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Bibliography on the Letters of Abelard and Heloise: English Studies (First part)

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Bibliography

1. Amsler, Mark. 1987. "Genre and Code in Abelard's *Historia Calamitatum*." *Assays. Critical Approaches to Medieval and Renaissance Texts* no. 1:35–50.
 "In what follows I want to elucidate some of the most important features of the *Historia Calamitatum* as a narrative text and, in so doing, indicate how narrative codes can differ from genres. Reflecting on the *Historia*, we can perceive three different though interrelated codes working in the narrative: (1) the confessional autobiography, archetypally represented in the Christian tradition by Augustine's *Confessiones*; (2) the moral allegorical interpretation of the adultery of Venus and Mars; and (3) the stereotyped Christian argument against women, that is, antifeminist discourse. These three discourses determine the text's narrative structure, but because they are not always compatible, junctures and paradoxes appear in the narrative. These impediments are multiplied by the narrator's use of prolepsis to collapse the narrative line. The narrator attempts to resolve and transform all these junctures, but the result is that the resolutions lead to new junctures and paradoxes.
 Students of medieval iconography and allegory will recognize that the Venus and Mars code is closely connected with the antifeminist code.
 The adultery of Venus and Mars (male virtue corrupted by female luxuria) was often used as an example to bolster the argument against women. But the correlation of these two codes is short-circuited by the *Historia*'s particular realization of the genre of confessional autobiography with its portrayal of the sinner redeemed by grace. Unlike autobiography, which denotes a specific narrative form, the codes of Venus and Mars and antifeminism may be figured in a variety of genres, but they are not themselves genres. The result is that the genre of the confessional autobiography links the two codes so that the instrument of sin in one code becomes the occasion for salvation in the other." (pp. 36-37)
2. Arenberg, Nancy. 2015. *Textual Transvestism: (Re)Visions of Heloise (17th-18th-Centuries)*. Amsterdam: Rodopi.
 "The epistolary genre is an intriguing area in French literature where the focus is on complex systems of communications constructed between writer and receiver. The love letter is not a recent genre; the roots of the epistolary novel can be traced to the rich cultures of ancient Greek and Roman civilizations.(1)
 Clearly, however, the most influential historical precursor to the modern love letter was Ovid's *Heroides*, a work that contained twenty-one missives, written in verse, by famous mythological or real characters such as Sappho, Phaedra, Dido, Hermione or Penelope. Ovid also included exchanges between lovers in the final six epistles that concluded his text." (p. 11)

(...)

"After Ovid, the next stage of literary activity in the epistolary genre occurred in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries." (p. 12)

(...)

"In discussing Heloise's and Abelard's love letters, a chronological method is useful, but recent publications of new translations in the seventeenth and eighteenth-centuries will deviate slightly from a pure sequential approach. However, a chronological study will be carried out as much as possible in order to explore why it is important to study what happens to a woman's love discourse as it fell into the hands of male imitators throughout the centuries." (p. 18)

(...)

"My study will show that the revisions of Heloise's persona over two hundred years may be indicative of, and have helped construct, ideological changes in expectation concerning the role of women." (p. 18)

(1) See Charles Kany's introduction in *The Beginnings of the Epistolary Novel in France, Italy and Spain* (Berkeley, Berkeley, UP, 1937): 1-10.

3. Bagge, Sverre. 1993. "The Autobiography of Abelard and Medieval Individualism." *Journal of Medieval History* no. 19:327–350.
Abstract: "This article discusses Abelard's *Historia Calamitatum* in connection with the debate on 'the individual or 'individualism' in the Middle Ages, which has been going on between adherents of 'the Renaissance of the Twelfth Century' and scholars placing the emergence of the modern individual in more recent periods. The conclusion largely supports the latter point of view. Abelard does not tell a continuous story of his life, he does not describe a conversion or a new understanding of his own self as the result of his tragic experience and, as an intellectual, he does not emphasize his own independent thinking in opposition to his surroundings. By contrast, he understands his own life through models derived from sacred history, according to the contemporary idea of typology. However, his vivid description of the tragic events of his life and of his own reactions to them contains a strong element of subjectivity and his emphasis on merit rather than status when competing with other intellectuals is in a certain sense individualistic. In this respect Abelard may also be regarded as representative of more widespread attitudes in contemporary scholarly milieu. Finally, it must be noted that similar objections can be raised against renaissance or early modern individualism as the ones adduced here against regarding *Historia Calamitatum* as an expression of medieval individualism."
4. Baswell, Christopher. 2003. "Heloise." In *The Cambridge Companion to Medieval Women's Writing*, edited by Dinshaw, Carolyn and Wallace, David, 161–171. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
"Heloise's own writings, however, record a profound and persistent will to *choose* her role, often in conflict with the men and institutional expectations around her, including Abelard, and their efforts to inscribe and circumscribe her. What she sometimes willed, and how she expressed that will in her letters, remain shocking. That shock at the core of Heloise's choices — the scandal of her will — is the cultural irritant which has provoked the many versions of her identity from her own day until now. These pages explore the profound and unresolved spiritual crises, crises of secular and religious conversion, that characterized Heloise's choice and will in the relatively small body of her surviving letters." (p. 161)
5. Benton, John F. 1975. "Fraud, fiction, and borrowing in the correspondence of Abelard and Heloise." In *Pierre Abélard et Pierre le Vénérable. Les courants philosophiques, littéraires et artistiques en occident au milieu du XIIe siècle*, edited by René, Louis, 469–511. Paris: Editions du Centre national de la recherche scientifique.
"As a step toward such an investigation, which will have to call upon the learning of scholars skilled in various disciplines and areas of knowledge, this paper presents an hypothesis intended to stimulate further research following Abelard's own dictum:

"Through doubting we arrive at inquiry, and through inquiry we perceive the truth."(3) Simply put, the hypothesis offered here is that sometime in the thirteenth century a forger, or a pull of forgers, motivated by a desire to modify the institutions of the Paraclet, compiled and reworked the eight letters we can read today in ms. T, making use of both authentic writings of Abelard (including the lost *Exhortatio ad fratres et commonachos*) and a twelfth-century "autobiographical" letter which was itself a work of imaginative fiction, produced perhaps by some skilled student of the *ars dictaminis*. The hypothesis that the text we have now is composed of at least three different elements, authentic but otherwise unrecovered writing of Abelard, inauthentic twelfth-century material, and inauthentic thirteenth-century addition, may seem unduly complicated, but it is the best explanation I can find for the heterogeneous character of the letters, in which some passages must have been written in the twelfth-century and others seem to date from the thirteenth, and in which some portions have the ring of the genuine Abelard and others contain errors which presumably would not have been written by Abelard, Heloise, or anyone familiar with the early history of the Paraclet." (pp. 469-470)

6. ———. 1980. "A reconsideration of the authenticity of the correspondence of Abelard and Heloise." In *Petrus Abaelardus (1079-1142). Person, Werk und Wirkung*, edited by Thomas, Rudolf, 41–52. Trier: Paulinus-Verlag.
"The complex hypothesis I presented at Cluny in 1972 was the best explanation I could then find to account for differences between the prescriptions of Abelard's *Rule* and documented practices at the Paraclete, as well as certain difficult passages in the text. I wish I could say now either that significant new evidence supported that hypothesis and raised it to a higher level of certainty, or that on the other hand it had been refuted so thoroughly that it could now be safely ignored. Unfortunately, it does not yet seem to me possible to declare with confidence either that the correspondence is a blatant fraud or that it is unquestionably authentic. In certain significant respects, largely because of the work of Fr. Chrysogonus Waddell which, with his permission, I will present to the public for the first time in this paper, my hypothesis of 1972 now seems to me weaker than it did seven years ago. On the other hand, we still do not have a determinative stylistic analysis of the text and a few of my earlier points remain unrefuted, so that at present it now seems prudent to maintain some doubts about authenticity. In this paper I shall try to present an assessment of the current situation, hoping that further research will resolve our problems before another seven years have passed." (p. 42)
7. ———. 1987. "The correspondence of Abelard and Heloise." In *Fälschungen im Mittelalter. Internationaler Kongress der Monumenta Germaniae Historica, München, 16–19 September 1986. Band V*, 95–120. Hanover: Hahnsche Buchhandlung.
Abstract: "This paper approaches the question of the authenticity and the authorship of the *Historia calamitatum* and the letters supposedly exchanged between Heloise and Abelard, through an investigation of word frequencies, phrases, and other stylistic issues, making use of computer-assisted counting and a concordance of the *Historia* and Letters Two to Seven. Recently Tore Janson [*] studied the cursus patterns used in the correspondence, and concluded that on the basis of that evidence, the correspondence had either one author or one editor who imprinted his or her style on all the letters. A study by the present author of the means and standard deviations of 24 words shows that on the basis of these words the letters attributed to Heloise cannot be differentiated from those attributed to Abelard; the style of the *Historia calamitatum* is close to that of the letters, but Letters Three, Five and Seven ("Abelard") are more similar to Letters Two, Four and Six ("Heloise") than they are to the *Historia*. The use of quotations is also consistent with the hypothesis that Abelard was the single author of the entire correspondence, and some of the concepts which appear in the letters attributed to Heloise are strikingly Abelardian. Moreover, Letters Two, Four and Six contain a number of phrases, more or less unusual, which appear in the letters attributed to Abelard and in other works surely written by him. The author challenges the explanation that as

Abelard's student and wife, Heloise wrote in the same style, and points out that according to the correspondence, contact between the two was minimal after their conversion to monastic life. The more contact one hypothesizes in order to explain the style of the letters attributed to Heloise, the more difficult it is to explain their content. The paper was presented orally at the International Congress of the Monumenta Germaniae Historica on Fälschungen im Mittelalter on September 18, 1986 and is to be published substantially in the form which follows in the Proceedings of that Congress."

[*] *School of Cursus in the twelfth century and the letters of Heloise and Abelard* (1988).

8. Benton, John F., and Prosperetti Ercoli, Fiorella. 1975. "The Style of the *Historia Calamitatum*: A Preliminary Test of the Authenticity of the Correspondence Attributed to Abelard and Heloise." *Viator. Medieval and Renaissance Studies* no. 6:59–86.
 "In 1972 at the International Colloquium on Peter Abelard and Peter the Venerable held at the abbey of Cluny, Professor Jacques Monfrin called for a study of the correspondence of Abelard and Heloise which would make use of machine-readable texts and recently developed techniques for computer-assisted tests of authenticity and the attribution of authorship.(1) This paper is not a response to that request for a full-scale investigation of the correspondence, for it is based on conventional hand counting of only a few words and constructions. Instead, this is a modest preliminary study to test the validity of earlier statements about the style of the correspondence and its authorship, to attempt to determine whether a computer-assisted investigation would be worth the cost and effort, and to consider how such a study might best be undertaken." (p. 58)
 (...)
 "The limited survey of vocabulary and constructions which forms the basis of this paper suggests that the author of the *Historia calamitatum* was both careless in his repetition of conventional constructions and given to the creation of artificial emphasis through the repeated use of certain adverbs. If this author was Abelard, he wrote his autobiographical letter, the letter in which he bared his soul not only to his anonymous friend but to the world, in a style quite unlike and inferior to that of his other works. If the author was not Abelard, then one of the most important documents in medieval history needs to be reexamined and reinterpreted.(49) We hope that this survey will lead to a more intensive investigation of style that will determine which of these possibilities is correct.
 (1) Jacques Monfrin, "Le probleme de l'autenticite de la correspondance d'Abelard et d'Heloise," in *Actes du Colloque International Pierre Abelard - Pierre le Venerable* (Paris 1975) 409-424, esp. 423.(...)
 (49) Durant W. Robertson, Jr., *Abelard and Heloise* (New York 1972), 99-118, argues that the *Historia* is a work of self-criticism in which Abelard mocks himself, as in the use of a quotation from Ovid about Ajax which seems to have ironic implications. Whether Abelard, who steadfastly held his ground against his critics in a number of his other works, was likely to present himself as a subject of ridicule is open to debate. If Abelard did not write the *Historia*, then it is worth asking whether the real author intended to present Abelard in a favorable fashion or not. The problem is complicated by the possibility of interpolation. On the one hand, perhaps the letter was written about the time of the Council of Sens by one of Abelard's critics, and was later changed by someone who wished to improve the image of the founder of the Paraclete. On the other hand, the letter may have been written originally by someone favorable to Abelard and changed by someone who wished to emphasize the contrast between his early pride and lust and his later Christian behavior after his conversion.
9. Blamires, Alcuin. 1998. "*Caput a femina, membra a viris*. Gender Polemic in Abelard's Letter "On the Authority and Dignity of the Nun's Profession." In *The Tongue of the Fathers: Gender and Ideology in Twelfth-Century Latin*, edited by

Townsend, David R. and Taylor, Andrew, 55–79. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

"However, even supposing a conventual context able to sustain the intellectual qualities shown here, there was no foundational genealogy comparable to that which Abelard had constructed to link a highly educated nun with august *female* philosophical-monastic forbears.(23)

And that was why, if her husband would not respond to her emotionally, the next best thing was to challenge him (albeit strategically on behalf of "all" the Paraclete nuns) to console her by formulating an originary *auctoritas* for the identity as nun into which he had rushed her at their crisis.(24)

That he understood her absolutely is proved both by some features of letter 7 now to be considered and by the way he concludes it: trusting that he has not only dealt with the *auctoritas* of her calling, but also commended its *propria dignitas* (particular dignity) and its *excellencia* so that she may embrace it the more zealously.(25) He, as *philosophus*, could never ultimately be short of *propria dignitas*; culture was littered with famous male antecedents. Letter 7 is all about recovering and inventing the dignity of a professional genealogy for her, and thence arise its power and its radicalism in terms of gender issues. Having retrieved the challenge to which the letter responds, we now need to survey what precedents and arguments it offers, attending particularly to strategies of gender polemic that those arguments adopt. This will provide a context for discussion of some particularly striking examples of polemic and for attendant questions about Abelard's standpoint. In concluding, I will suggest how the strategies deployed in the letter express the "empathy" that I am attributing to it." (pp. 57-58)

(23) Newman interestingly speculates that for Heloise, as much as for Abelard, "the classical *otium philosophicum* exerted a strong attraction" ("Authority," 150).

(24) My diagnosis of a deeply personal motivation for Heloise's request differs from that of McLaughlin, who believes that it arises from Heloise's perception of the "ambiguous status" of the female monastic life, in that theoretically "nuns were laywomen living a religious life"—an ambiguity underlined by the period's enthusiastic female response to the call to the *vita apostolica* ("Peter Abelard and the Dignity of Women," 294). Georgianna connects Heloise's request with controversy over varying interpretations of the Benedictine Rule ("Any Corner of Heaven," 231-32). Unfortunately, Catherine Brown overlooks the request in her absorbing exploration of a "deployment of cultural masks of 'the feminine'" by Heloise ("Muliebriter: Doing Gender in the Letters of Heloise," 42).

(25) Muckle 1955: 281; Scott Moncrieff: 175. This concluding passage validates the manuscript title *De auctoritate vel dignitate ordinis sanctimonialium*, which was adopted by Muckle in his edition of the letter (1955: 253), though he had earlier (1950: 164-65) referred to it as the *De origine sanctimonialium*. For convenience (while retaining the important focus on female *auctoritas*) this essay will abbreviate the manuscript title to *De auctoritate sanctimonialium*.

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McLaughlin, Mary Martin. "Abelard as Autobiographer: The Motives and Meaning of His 'Story of Calamities?'" *Speculum* 42 (1967): 463-88.

_____. "Peter Abelard and the Dignity of Women: Twelfth Century 'Feminism' in Theory and Practice.” In *Pierre Abélard, Pierre le Vénérable: Les courants*

philosophiques, littéraires et artistiques en Occident au milieu du XI^e siècle, ed. René Louis, Jean Jolivet, and Jean Chatillon. Paris: Editions du Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, 1975. 287-333.

Newman, Barbara. "Authority, Authenticity, and the Repression of Heloise." *Journal of Medieval and Renaissance Studies* 22 (1992): 121-57. Reprint in Newman, *From Virile Woman to Woman Christ*.

_____. *From Virile Woman to Woman Christ: Studies in Medieval Religion and Literature*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1995.

10. Boos Dykeman, Therese. 1999. "Heloise (1100-1163)." In *The Neglected Canon: Nine Women Philosophers First to the Twentieth Century*, edited by Boos Dykeman, Therese, 39–72. Dordrecht: Kluwer.

"Heloise's contribution to the philosophical canon of the twelfth century has barely been investigated, for Heloise was not studied as a philosopher until as recently as the last two decades of the twentieth century. Yet, the twelfth century canon is not complete without including her early humanism. Other issues about which she made original contributions to the canon are as follows: the philosophy of love, the ethics of intention, the concept of justice, and feminism as a rationale for her own autonomy and for women's visibility and historical significance.

Heloise broadened Abelard's philosophical positions with her counter arguments, humanized his thinking, and being a wise instructor led him to new inquiry.

The rhetoric or the eloquence and logic of the letters provides evidence with which to judge Heloise a philosopher. Scholars agree that as rhetorician Heloise surpassed Abelard, who was himself skilled in rhetoric and taught it. (14)

Peter Dronke claims that, "Abelard assimilated to quite an extent Heloise's habits in the epistolary style, rather than other way round." (15) Abelard, in fact, acknowledged her "gift for letters." Her rhetoric informs her reasoning or logos with humanizing ethos and pathos. For Heloise demands with passion to be taken seriously as an individual and as a woman. She demands to have her thinking addressed by Abelard, not only as her friend and lover, but as philosopher. In this and other ways Heloise's style is integral to her philosophy, especially to her *feministicism*." (p. 43)

(14) One critic claims that "Heloise's letters stand beside any prose written by either sex ... she is as articulate as Sappho or George Eliot and makes Jane Austen or Emily Bronte tongue-tied in comparison" (Duncan, 13). Joseph T. Muckle asserts that the style of Heloise in contrast to Abelard in the letters is "more compact and involved" and her style "more vivid and forceful" (51).

(15) Dronke, *Women II I*. The rhetorical figures Heloise uses: the paradox (if you are lost to me, I am lost because I am in you), sentence balance, climactic paragraphs, comparisons such as of Abelard to Christ, parallel constructions, repetitions, allusions, hyperbole, metaphors and subtle changes in pronouns ("I" to "we," "you" to "us"), and antithesis. These and all the other rhetorical figures Heloise employs are more than stylistically pleasing, more than vehicles for sensory passion. They are, as in the Ciceronian definition of rhetoric being eloquence and wisdom, integrated with her thinking.

References

Dronke, P. 1984. *Women writers of the middle ages: A critical study of texts from Perpetual (+203) to Marguerite Porete (+ 1310)*. London: Cambridge UP.

Duncan, R. 1960. *Abelard and Heloise*. London: Faber.

Muckle, J.T., C.S.B. 1953. The personal letters between Abelard and Heloise: introduction, authenticity and text. *Medieval Studies*: 47-94.

11. Brown, Catherine. 1996. "Muliebriter: Doing Gender in the Letters of Heloise." In *Gender and Text in the Later Middle Ages*, edited by Chance, Jane, 25–51. Gainesville: University Press of Florida.
Reprinted Eugene (OR): Wipf and Stock 2019.
"I present these readings not with the intent of ironizing a feminist approach to Heloise into impossibility, but to demonstrate the high interpretive stakes associated with her in the canons of medieval and gender studies as well as the traps that here

await the necessary reading of the coimplications of gender and text. Rather than attempting to identify characteristics of Heloise's letters that I—as a late twentieth-century woman, feminist, medievalist—might recognize as "feminine" or "female," this essay will study the ways in which Heloise, in her writing, assumes positions that she herself identifies as gendered—the ways in which, to borrow Judith Butler's term, this woman "does" gender in all of its—and her-twelfth-century cultural specificity.(14) I will suggest that Heloise chooses, for strategic reasons, to write *muliebriter*, and that she does so by actively and aggressively assuming gendered positions already partly constructed in the cultural discourses available to her as a learned medieval writer." (p. 27)

12. Burge, James. 2003. *Heloise & Abelard: A Twelfth-century Love Story*. London: Profile Books.

"The first letter of the collection is from Abelard. It is addressed not to Heloise, however, but to an unnamed monk. It is what was called in the Middle Ages a 'letter of consolation', the idea being that the recipient should be so moved by the misfortunes of the writer that he himself would feel better about his own troubles. At 20,000 words it is really more of an autobiography, an account of Abelard's life to date. It has been known for centuries by the phrase which he himself uses, 'The Story of My Misfortunes'.(*)

(...)

It is not known precisely how Heloise came to read a copy of the autobiographical letter; perhaps Abelard even sent it to her as well as to the monk. Her letter to Abelard in response to this is the next in the series. She is reacting to a letter from the husband with whom she has not spoken for fifteen years, written to a third party, which tells the story of her own life. She writes to him, perhaps understandably, with a considerable amount of passion and so begins a dialogue which would continue for the rest of their lives, as they tried to make sense of what had happened. Abelard comes to see his fate almost as a gift: a chance to pursue the truth without distraction. Heloise, however, is unable to deny the essential rightness of the love they shared.

This dialogue takes place in the context of Abelard's continuing and ultimately disastrous — conflict with those in authority.

These letters captivate anyone who comes in contact with them.

Not only do they contain the story of Abelard and Heloise but they are a unique resource for anyone interested in the thoughts and feelings of people from an age which is both so different from and yet so similar to our own. It would have been churlish to have asked Providence for anything more, yet there was more." (pp. 2-3)

(*) *Historia Calamitatum Mearum*. In this book I refer to this autobiographical letter for simplicity as 'the autobiography'. Its other title among historians is 'Letter I'.

13. Burnett, Charles F. 1986. "'Confessio fidei ad Heloisam'. Abelard's Last Letter to Heloise? A Discussion and Critical Edition of the Latin and Medieval French Versions." *Mittellateinisches Jahrbuch* no. 21:147–155.
14. Cizewski, Wanda. 1987. "From *Historia calamitatum* to Amours et infortunes: the Legend of Abelard and Heloise in Seventeenth-Century France." *Studies in Medievalism* no. 3:71–76.
15. Classen, Albrecht. 2013. "Dialectics and Courtly Love: Abelard and Heloise, Andreas Capellanus, and the *Carmina Burana*." *The Journal of Medieval Latin* no. 23:161–183.

Abstract: "When Peter Abelard developed the principal ideas of dialectics, he did not only redirect the theological and philosophical discourse in a most critical fashion, but also provided a fundamental basis for much of the subsequent culture of courtly love. This finds powerful confirmation both in Andreas Capellanus's *De amore* and in the collection of Latin and Middle High German poems contained in the *Carmina Burana*. But Abelard appears to have had the most important impact of his own thinking on the relationship with his beloved mistress, later wife, Heloise.

In light of the Abelardian dialectics, the old question regarding the authenticity of the correspondence between these two people can be laid to rest as moot. What matters most proves to be that the letters reflect on two critically opposed positions vis-a-vis courtly love and illustrate how love can or must be viewed through the lens of dialectics."

16. Constable, Giles. 2005. "The Authorship of the *Epistolae duorum amantium*. A Reconsideration." In *Voices in Dialogue: Reading Women in the Middle Ages*, edited by Olson, Linda and Kerby-Fulton, Kathryn, 167–178. Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press.
 "Scholars should not allow themselves to be intimidated by accusations of this sort if they doubt the attribution to Heloise or even that the letters labeled "M" were necessarily written by a woman. Nor should they lose sight of the interest of the letters apart from their authorship, like a work of art of which the only value lies in the name or names attached to it. Even if they were not written by Abelard and Heloise, it would not subtract significantly from their interest, since they add comparatively little to what is already known about Abelard and Heloise. Indeed, the attribution is based almost entirely on knowledge derived from works more firmly attributed to them. In any case, the *Epistolae* are of value in themselves. Scholars may differ regarding their authorship, date, style, and quality, but they are without question a remarkable addition to the corpus of medieval love letters." (p. 174, a note omitted)

17. Cook, Brenda M. 2023. *Astralabe: The Life and Times of the Son of Heloise and Abelard*. Cham (Switzerland): Palgrave Macmillan.
Introduction, by Michael Clanchy, pp. XXIII-XXVI.
 "Brenda Cook succeeds in transforming a footnote in medieval history into the story of one man's search for recognition in twelfth-century France and beyond. This man is Astralabe, the only son of Abelard and Heloise, who was born around 1116/7. Abelard says it was Heloise who gave him this unusual name, which may have been her own invention. Brenda Cook argues that Astralabe's extraordinary name is a key to reconstructing his career." (Michael Clanchy, *Introduction*, p. XXIII)
 "From sparse and awkward materials, Brenda Cook has made Astralabe into a real person, instead of an unfamiliar name in a medieval book. She has therefore contributed to our permanent stock of knowledge about the Middle Ages, particularly in her demonstration that Astralabe became abbot of the Cistercian abbey of Hauterive. Abelard too is seen in a more sympathetic light. Here he is at last a family man, who is concerned for his son, even though he himself is castrated and a priest. If Abelard moved to the abbey of St Gildas in order to be nearer to his son, as Brenda Cook suggests, he made a move that almost destroyed him, as he alleges that the monks tried to kill him. In academic books on Abelard there is little room for Astralabe. My *Abelard: A Medieval Life* (Blackwell-Wiley, Oxford, 1997) fails typically in this respect, as I have Astralabe consigned to an appendix where I list the bare facts about him without comment. In addition to Brenda Cook's book, the subject of Abelard as a family man is now very well explored by Juanita Feros Ruys, *The Repentant Abelard* (Palgrave Macmillan, New York, 2014). She publishes an edition and translation of Abelard's *Song for Astralabe*. Her 'repentant Abelard' repents for his former life and so he now begins to take notice of Astralabe and likewise of Heloise. Abelard's family were not with him at the end, however, because he died as a monk of Cluny virtually as a prisoner." (Michael Clanchy, *Introduction*, p. XXV)

18. De Gussem, Jeroen. 2019. *Collaborative Authorship in Twelfth-Century Latin Literature: A Stylometric Approach to Gender, Synergy and Authority*. Gent: Universiteit Antwerpen.
 "English Summary
 (...)
 Chapter 8. Love to the Letter: Heloise and Abelard (pp. 235–279)

Current scholarship hypothesizes —and disagreement is still ongoing— that the renowned twelfth-century lovers Heloise of Argenteuil († 1164) and Peter Abelard (1079–1142) may be held responsible for having collaboratively composed two letter collections. The first is their conventionally ‘accepted’ letter collection (the Heloise-Abelard collection) consisting of eight letters, which constitutes a dialogue from which the pair recounts their early life and love story and gradually develops into a foundational document for the Paraclete, the monastery founded by Abelard in 1122 and seven years later presided over by Heloise as prioress. The second collection is a set of 113 short letters exchanged between two anonymous lovers (<V>ir and <M>ulier), known as the *Epistolae duorum amantium* (EDA). Due to a dire lack of historical information and material sources, both of these collections have been subjected to fierce scholarly debates when it comes to their provenance, dating, intention and authorship.

In the past few decades, especially the restitution of Heloise’s female authorship has been a major factor in the collections’ authenticity disputes.

The stylometric results in this chapter, however, suggest a strong stylistic homogeneity of the Heloise-Abelard collection in favour of Abelard, which contradicts the commonly held scholarly consensus that both Heloise and Abelard equally contributed to its composition. The collection’s constituent letters appear inextricable in terms of writing patterns, and finding a trace that might lead to a distinction in favour of Heloise proved impossible in the current set-up. Secondly, the EDA cannot be matched with the stylistic profiles of the Heloise-Abelard collection. As opposed to the latter *epistolarium*, it does, however, betray behaviour that is attributable to dual authorship, meaning that a <V>ir and a <M>ulier were responsible for composing the constituent letters of the exchange traditionally ascribed to them. Instead of resembling writings by Heloise and Abelard, the EDA exhibit stylistic affiliations with the Tegernsee letters, a collection of ten short twelfth-century erotic love letters originally composed in current-day Germany. The chapter concludes with general remarks on the constructed nature of medieval epistolaria, which often served a public rather than a private function in the Middle Ages, and were composed, revised and reconstructed with an underlying agenda." (pp. 290-291)

19. Desmond, Marylinn. 1998. "Dominus/Ancilla: Rhetorical Subjectivity and Sexual Violence in the Letters of Heloise." In *The Tongue of the Fathers*, edited by Townsend, David and Taylor, Andrew, 35–54. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.
"As he initiates his affair with his young pupil, Abelard expresses his desire through the violent eros of pedagogy, and ultimately he claims the erotic possibilities of violence. He reports that his role as magister authorizes his beating of Heloise, which increases his pleasure as her lover. Such a construction of desire marks a convergence of the erotic and the violent traditions of pedagogy in Western culture." (p. 36)
(...)
"The exchange of letters between Abelard and Heloise acknowledges the significance of violence in their sexual relations, and it likewise enacts a textual and rhetorical play of dominance and submission. As such, the letters exemplify the constitutive features of sadomasochism, generally identified by the “eroticization of relations of domination and submission.”(5)
Abelard’s depiction of his violent sexual performance in these passages is complemented by the submissive, even masochistic subjectivity that animates Heloise’s *epistulae*, in which she willingly submits to Abelard’s rhetorical violence as it textually reenacts this initial erotic encounter between *magister* and *discipula*. Throughout the correspondence Heloise performs a submissive role in an erotic dynamic scripted by Qvidian amatory discourse and structured by epistolary rhetoric." (p. 37)
20. Dronke, Peter. 1976. *Abelard and Heloise in Medieval Testimonies*. Glasgow: University of Glasgow Press.

"To return to the earlier testimonies by way of conclusion. What they show us, I suggest, is that there is no a priori reason against taking the Abelard-Heloise letters at their face value. To say this does not of course eliminate the more detailed questions: to what extent has the collection—which is clearly not just a group of randomly assembled letters—been edited as well as collected, and who was responsible for that editing?(72) But whatever historical aspects of the letters may still be debated, we have no reason to doubt their authenticity on the ground that they express thoughts and emotions incompatible with what we know of twelfth-century thought and emotion. All the attitudes revealed in the letters can be paralleled in early testimonies outside the letters. The two contemporaries—Fulco and Roscelin—who mocked and caricatured the tragedy, under the pretext of moral indignation, did so not because this was the only medieval way of regarding it, or even the most obvious way. Rather, it seems they were motivated by a personal dislike of Abelard. By contrast, the majority of contemporaries of whom we have evidence, and the generations immediately following, up to the time of Jean de Meun, were convinced of the uniqueness and stature of Abelard's and Heloise's love, and regarded their tragedy with wonderment and compassion. And no one in the twelfth or thirteenth century, to my knowledge, ever suggests that Heloise came to see the error of her ways in loving Abelard. Of what many of our modern judges so confidently affirm, the medieval evidence shows no trace."(pp. 30-31)

(72) On this point, see the judicious comments of Monfrin, *Colloque [Pierre Abélard - Pierre le Vénérable. Les courants philosophiques, littéraires et artistiques en Occident au milieu du XII siècle]*, pp. 409-24, esp. p. 424:

Personne ne considère que le recueil représente la mise bout à bout de lettres originales. Il s'agit d'un dossier organisé. Il paraît établi d'autre part que ce dossier, aussi haut que l'on peut remonter, vient du Paraclet.

Since these pages went to press, the problems of the critical evaluation of medieval letters, and especially of the formation of collections, have been finely discussed in a wider context by Giles Constable, *Letters and Letter-Collections* (Typologie des sources du moyen âge occidental, Fasc. 17, Turnhout, 1976), ch. III.

21. ———. 1980. "Heloise's *Problemata* and *Letters*: Some Questions of Form and Content." In *Petrus Abaelardus (1079-1142). Person, Werk und Wirkung*, edited by Thomas, Rudolf, 53–73. Trier: Paulinus-Verlag.
"While the letters of Heloise have been a focus of much discussion in recent years, the *Problemata* have been neglected. The genuineness of Heloise's letters continues to be challenged; that of the *Problemata* has been neither challenged nor investigated. At first view, the evidence for the authenticity of the *Problemata* might seem slender compared with that for the more famous *Epistolae*. Only one manuscript is known: Paris B. N. lat. 14511, from Saint-Victor. The second part of this composite manuscript, copied probably in Paris in a hand datable towards 1400, contains both the *Problemata* (fols. 18r-44v) and Abelard's letter *de studio literarum*, addressed to the community at the Paraclete (fols. 44v-50v)." (p. 53)
(...)
"Although a vast amount has been written on Heloise's letters, a number of important questions have been ignored. First, there has been no detailed discussion of the style of the letters, no attempt to characterize the principal features of that style or ascertain its possible sources. Second, notwithstanding some fine work by Peter von Moos(4), the structure of Heloise's letters still requires more careful consideration. The same holds true, even more, for both the style and structure of the neglected *Problemata*. A third range of questions concerns the description and evaluation of the links between the *Epistolae* and *Problemata*. A fourth — perhaps from the vantage of literary and intellectual history the most important — concerns individuality of expression and content in both these works. For Heloise should be considered not only in relation to Abelard, as has always been customary, but also in relation to other medieval women writers, to see precisely in what ways a womanly awareness comes to be expressed —and to be called in question - in her writings, and how her self-understanding compares with that of other medieval women who

have left us written testimonies. This last problem is one that I shall return to in detail, in the course of a forthcoming book on women writers from the third century to the thirteenth. For the present, I can only adumbrate swiftly some of the work that needs to be done regarding Heloise, in each of the four topics mentioned. The suggestions advanced are necessarily provisional; they are to indicate, above all, how much remains open and how rewarding fuller investigations could be." (p. 54)

22. ———. 1984. "Heloise." In *Women Writers of the Middle Ages: A Critical Study of Texts from Perpetua († 203) to Marguerite Porete († 1310)*, 107–143. Csmbridge: Cambridge University Press.

"On the distinctive technical features of Heloise's style, and their probable source, I shall summarize, and briefly add to, what I argued and documented in the Trier symposium on Abelard.!(10) There an enquiry into Heloise's practice of prose rhythms showed, first, that at the ends of sentences she used certain kinds of cadence (in particular, *cursus tardus* and *cursus velox*) purposively: a statistical test that enables one to distinguish between the observed and the expected frequency of any possible cadence showed that Heloise's choice of these two types could not be fortuitous. Second, and more surprisingly, Heloise's proportion of 'slow' to 'swift' cadences was the opposite of that found in all the major northern French writers of her day: while they, if they used *cursus* in their prose, favoured swift cadences far more than slow, Heloise, though using both swift and slow rhythms deliberately in her sentence-endings, chose to conclude more than 25 per cent of her sentences with a *tardus*, as against 16 per cent with a *velox*.

Third, this particular distribution corresponds precisely to that chosen and diffused by a leading Italian teacher of letter-writing in the first years of the twelfth century, Adalbertus, whereas the French teachers of this art — at least all those traced till now — overwhelmingly preferred *velox* cadences to *tardus* ones. Fourth, the model epistles in Adalbertus' 'art of letter-writing' share with Heloise's letters not only their choice of sentence-endings but also, within sentences, their use of elaborate rhythmic parallelism in phrases and clauses, a parallelism that, especially when intense emotion is to be expressed, is heightened by frequent, often almost regular, rhymes. That is, it seems that Heloise was taught to compose in an Italianate style, one that may have been quite new in France at the time of her adolescence." (pp. 109-110)

(10) Trier 1980, pp. 53-73.

References

Petrus Abaelardus (1079-1142). Person, Werk und Wirkung, ed. R. Thomas, J.Jolivet, D. E. Luscombe, L. M. de Rijk (Trierer Theologische Studien 38, Trier 1980)

23. ———. 1984. *Women Writers of the Middle Ages: a Critical Study of Texts from Perpetua († 203) to Marguerite Porete(† 1310)*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Chapter 5: Heloise 107; Excursus: Did Abelard Write Heloise's Third Letter? 140-143.

"From Heloise we have three letters to Abelard, preserved complete in seven of the nine manuscripts of their collected correspondence, and preserved also in the French translation of the Abelard-Heloise letters by Jean de Meun. We likewise have her *Problemata*, surviving in a unique manuscript, copied only towards 1400: this is a series of her questions, chiefly on problematic passages in Scripture, which she directed to Abelard with a letter introducing them, together with Abelard's replies. Finally, from the time after Abelard's death, we have a brief letter of hers to Peter the Venerable, the influential abbot of Cluny who gave protection and shelter to Abelard in his last years. Neither this letter nor that introducing the *Problemata* has ever been thought to be by anyone but Heloise. It is well known, by contrast, that many scholars have questioned the authenticity of her three letters in the collected correspondence.

As the *Problemata* are closely linked with these letters, being, in Van den Eynde's words, their 'continuation and complement', it is hard to see how one can

consistently deny Heloise the letters to Abelard without also rejecting her share of the *Problemata*. The reason that this has never been challenged — one cannot but suspect — is because it contains nothing that could be thought unedifying. In other words, the doubts expressed about the three earlier letters may be motivated, even if largely unconsciously, by the doubters' disquiet at certain 'profane' passages encountered there." (p. 108, two notes omitted)

"My purpose here is to examine the most recent arguments by which John Benton (Trier 1980) claims to 'demonstrate' or 'support the theory of Abelardian authorship' of the third letter ascribed to Heloise (Ep. VI in the collection)." (p. 140) (...)

"Before a full study of the textual problems is undertaken, one can only say that in the portions shared by *Epp.* VI and VII there is a strong likelihood of contamination, and that some passages, which do not seem to fit into either argument, may well have been interpolated. *Ep.* VIII poses special problems of transmission, since it survives complete in only one of the nine manuscripts that contain the collection of letters. As for *Ep.* VI, even if we must reckon with the later insertion of an ill-fitting diatribe against wine, with its own auctoritates, it is safe to say that no reason of weight has yet been advanced for attributing the remainder of this letter to anyone other than the person to whom all the manuscripts assign it: Heloise." (p. 143)

24. ———. 1989. "Heloise, Abelard and Some Recent Discussions." *Proceedings of the British Academy* no. 74:247–283.
Reprinted in P. Dronke, *Intellectuals and Poets in Medieval Europe*, Roma: Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura 1992, pp. 323-342.
25. Dronke, Peter, and Orlandi, Giovanni. 2005. "New works by Abelard and Heloise? (first part: *Versus et Ludi*)." *Filologia mediolatina* no. 12:123–146.
While this essay has been conceived as a collaborative effort, Peter Dronke is principally responsible for the first section (in English), Giovanni Orlandi for the second (in Italian).
"These notes on the question of attributing new poetic compositions to Abelard or Heloise were set down in the summer of 2003. A few months later a further contribution, by David Wulstan and several of his colleagues, became accessible to me: «The Poetic and Musical Legacy of Heloise and Abelard», ed. M. Stewart-D. Wulstan, Ottawa-Westhumble 2003. I shall only discuss those points in the new volume which have a direct bearing on the problem of further ascriptions to Heloise and Abelard, and which do not simply duplicate the arguments advanced by Wulstan in his essay in *Plainsong and Medieval Music* II (2002). Some passages from this are reproduced directly in the later publication, whilst others have been expanded. The volume includes two new attempts at attribution. Wulstan (pp. 123 f.) sees Abelard as the author of *Carmina Burana* 136, *Omnia sol temperat*, but also reports that John Ward wishes to ascribe it to Heloise. The fact that this song uses two-syllabled rich rhymes throughout (*subtilis l Aprilis l herilis l puerilis ...*) will, in the light of my discussion of Abelard's rhyming technique above, indicate why any such attribution seems to me implausible."
26. East, W. G. 1997. "This Body of Death: Abelard, Heloise and the Religious Life." In *Medieval Theology and the Natural Body*, edited by Biller, Peter and Minnis, A. J., 43–59. Rochester: York Medieval Press.
"Conversion to the religious life was clearly seen both as a way out of an impossible amorous entanglement, and as a possible option for a married couple. In fact, Abelard had a close personal precedent for considering the religious life as an honourable option for married people: both his parents had entered the monastic life.(4)
Rather than taking the romantic way out, Abelard and Heloise therefore turned to religion. He took the monastic habit at Saint Denis in Paris; she took the veil at Argenteuil.
(...)

"She [Heloise] ends the letter by asking Abelard for two things: a history of female monasticism, and a detailed rule of life for her community.

As Southern remarks, Abelard did what she asked, and much more. He sent her the desired Rule and History of the Order, long treatises that must have cost him much time and labour. 'To get the full record of what Abelard did for Heloise, we must add about a hundred hymns, thirty-five sermons, and a substantial series of solutions of Heloise's theological problems.'(30) One should not forget either the half-dozen *Planctus* which Abelard wrote, and which touch very closely on the state of mind of Heloise and himself.(31)

The hymns which Abelard wrote for Heloise's community are among the glories of Latin literature. F. J. E. Raby comments, 'Abélard, the prince of dialecticians, the master intellect of his age, wrote a volume of hymns of which the least that can be said is that it is worthy of his genius.'(32) Their editor describes them as 'a major monument of twelfth-century hymnody and poetry in general'. He goes on to say that, more than this, they are also 'a work of personal significance . . . a labor of love.'(33) They are a collection of hymns for the daily monastic office. They could be used, as some of them are used, in other churches and monastic houses, without reference to or any necessary knowledge of the story of Abelard and Heloise. But if one does know their story, the poems gain a considerable resonance. Abelard had found an acceptable medium in which to express his love for Heloise. He had written in his *Historia calamitatum* of composing love songs for Heloise, some of which were still being sung as he wrote.(34) This channel for the expression of his love had now been cut off, but another had opened up. He could now express a love for her, as ardent as before, but now refined, sublimated, subsumed in their common love for Christ." (pp. 50-51)

(4) 'Letter of Consolation', pp. 163-213.

Abelard briefly mentions his parents' conversion, without specifying where or why they entered the religious life (p. 179). For a translation of the *Historia calamitatum* see Radice, *Letters*, pp. 57-106.

(31) They have been edited by G. Vecchi in *Pietro Abelardo, I 'Planctus', Introduzione, testo critico, trascrizioni musicali*, Istituto di filologia romanza della Università di Roma, Collana Testi e Manuali 35 (Modena, 1951).

(32) F. J. E. Raby, *A History of Christian Latin Poetry from the beginnings to the close of the Middle Age* (Oxford, 1953), p. 290.

(33) *Peter Abelard's Hymnarius Paraclitensis*, ed. J. Szövérfy, 2 vols. (Albany, NY, and Brookline, Mass., 1975), I, 7.

(34) 'Letter of Consolation', p. 184; Radice, *Letters*, p. 68.

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The Letters of Abelard and Heloise, trans. B. Radice (Harmondsworth, 1974)

27. Feilla, Cecilia A. 2003. "Translating Communities: The Institutional Epilogue to the Letters of Abelard and Heloise." *The Yale Journal of Criticism* no. 16:363–379.
"In the pages that follow, I examine the relationship between literary and juridical translation from the twelfth to the eighteenth centuries.
I do not attempt a comprehensive study of translation over six centuries, but rather focus on one paradigmatic corpus of texts through which to map the shifting relationship between texts and tombs, letters and bodies in the constitution of communities: the institutional epilogue to the letters of Abelard and Heloise, the twelfth-century lovers and clerics. By institutional epilogue I mean the story that continues after their deaths and survives in the many literary translations of their letters, as well as in the institutional *breves de translation* written at each transfer of their bodily remains to a new site or tomb. This two-part epilogue spans the years 1143 to 1817 and comprises two textual archives. The first reflects the literary fate of the correspondence of Abelard and Heloise, and is manifest in the numerous editions and translations of the correspondence that appeared, most notably in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.(10) The second archive refers to the institutional fate of their correspondence within the juridical communities in which they circulated. This archive consists of the official letters and *procès-verbaux* that

- accompanied and recorded each translation (exhumations, cataloguing, movement, and re-interments) of the bodily remains of the pair." (pp. 363-364)
- (10) By literary translations I mean not only from one language into another, but imitation, adaptation, quotation, pastiche, and parody as well.
28. ———. 2004. "From 'Sainted Maid' to 'Wife in all her Grandeur': Translations of Heloise, 1687–1817." *Eighteenth-Century Life* no. 28:1–16.
 "Due in large part to the enormous success of Alexander Pope's poem "Eloisa to Abelard" (1717), the letters of Abelard and Heloise experienced a remarkable rebirth and vogue in eighteenth-century England. The fashion for their lives and letters swept every genre in its path, and crescendoed in popularity well into the nineteenth century. "If you search for passion," wrote Lord Byron, "where is it . . . stronger than in the epistle to Eloisa from Abelard." (p. 1)
 (...)
 "The literary and the institutional fates of Abelard and Heloise were thus intimately connected during the eighteenth century, and I explore this connection by focusing primarily on the changing representation of Heloise from 1687 to 1817. My central questions are: "What role did translation play in creating the modern legend of Abelard and Heloise?" and "How did the literary legend impact the lovers' role within non-literary communities and institutions of the eighteenth century?" (p. 1)
 29. Findley, Heidenreich, Brooke. 2006. "Does the Habit Make the Nun? A Case Study of Heloise's Influence on Abelard's Ethical Philosophy." *Vivarium* no. 44:248–275.
 Abstract: "A careful reading of Heloise's letters reveals both her contribution to Abelard's ethical thought and the differences between her ethical concerns and his. In her letters, Heloise focuses on the innate moral qualities of the inner person or *animus*. Hypocrisy - the misrepresentation of the inner person through false outer appearance, exemplified by the potentially deceitful religious habit or *habitus* - is a matter of great moral concern to her. When Abelard responds to Heloise's ideas, first in his letters to her and later in his *Collationes* and *Scito te ipsum*, he turns the discussion away from her original interests. He transforms her metaphor of the *habitus* as false appearance into a discussion of another type of *habitus*, the habitual process of acquiring virtue, and integrates her focus on the *animus* into his developing ideas about sin as intention. Examining the differences between Heloise's ethical thought and Abelard's allows us to appreciate the distinct contributions of both."
 30. Forrai, Réka, and Piron, Sylvain. 2007. "The debate on the *Epistolae duorum amantium*. Current status quaestionis and further research." *Digimed: filologia digitale dei testi mediolatini*:1–12.
 Abstract: "The *Epistolae duorum amantium* are the object of one of the most intense and interesting current debates in medieval studies. Could it be the case that this set of 116 anonymous sophisticated letters and poems exchanged by a couple of learned medieval lovers represents the actual correspondence of Heloise and Abaelard at the time of their love affair, as Constant Mews has claimed in a book published in 1999 ? This ascription has been accepted by some scholars (B. Newman, M. Clanchy, D. Boquet, etc.) ; some supporters have even produced more arguments and evidence in favour of such a result (S. Jaeger, J. Ward, S. Piron). On the other hand, a number of medievalists have expressed their scepticism on various grounds, arguing that is impossible to decide (G. Lobrichon), that the outcome doesn't matter much (J. Verger, M.T. Fumagalli), or just stating their disbelief (J. Marenbon, G. Orlandi). The number of actual argued critics against Mews' view is so far rather limited (G. Constable, P. Dronke, P. von Moos, J. Ziolkowski). Most of them originated among Latin philologists, but it would be misleading to reduce the debate to an opposition between disciplines (idest, the cautious philologists against the temerary historians) or, as J. Ziolkowski puts it, between continents (the European sceptics vs. the enthusiastic Australians and Americans), or to perceive it, as Ziolkowski also strongly suggests, as expressing an ideological divide on the issue of gender studies (the defender of the ascription beeing blinded by a feminist agenda)."

31. Fraioli, Deborah. 2000. "Pierre Bayle's Reflections on a Much Discussed Woman: The HELOISE Article in the *Dictionnaire historique et critique*." In *Listening to Heloise: The Voice of a Twelfth-Century Woman*, edited by Wheeler, Bonnie, 341–360. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
"Pierre Bayle's commentary on the Abelard-Heloise correspondence has never been translated into English. The article HELOISE merits our consideration both for its inherent interest and its relevance to the authenticity question surrounding this correspondence." (p. 341)
(,,,)

"Several kinds of difficulties arise in finding one's way to the invaluable and entertaining article on Heloise by Pierre Bayle, contained in the vast encyclopedia compiled by this seventeenth-century erudit. Although Bayle's *Dictionnaire historique et critique* is cited in the bibliography of Charlotte Charrier, *Héloïse dans l'histoire et dans la légende*, 1933, at no. 429, it is translated neither by Richard H. Popkin in the *Historical and Critical Dictionary: Selections from the Dictionnaire* nor in the earlier four-volume selections titled *An Historical and Critical Dictionary, Selected and Abridged from the Great Work of Pierre Bayle*. For readers of French, the original four folio volumes of the *Dictionnaire* are cumbersome and relatively rare, meaning that in most cases they are available only in rare book libraries. The best modern access to Bayle's article on Heloise remains the nineteenth-century, sixteen-volume edition, titled *Dictionnaire historique et critique de Pierre Bayle*, edited by Beuchot." (p. 341)
(...)

"The complete translation of Bayle's article HELOISE follows." (pp. 343-356)
32. ———. 2012. "Assessing Medieval Moral Outrage: the Correspondence of Abelard and Heloise." *Mediaevistik. Internationale Zeitschrift für interdisziplinäre Mittelalterforschung* no. 25:55–68.
"Were I to analyze in what ways I find the couple's medieval attackers, satirists, and censors to be on far more solid intellectual ground than their defenders, it would be to place the cart before the horse. This is because I believe steadfastly that the strongest condemnation of the couple's behavior and attitudes comes straight from the correspondence itself, and that those medieval censors and satirists merely play on the ironies and laughable inconsistencies, the hyperbole, and self-contradiction, that they have already found in the letters. In the letters each protagonist mocks the other. And the texts themselves, by providing scrambled and paradoxical testimony, mock them both.
By selecting several examples in this article to argue this point, I hope to remove myself from the moral debate, as I argue that the letters themselves, by their skillfully paradoxical nature, build a strong emotional case for siding with the protagonists, but then subtly undermine that position to the point of whimsically witty and cleverly erudite, but clear, condemnation."(p. 59)
33. ———. 2016. "Heloise's First Letter as a Response to the *Historia Calamitatum*." *Mediaevistik. Internationale Zeitschrift für interdisziplinäre Mittelalterforschung* no. 29:119–141.
"While few scholars are likely to place themselves in the camp of Moore or Dalarun, one wonders whether the two scholars were led to their theories by perceiving small signs that something is amiss in the relationship between the *Historia* and Heloise's first letter, something beyond the double implausibility that Abelard wrote his autobiography to console a friend or that Abelard's *Historia* came into Heloise's hands "by chance."
The usefulness of Moore's and Dalarun's flexible thinking lies, I think, not in their conclusions but in focusing our attention on the odd affiliations, and sometimes the very lack of affiliation, between the two documents. Addressing the contours of the textual relationship between Abelard's autobiography and Heloise's first letter, as I propose to do in these pages, uncovers surprisingly rich terrain in which to explore the deepest nature of the correspondence and its interpretation. I will assume here—

despite the usefulness of Moore and Dalarun's theories as a way to open up our thinking about the relationship between the two texts—that the conventional chronology (*Historia* followed by Heloise's reply) is the correct one." (p. 121)

References

Jacques Dalarun, "The Last Word of the Correspondence," *Journal of Hermeneutic Study and Education of Textual Configuration* (Nagoya, Japan), 2, 1 (2008), pp. 1–14.

Jacques Dalarun, "Nouveaux aperçus sur Abélard, Héloïse et le Paraclet," *Francia: Forschungen zur westeuropäischen Geschichte* 32:1 (2005), pp. 19–66.

George Moore, *Héloïse and Abélard, The Works of George Moore*, vol. 14 (London: Heineman, 1933).

34. Freeman, Elizabeth. 1997. "The public and private functions of Heloise's letters." *Journal of Medieval History* no. 23:15–28.
Abstract: "This article investigates Heloise's three letters to Abelard in relation to modern debates concerning the characteristics and usefulness of the categories 'public' and 'private'. It is common to assign women's letters and autobiographies to the private realm. While it is not denied that women's letters frequently fulfilled functions of a more or less 'private' nature, this article suggests that certain peculiarities of medieval textual practices complicate this assignation. Medieval 'participation in literacy' was always a more public practice than modern reading and writing. Moreover, the conventions of epistolography ensured that medieval letters were in fact highly public documents. It is suggested then that medieval female epistolography is a site for the interaction of private (autobiographical) and public (literary and rhetorical) interests. Heloise's letters show us a woman claiming her place in both public and private realms. She used the rhetorical skill which she had acquired via her position in the public world of learning in order to validate her many different experiences. Modifications to the original formulations of public and private suggest that the spheres are not separate and exclusive but, rather, permeable. Certainly, Heloise reminds us of the shifting boundaries of social categorisation, as she consciously rejects traditional binary opposites, such as that between wife and whore, in her individual quest for self-definition."
35. Gilson, Etienne. 1960. *Heloise and Abelard*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.
"Before attempting to define the Middle Ages, we should have first to define Héloïse. Next, we should have to look for a definition of Petrarch. This done, we should still have to find a definition of Erasmus. These problems resolved, we might with some confidence seek out our larger definition of the Middle Ages and the Renaissance. But Tree plus two make five impossibilities. Those who have no taste for undertakings of this kind will be content with the reading and analyzing of texts. Like explorers in an unknown country, they will do nothing more than keep the daily record of their trip. All about the narrow furrow which they plough, behind and beyond what they see to the right and to the left extends the vast territory which they cannot see. But others, too, pass or will pass that way. And when their paths cross and recross one another, not only will each explorer be able to see more, but he will see in a far juster light the few things which he already knows. Before reality, perceived in all its ordered complexity, who will stop to worry about formulas? It is not to be rid of history that we study it, but to save from nothingness the whole past which would be swallowed up without it. We study history so that even those things which otherwise would be lost even from the past may once again come to life in this all-important present, apart from which nothing really exists. In order that this particular human story may live anew in all its individual and concrete complexity, it is enough that we know it. In order that it may enrich us with its very substance, it is enough that we love it." (pp. 143-144).
36. Godman, Peter. 2009. *Paradoxes of Conscience in the High Middle Ages: Abelard, Heloise, and the Archpoet*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

"Why then, in the *longue durée* of the European conscience, does a single century make a difference? Because that century was the twelfth, during which new issues were perceived and forgotten

problems recalled to memory. An example, novel in the intensity with which it was discussed during that period, is *fictio*.

Fictio does not mean 'fiction'. Rather theological than literary, this term signifies feigning and falsification of conscience, particularly in penance.

Penance was given the status of a sacrament during the twelfth century, and confession was regarded as a test of spiritual authenticity and religious sincerity.

A travesty of both, at the moment when sinners were expected to be truest to God and to themselves, *fictio* challenged the ethical imagination of Latin Europe. That challenge found a response in the works of Abelard, Heloise, and the Archpoet.

Usually considered separately from one another, in terms of such harmless but unhelpful anachronisms as 'individuality' or 'renaissance', all three of them reflected on issues of moral identity posed by feigning and falsification of conscience. Because the morality to which Abelard and Heloise subscribed was, or became, monastic, their reflection also led them to allied problems of lying, dissimulation, and hypocrisy in a religious context. In the very different context of a German schismatic's court, opposed to Rome and hostile to monks, the Archpoet took *fictio* to its limit. There the dividing-line between irony and blasphemy blurred. With a refined wit directed against ethical concerns of the previous generation, this feigned penitent, in his 'confession', created a new figure of spiritual sophistry."

(*Preface and acknowledgements*, pp. IX-X)

37. Hellemans, Babette. 2015. "Abelard and Heloise between voice and silence." In *Voice and Voicelessness in Medieval Europe*, edited by Kleiman, Irit Rut, 83–97. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
"This chapter studies both the letters of Heloise and Abelard and elements of their still-controversial reception. Its aim is to consider voice and silence as types or expressions of rhetorical individuality. I begin with a stance against what I see as a persistent idea about the famous letters exchanged between Abelard and Heloise: namely, that they are actually true letters, written between a couple in a consecutive order and revealing to the reader a sense of growing insight into their existence, both as a couple and as two individuals. My approach in this chapter draws on certain aspects of the debate that surrounds these letters in European scholarly tradition, and especially in Germany, where the tendency is arguably to emphasize the historical context of a source, as opposed to what might be described as the more politically engaged, gender-focused scholarship predominant in North America.(1) My aim on these pages is a modest one, namely, to consider a particular historiographical approach to a body of commonly discussed sources." (p. 83)
(1) For example, Linda Olson and Kathryn Kerby-Fulton, *Voices in Dialogue: Reading Women in the Middle Ages* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2005).
38. ———. 2019. "Heloise's Echo: The Anthropology of a Twelfth-Century Horizontal Knowledge Landscape." In *Horizontal Learning in the High Middle Ages: Peer-to-Peer Knowledge Transfer in Religious Communities*, edited by Long, Micol, Snijders, Tjamke and Vanderputten, Steven, 185–205. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press.
Abstract: "This chapter presents Heloise of Argenteuil's quest for an intellectual voice through her correspondences with Abelard, Bernard of Clairvaux, and Peter the Venerable. The relationships between these four characters are deeply intellectual yet at the same time they are negotiated not only through intimate conversations, but also through collaborative monastic projects, through which the characters seek to transform the world around them. These performances open up a space that is at once estheticized and intellectualized, in which interpersonal connections can develop. This is particularly true of vocal performances such as in the letters, in which the act of listening offers a moment of connection with the unmistakable individuality of Heloise as a performer."

39. Irvine, Martin. 1996. "Heloise and the gendering of the literate subject." In *Criticism and Dissent in the Middle Ages*, edited by Copeland, Rita. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
 "The Abelard—Heloise correspondence thus discloses that masculinity and femininity as positions in literate subjectivity were not pure, absolute states but rather formed from ongoing negotiations among various kinds of (already) mixed subject positions. For twelfth-century litterati, gender classes seemed to be natural categories mirrored in language, and maleness and femaleness would have been understood as both natural and social identities. But a close reading of these letters reveals that gendered subjectivity seldom appears as a fixed, one-dimensional identity. Abelard's letters alone disclose that there was no easy equation between social sex identity and gendered subjectivity; indeed, the Abelard—Heloise correspondence reveals a play or drift away from a sense of fixed or essential gender identity and creates an image of an alternating or ever-vacillating current through which literate subjectivity was constructed. Heloise's strategy of negotiation and new self-definition utilized the gender categories of the twelfth century and resisted the totalizing or essentializing functions that these categories often served." (p. 107, a note omitted)

40. Jaeger, C. Stephen. 1980. "The Prologue to the *Historia calamitatum* and the "Authenticity Question"." *Euphorion. Zeitschrift für Literaturgeschichte* no. 74:1–15.
 "If we are to avoid making the weaker argument the stronger, then we must put aside the idea that the prologue to the *Historia* is based on skillful imitation of Peter Abelard.(48) The correspondences in question are much more satisfactorily accounted for by supposing that Peter Abelard wrote that prologue. Mary McLaughlin has shown that there is a unity of thought, tone and style underlying Abelard's writings for the Paraclete.(49) The echoes of Abelard's style in the opening to the *Historia* are undoubtedly part of that unity. My conclusion is that this preface constitutes a statement, the authenticity of which is beyond all reasonable doubt, that Abelard wrote a letter of consolation narrating his own calamities in order to comfort an absent friend and to convince him of the comparative triviality of his sufferings. That letter is of course the *Historia calamitatum*." (pp. 14-15)
 (48) It might be objected that the possibility of imitation, like! or not, gains strength because of the evidence of historical inaccuracy in the text of the *Historia*; we must account for anachronisms and contradictions somehow. I for one am not convinced that the historical evidence against its authenticity is best accounted for by a hypothesis of forgery and fiction. The means of corrupting a genuine text are many and well known: scribal error, wilful tampering, large scale additions. But the means of producing a fictional autobiography which bears many traces -- both obvious and subtle -- of the style, temperament and thought of the man to whom it is ascribed, are extremely limited; very few litterati in the Middle Ages would have commanded or would even have dreamed of mustering such means.
 (49) In: *Peter Abelard and the Dignity of Women: Twelfth Century "Feminism" in Theory and Practice*. In: *Pierre Abelard - Pierre le vénérable* (1975), pp., 287-333.

41. ———. 1999. *Ennobling Love: In Search of a Lost Sensibility*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.
 Chapter 12: *The Epistolae duorum amantium, Heloise, and Her Orbit*, pp. 157-173.
 "The defense of passionate love is a creation of Heloise. Her sensibilities are guided by sublime ideals, her passionate nature appreciates and defines the exalting character of passionate love. She constructed a virtuous sexual passion of the elements of ennobling love: selflessness, purity of intention, love of merit, purity of love, mutuality, complete self-abandonment. She is the architect of a higher law of pure love sanctioning sexuality, a kind of carnal agape, set above the shallow morality of marriage and external, bodily purity. Gilson pointed to the couple's self-conception as "heroes of the spiritual life" (*Heloise and Abelard*, p. 51). But Heloise genuinely became a heroine of the amatory life. For Abelard the story is a crass

drama of seduction shading off into an idyll of lustfulness; his explanation for the tragedy is simply sin punished.

But what is the exalting character of passionate love constructed and lived by Heloise? It certainly has to do with willing self-abandonment, sacrifice of everything for the beloved, salvation included. It has to do with the refusal to repent pleasures too sweet to forget, with her maintaining of a shallow social role (abbess, nun) while inwardly cultivating the memory of love. Her unrepentance is not the buffoonish defiance of Don Giovanni. Heloise fades into silence with the insistent conviction that her love is worth her destruction, not with a defiant "My will be done." (pp.169-170)

42. ———. 2005. "*Epistolae duorum amantium* and the Ascription to Heloise and Abelard." In *Voices in Dialogue: Reading Women in the Middle Ages*, edited by Olson, Linda and Kerby-Fulton, Kathryn, 125–166. Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press.
"A set of 113 love letters, abridged, copied, and entitled *Ex epistolis duorum amantium* by a Cistercian monk of Clairvaux, Johannes de Vepria, in the late fifteenth century, enjoyed total obscurity in the libraries of Clairvaux and Troyes until the German medieval Latinist Dieter Schaller noticed them in 1967 and passed to his student, Ewald Könsgen, the task of editing them. Könsgen's edition appeared with an extensive apparatus in 1974 with the title *Epistolae duorum amantium: Briefe Abaelards und Heloises?* (1) The small flame of Könsgen's subtitle flickered pale against the bonfire set under the corpus of personal and monastic writings of Abelard and Heloise two years before by John Benton, stoked again by Benton and Fiorella Prosperetti Ercoli in 1975, and at last all but extinguished in 1980 by the same man who had set it.
(...)
In 1999 Constant Mews published a study of the letters confidently arguing that the collection indeed excerpts the authentic letters exchanged by Abelard and Heloise from the early years of their love affair, c. 1115–1117.(5) Mews himself and his publisher considered his studies conclusive and announced them as such.(6) Mews's arguments have been accepted by John O. Ward and Neville Chiavaroli (Mews's co-translator) and shored up in a dense study of rhetorical aspects of the *Epistolae*. A great deal remains to be learned about these letters and their authors from a close reading and comparison with other comparable Latin love letters. This study explores the character of the two authors, their literary styles, and their educational backgrounds. The results strengthen the ascription to Heloise and Abelard and point out what is gained for understanding the education of the young Heloise when the letters of the woman are recognized as products of her pen. I begin by summarizing some of the information that is to be gleaned about the writers and the context of their letters." (pp. 125-126, some notes omitted)
(1) Ewald Könsgen, *Epistolae duorum amantium: Briefe Abaelards und Heloises?* (Leiden and Cologne: Brill, 1974); hereafter Könsgen. The manuscript is Troyes BM 1452. For description and history of the text, see Könsgen, xx–xxxiii. Könsgen can find no trace of Johannes de Vepria's source for the love letters. It remains unknown.
(5) Constant J. Mews with translations by Neville Chiavaroli and Mews, *The Lost Love Letters of Heloise and Abelard: Perceptions of Dialogue in Twelfth-Century France* (New York: St. Martins, 1999).
The book includes Könsgen's edition of the Latin texts with translations by Neville Chiavaroli and Mews on facing pages. See also Mews, "Philosophical Themes in the *Epistolae duorum amantium*: The First Letters of Heloise and Abelard," in *Listening to Heloise*, ed. Bonnie Wheeler (New York: St. Martins Press, 2000), 35–52.
(6) The publisher distributed a press release declaring, "Scholar proves letters lost for eight centuries to be those of famous lovers Heloise and Abelard."
43. ———. 2005. "A Reply to Giles Constable." In *Voices in Dialogue: Reading Women in the Middle Ages*, edited by Olson, Linda and Kerby-Fulton, Kathryn,

179–186. Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press.

Reply to G. Constable, *The Authorship of the Epistolae duorum amantium*. *A Reconsideration*, same volume.

"Giles Constable's gentlemanly skepticism is a brake on a vehicle which is moving slightly above the speed limit. His "Reconsideration" is not a refutation or a reply to the arguments in favor of ascribing the *Epistolae duorum amantium* to Heloise and Abelard. His purpose is to slow down Constant Mews and others, like me, who have accepted Mews's finding, prematurely he believes. He does not present evidence or substantial arguments against the ascription of the *Epistolae* to Abelard and Heloise; he just issues a gentle cautioning.(1)

As Constable says, no "positive evidence" identifies and locates the *Epistolae duorum amantium* with certainty. That means, no signatures, no clearly locatable details of the identity of the authors." (p, 179)

(1) Peter von Moos takes up a skeptical position far more vehemently in a forthcoming study of the collaboration of Heloise and Abelard at the Paraclete ("Abaelard, Heloise und ihr Paraklet: ein Kloster nach Mass, Zugleich eine Streitschrift gegen die ewige Wiederkehr hermeneutischer Naivitaet," in [Peter von Moos, *Gesammelte Schriften zum Mittelalter. Bd. 1: Abaelard und Heloise*], ed. Gert Melville) [Berlin 2005 pp. 233-302] (...)

44. ———. 2014. "The *Epistolae Duorum Amantium*, Abelard, and Heloise: An Annotated Concordance." *The Journal of Medieval Latin* no. 24:185–224.
Abstract: "This concordance juxtaposes passages from the *Epistolae duorum amantium* with passages from the authentic writings of Abelard and Heloise which have clear resonance with the anonymously transmitted love letters. The accumulated evidence of authorship by Abelard and Heloise is considerable. At the same time the flaws in argumentation of the most prominent and vocal deniers of the ascription leave the current state of the question clear: authorship by Abelard and Heloise is probable; few arguments of substance opposing that claim remain. The texts juxtaposed here do not prove authorship by Abelard and Heloise conclusively, but they more than justify placing them in the foreground as the legitimate focus of study of the question, who wrote the *Epistolae duorum amantium*."
45. Janson, Tore. 1988. "School of Cursus in the twelfth century and the letters of Heloise and Abelard." In *Retorica e poetica tra i secoli XII e XIV. Atti del secondo Convegno internazionale di studi dell'Associazione per il Medioevo e l'Umanesimo latini (AMUL) in onore e memoria di Ezio Franceschini (Trento e Rovereto 2-5 ottobre 1985)*, edited by Leonardi, Claudio and Menestò, Enrico, 171–200. Spoleto: Fondazione Centro italiano di studi sull'alto medioevo.