannot be a substitute for an analysis of collecting practices and book use. Reading traces like underlining or notes, in particular, give essential insights into these women's learning. Extensive comparative research, for both protestant and catholic areas, is needed to get a complete picture of female strategies of participation in a knowledge society. Secondly, the basic definition of a private library is concerned with a spatial dimension. In that sense, it will be necessary to ask further questions about the libraries' locations inside the princely apartments and the furnishing. Moreover, it seems necessary to evaluate who had physical access to these spaces. This is particularly important if we are to understand the intimacy of the spaces provided to the Duchesses. This brings me to the third aspect. Even though books and bodies do not seem to have much in common at first glance, the Duchesses' handling of their books has an immediate physical dimension. For now, Elisabeth and Philippine Charlotte give us only small impressions on how to think corporality, book collections and (self-)knowledge practices together, opening up additional dimensions of the private library. Especially Philippine Charlotte's interest in anatomical knowledge leaves us wondering if the women needed private spaces to learn and produce knowledge about their own bodies or indeed other specific female knowledge—with the well-known result that it is hard to find in sources and has therefore been ignored by researchers for too long. If this is the case, the examples of the two private libraries show that it is worth being persistent. If we assemble enough pieces of the puzzle, however small they are, we will gain a better look at the whole picture.

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Contingent Privacies: Knowledge Production and Gender Expectations from 1500 to 1800

Natacha Klein Käfer

Abstract This epilogue presents the main insights from *Women's Private Practices of Knowledge Production in Early Modern Europe*, demonstrating the key ways in which privacy factored into women's knowledge-making practices. The chapter highlights women's strategies of publicizing the private as a knowledge-sharing strategy, the role of the home in knowledge-making in the early modern period, and the limitations and affordances of navigating knowledge-production processes in a female body. Moreover, this contribution emphasizes privacy as a malleable, contingent, and continuous negotiation, not necessarily respected by default, but that enabled women to balance gendered expectations and knowledge pursuits.

Keywords Knowledge production • Gender • Privacy • Home • Body

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Women's knowledge production in early modern Europe encompassed a broad variety of topics, crossing and redefining the boundaries of gender expectations in their historical and regional contexts. Elite women were able to do so by carefully navigating social norms of decorum, adapting their knowledge practices, reconfiguring the spaces utilized for knowledge activities, and tailoring the communication in their knowledge exchanges. Through a careful examination of cases from English, Italian, French, and German territories between 1500 and 1800, the chapters in this book demonstrate the wide breadth of strategies that enabled women to instrumentalize the private in their quest for knowledge.

This broad chronological and geographical scope is an intentional choice, being key in unravelling how women maneuvered privacy and the private as knowledge producers. The recent curiosity regarding women's writings and the positioning of their work in relation to the public/private divide has mainly been directed to insular contexts, even though the need for cross-cultural analysis has been pointed out, with few but notable comparative works demonstrating the richness of broader perspectives.[1] In the present volume, we widened the range of time and space, looking at the opportunities offered—and the challenges presented—by women's complex social relationship with notions of the private and the domestic in the broader early modern period.

Our chapters look at the periods leading to and immediately after the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, a period considered to be a defining moment when a category of domesticity associated with the household received firmer contours.[2] This has also been a highly studied period to tackle women's intellectual production and their circulation in learned circles.[3] By shifting focus to the sixteenth and late eighteenth centuries, we added a more layered understanding of these processes and

[1] In 2017, Martine van Elk skilfully built upon Michael McKeon's *The Secret History of Domesticity* to look at women's writers in the seventeenth century, a crucial period to the development of a distinct sense of domesticity according to McKeon. Elk expands the focus of analysis by contrasting the English context—McKeon's point of departure—with examples of the Dutch Republic. Elk, Martine van. *Early Modern Women's Writing: Domesticity, Privacy, and the Public Sphere in England and the Dutch Republic*. Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2017.

[2] McKeon, Michael. *The Secret History of Domesticity: Public, Private, and the Division of Knowledge*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2005.

[3] Norbrook, David. "Women, the Republic of Letters, and the Public Sphere in the Mid-Seventeenth Century." *Criticism* 46, no. 2 (2004): 223–40.

could identify the continuities and transformations of the challenges that women faced and the approaches they employed in their knowledge pursuits. In this epilogue, we will see how women's private practices of knowledge production operated across many levels of early modern society.

Women's Knowledges and Publicizing the Private

When we think about women's intellectual production in the early modern period, we must pay heed to how gender played a role in knowledge circulation and portrayal to wider publics. Writings by women did reach the print market, but many times their circulation was done more safely via the sharing of manuscripts. Many authors have also stressed the different ways in which 'printed' did not necessarily equate to 'public' in the early modern knowledge marketplace.[4] Mary Trull brilliantly pointed out the dichotomy-breaking potential of understanding privacy as a performance for early modern women's writings. By understanding privacy also as a trope, the idea of the 'private' also became an instrument for people to enter the public eye and adjust the levels of publicity to one's work.

This power to instrumentalize the private in order to navigate the extent of the circulation of one's intellectual work within selected publics was fundamental for women to insert themselves in public knowledge conversations safely. Jelena Bakić demonstrates this aspect explicitly in the case of Camilla Herculiana. Herculiana carefully navigated the paratextual aspects of the publication of her work, painstakingly crafting a justification for and the validity of her position as a female knowledge-maker through dedicatory epistles and continuous highlighting of her integration in circles of knowledge with her male peers. Despite her *Lettere di philosophia naturale* being published, it seems to have reached a limited audience, at least according to the surviving copies, and even with all the care behind the publication, at some point, things went amiss, leading to the Inquisitorial trial against her. Even then, a gendered response—although going against her own will and arguments—managed to avoid a conviction, with her attorney claiming her female nature as a justification for her potentially dangerous opinions.

[4] Love, Harold. *The Culture and Commerce of Texts: Scribal Publication in Seventeenth Century England*. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1993; Elk, *Early Modern Women's Writing*, 8.

This art of navigating how private aspects reached the public also operated in more indirect ways than via publication in print. The case of Lady Lumley, explored by Natália da Silva Perez, is a clear demonstration that the instruction of a sixteenth-century aristocratic woman could follow the same humanist principles expected of a proper Christian education for their male peers. Knowledge of Greek and Latin and translating the classics was at the core of erudition, especially in the English context following the influence of Catharine of Aragon's presence and patronage in humanist circles and her insistence on a high-level education for her daughter Mary I. The kind of education provided to one's daughter was a political statement, and Silva Perez demonstrates Lady Lumley's awareness of this fact in the way she displayed her knowledge acquisition and development to her father. Although a private investment, Lady Lumley's education was also an asset of public influence to Lord Arundel. By skilfully producing translations and hortatory letters, she transformed a private and exclusive learning process into a recognizable token of her family's ideals and allegiances. Nevertheless, Silva Perez stresses that this was not an exercise just for show: Lady Lumley used the opportunity of translating a classic like Euripides's *Iphigenia in Aulis* to reflect on what it meant for her, as a woman, to be inserted in the learned humanist circles, cross-referencing her knowledge and Erasmus's influence to insert her understanding of Christian principles into *The Tragedie of Euripides Called Iphigeneia*.

Isabelle Lémonon-Waxin shows us that women's access to certain forms of knowledge also depended on their skilful fostering and navigation of private networks of knowledge. Victorine de Chastenay had the privilege of being born into a family already embedded in *savant* culture, but it was her mastering of how to communicate with knowledge-makers, how to display her learning prowess, and how to keep norms of decorum that allowed her to reach knowledge circles and institutions that would rarely be available to other women. By achieving the title of *chanoinesse*, also, she was able to maintain a certain independence in a position as a private person with appropriate public recognition.

Material assets also supported women's positions within these knowledge networks. Joëlle Weis exemplifies this exquisitely with the examples of the private libraries of Duchesses Elisabeth Sophie Marie and Philippine Charlotte of Brunswick-Wolfenbüttel. While they stress the fact that the libraries are their private collections, they also instrumentalize those spaces to insert and maintain themselves in the circles of knowledge. As such,

women's association with the private was not only used as allure from its exclusive nature, but as a way to provide them access to knowledge networks.

Therefore, women could turn their connection to the private and the domestic to their advantage: it could operate as a *quasi* marketing tool, as a personal asset in noble society, and as a crucial tool to regulate the level of publicity appropriate to reach a balance between recognition and personal safety. Privacy provided them with a measure of power to differentiate what knowledge should remain private from what could be disseminated, as well as a way of tailoring their presence in knowledge circles.

Knowledge Production at Home

When we think of spaces of knowledge production in the early modern period, a few locations come to mind: the university, the laboratory, the library, or the cloister, for instance. For members of the elite, versions of these spaces could also be fitted into the home—nobles would have their own private laboratories, writing chambers and cabinets, and extensive book collections. A lively space for knowledge experimentation, the home offered a sense of safety, where testing practices could be done with less care for observers who might judge or misconstrue one's practices. Nevertheless, the knowledge produced in domestic confines usually had to go through a process of legitimization to be considered valid in broader networks of knowledge agents.[5]

Women's knowledge production at home is usually associated with the kitchen. However, none of the case studies here focused on the production of what could be called 'domestic knowledge'—as in knowledge of running and upholding a household. Indeed, distinguishing this form of knowledge from other kinds of early modern experimentation and advice literature was not such a simple task when looking at their applied principles.[6] Most recently, the work of Lucy Havard, in particular, demonstrates

[5] An excellent exploration of this dimension can be found in Bičak, Ivana. "Chops and Chamber Pots: Satire of the Experimental Report in Seventeenth-Century England" in *Early Modern Privacy: Sources and Approaches* edited by Michael Green, Lars C. Nørgaard, and Mette Birkedal Bruun. Leiden: Brill, 2021, 266–280.

[6] Hahn, Philip. "Domestic Advice Literature: An Entangled History?" in *The Routledge History of the Domestic Sphere in Europe: 16th to 19th Century*. Edited by Joachim Eibach and Margareth Lanzinger. 1st ed. London: Routledge, 2020, 43–58.

the intricate interconnectedness of cooking, preserving, and other domestic knowledge with early modern science.[7] Rather, our authors look at the home as a space in flux, in which knowledge could be pursued in designated rooms, such as private libraries, but also behind makeshift and temporary shieldings, such as a folding screen. While we might associate the home with women's realm, these malleable boundaries within the house and between the domestic and public spheres also affected men and children.[8] For women, though, the home implied particular sets of duties and responsibilities, which could, in turn, provide different knowledge affordances.[9]

One of the main challenges for women was to navigate between the home and other knowledge spaces. Camilla Herculiana was explicit about this difficulty, with her apothecary providing a fruitful environment for the kind of knowledge she aimed to focus on further, but with the duties of home taking up most of her mental space. Of a more noble lineage, Lady Lumley, on the other hand, profited from her education at home, with the indoor mobility of private tutelage allowing her to benefit from both knowledge exchange and solitude for deepening her analysis of her lessons' contents. Centuries later, Victorine de Chastenay also used the safety of her home as an opportunity to reflect deeper upon the lessons she learned from her readings and interactions with other *savants*. Elisabeth Sophie Marie and Philippine Charlotte transformed their private collections into semi-public spaces within their own homes, which could be adapted from private and isolated locations to explore knowledge into places of exchange with other nobles and intellectuals.

[7] Havard, Lucy J. "'Almost to Candy Height:' Knowledge-Making in the Early Modern Kitchen, 1700–1850." *Cultural and Social History* 19, no. 2 (March 15, 2022): 119–39; Havard, Lucy J. "'Preserve or Perish': Food Preservation Practices in the Early Modern Kitchen." *Notes and Records: The Royal Society Journal of the History of Science* 74, no. 1 (March 20, 2020): 5–33.

[8] Joris, Elisabeth. "Gender Implications of the Separate Spheres" in *The Routledge History of the Domestic Sphere in Europe: 16th to 19th Century*. Edited by Joachim Eibach and Margareth Lanzinger. 1st ed. London: Routledge, 2020, 364–380.

[9] Wunder, Heide. "'Privacy' and Gender in Early Modern German-Speaking Countries" in *Early Modern Privacy: Sources and Approaches* edited by Michael Green, Lars C. Nørgaard, and Mette Birkedal Bruun. Leiden: Brill, 2021, 63–78.

Women, Knowledge, and Their Bodies

While the knowledge of the female body in the early modern period is often associated with social taboo, both physicians and lay people were fascinated with female anatomy, menstruation, their reproductive system and particularities in contrast to the male body.[10] Women's relationship between their bodies and knowledge production was twofold: their quests for knowledge about their own bodies and the extent to which their bodies enabled their knowledge pursuits.

Existing in a female body could come with some hindrances in procuring knowledge. As many of the contributions have shown us, being the only female in male-dominated learning spaces was not an acceptable position for an aristocratic woman. They had to employ strategies like learning chaperones, distance learning via letters, and curated tutelage at different stages in life. In many cases, women had to conceal their presence in their processes of knowledge production. Displaying knowledge pursuits in public was not always well seen. Although being knowledgeable was praisable, their efforts needed to appear dedicated but not obsessive or as getting in the way of their other duties. Too much effort in producing knowledge would be akin to vanity, but some level of inclination towards knowledge-seeking was necessary, as it was also a form of showing avoidance of idleness. Striking this balance of acceptable levels of knowledge activity was an art in itself. Lady Lumley performed this art via her knowledge demonstrations to her father, while Camilla Herculiana did so by contrasting her wish for knowledge with her diligence with the tasks required of her gender. Victorine de Chastenay placed her activities behind the folding screen, and Philippine Charlotte stressed how knowledge filled her leisure time in her writing.

A curiosity over reproduction and the functioning of their own bodies appeared across most of our case studies. Lady Lumley copied the properties of *Lapis Aquilae* from a medical encyclopaedia due to its effects on childbirth and pregnancy. Philippine Charlotte made a glossary comprising genitals and reproductive organs, complementing her formal knowledge with subjects of her own interest. Camilla Herculiana focused on her own health and how it impacted her intellectual work. At the same time,

[10] McClive, Cathy. *Menstruation and Procreation in Early Modern France*. London: Taylor and Francis, 2016; Read, Sara. *Menstruation and the Female Body in Early Modern England*. London: Palgrave Macmillan UK, 2013.

her avoidance of dedicating her writing to female issues could indicate that such subjects would alienate her from engaging with male natural philosophers. The same can be said for Victorine de Chastenay—her knowledge quests focused on subjects she could easily share with other *savants*. It does not necessarily mean that Camilla and Victorine did not chase after that kind of knowledge, but it could be that their wish to keep it as private knowledge potentially prevented them from writing about it.

Lady Lumley, Camilla Herculiana, Victorine de Chastenay, Elisabeth Sophie Marie, and Philippine Charlotte were skilled knowledge producers. Their connection to the private and domestic realm did not stop them from pursuing knowledge, but it also did not mean that privacy for their pursuits was a given. This privacy had to be carved out, depending on very malleable circumstances and negotiations that were far from guaranteed to succeed. Nevertheless, privacy strategies enabled them not only to adapt to a landscape of gendered expectations, but also to turn their association with the private realm into a crucial tool for their processes of knowledge creation and dissemination.

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[1] Note: Page numbers followed by 'n' refer to notes.

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