

Contributi/7

Authority in the Margins

Paratexts, Politics and History in Louise de Keralio's Translations

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In her translations of the English travel writer John Carr, *Voyage en Hollande* and *L'Etranger en Irlande*, Louise de Keralio (1756-1822) turns a humble, "feminine" activity into an outlet for ideas. Adding copious paratexts (preliminary discourses, translator's prefaces, translator's notes, footnotes, a 225-page essay on Dutch commerce) that swell Carr's single-volume books into two, she engages in expansive philosophizing about politics and history, showcases her credentials as an Enlightenment intellectual and her rigorous historical method, and pronounces on an encyclopedic range of subjects. Deftly skirting Napoleonic censorship, the former revolutionary advocates, in contrast to imperial domination, a transnational "république universelle" grounded in shared knowledge. How effective was Keralio's choice to disseminate her far-reaching ideas, without apologies for her gender, not in books she authored herself, but in the margins of works written by another in the seemingly minor genre of the travelogue?

Louise de Keralio (1756-1822) revealed her intellectual ambition in a youthful letter to Bernardin de Saint-Pierre: «J'ai le corps petit, mais l'âme grande», she confided, «je me crois née pour la société et non pour moi»¹. In light of her entire corpus, which consists of more than forty volumes, not counting extensive writing for her newspapers, we may read these words as the expression of Keralio's will to go beyond the domestic circle traced around her by her «corps petit», that is, her female body, and contribute like her male contemporaries to the progress of *lumières* in society as a whole². Hers was the commitment of a *philosophe*. Perhaps the greatest illustration of the scope of Keralio's ambition are her 1809 translations of John Carr's travelogues: *Voyage en Hollande et dans le*

¹ Letter 3, ca. 1777. L. Robert, *Louise Félicité Robert [née Guynement de Keralio] to Jacques Henri Bernardin de Saint Pierre*, *Electronic Enlightenment*, ed. by S. Davies, Oxford 2016. Spelling modernized throughout.

² V. Mistacco, «*Le Corps petit, mais l'âme grande*»: Voicing a Woman's Ambition in Louise de Keralio, «*Women in French Studies*», 2019, pp. 83-84.

*mid de l'Allemagne, sur les deux rives du Rhin, dans l'été de 1806 and L'Étranger en Irlande, ou Voyage dans les parties méridionales et occidentales de cette île, dans l'année 1805*³. These are so copiously annotated and augmented in various types of paratexts (preliminary discourses, prefaces, notes, footnotes, essay) that they swell Carr's single-volume books into two. To appreciate Keralio's choice to weigh in on history and politics and to pronounce in the paratexts enveloping these translations on an encyclopedic range of topics – from herring fishing to agronomy and ecology, from women in society to fanaticism and freedom of thought, from reform of mental institutions to luxury, art, and literature – we need to view them in the context of her previous work.

Keralio's early works were also translations; the first were published anonymously⁴. They contain few interventions of the translator in the form of footnotes, but some of these already convey her eagerness to showcase her credentials as a historian to the detriment of the author whom she condemns, for example, for bias against the French⁵. Her first signed work, like the Carr translations, was a translation of a travel book, *Voyages dans les deux Siciles* by Henry Swinburne, («traduits de l'anglais par mademoiselle de Keralio»)⁶. Venturing openly into the public arena for the first time, Keralio places herself under the protective cover of two male authorities, Swinburne, to whom she submitted her translation for approval, and her father, to whom she dedicates the book⁷. Her authorial posture is marked by both personal ambition and a conformity to gender norms that inhibit that ambition. In the dedication to her father, she emphasizes her «faibles lumières» and «la faiblesse d'un sexe timide»⁸, all the while admitting her motivation to draw the attention of the public to herself.⁹ Offering her writing «à l'ombre d'un nom» that her father has illustrated, she hopes to follow in his footsteps, if only «de loin»¹⁰. Yet in the marginal space of footnotes, Keralio contradicts this performance of feminine humility. There she begins to question the boundaries of gender and experiments with defying expectations of what a woman can legitimately and authoritatively write. Thus, she seizes upon Swinburne's mention of *privileges exclusifs* to plead in a lengthy

³ J. Carr, *A Tour through Holland, along the Right and Left Banks of the Rhine, in the South of Germany, in the Summer and Autumn of 1806*, London 1807; Id, *The Stranger in Ireland: or, A Tour in the Southern and Western Parts of that Country, in the Year 1805*, Philadelphia 1806.

⁴ *Essai sur les moyens de rendre les facultés de l'homme plus utiles à son bonheur*, «traduit de l'anglais de Jean Gregory [...] par Mademoiselle ***», Paris 1775; selections from the memoirs of the Academy of Sienna, Paris 1777; *Histoire du grand duché de Toscane sous le gouvernement des Médicis*, by R. Galluzzo, vols. 6-9, Paris 1782-1784. In 1782, Keralio also published a novel, anonymously, *Adélaïde, ou Mémoires de la marquise de M***. Écrits par elle-même*, Neuchâtel.

⁵ *Histoire du grand duché de Toscane*, vol. 6, notes 7a, 25a, 36a; vol. 7, pp. 48-51.

⁶ Paris 1785.

⁷ Louis-Félix Guinement de Keralio, historian, journalist, academician, royal censor, and author of several translations.

⁸ *Voyages dans les deux Siciles*, Paris 1785, pp. iii, iv.

⁹ «Sans vous, je n'aurais pu franchir les obstacles qui auraient effrayé mes faibles lumières: sans vous enfin, découragée par les difficultés, sans guide et sans appui, je n'eusse jamais ambitionné l'avantage de fixer une seule fois l'attention générale». *Ibid.*, pp. iii-iv.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. iv.

footnote for the abolition of sole rights in France in favor of free trade, citing «des hommes de génie»¹¹ and the *Encyclopédie* as references. With their authority behind her, she advocates reform on a grand scale, restating her mission to speak out in public, regardless of her sex, on behalf of the common good:

Qu'il soit permis d'élever une faible voix en faveur du bien général et de la liberté particulière; de la réunion des petits moyens naît souvent le principe des forces majeures, et les hommes ne peuvent dédaigner tout être, qui, pensant assez pour adopter des vérités utiles, mais ne se sentant pas le talent de les démontrer, cherche au moins à en rappeler le souvenir¹².

As an intellectual who is a woman, she may need to ask for permission to declare her views on politics and economics, she may need to repeat the *doxa* of female inferiority in order to do so, but she voices her concerns nonetheless, in the clear voice she will later adopt in her journalism during the Revolution and in the translations of Carr's travelogues. Her goal is the transmission of knowledge; her method is astute compilation and intellectual critique. In this passage, with the move from the gendered, hierarchical «faible voix» to the neutral «tout être», Keralio effectively slips through the boundaries of gender and staves off the reader's potential disdain for her presumption.

In the following years, Keralio undertook, in tandem, two ambitious projects: a five-volume *Histoire d'Élisabeth, reine d'Angleterre* (1786-1788), which won her recognition as France's first *historienne*¹³, and twelve volumes of an intended thirty-six of *Collection des meilleurs ouvrages français composés par des femmes* (1786-1789), the first true anthology of French women's writing composed by a woman¹⁴. These works of remarkable erudition are replete with scholarly footnotes, containing references to and sometimes disputes with authorities. Keralio devotes the entire 500-page fifth volume of *Histoire d'Élisabeth* to reproducing and annotating her sources, notably the «écrits originaux anglais, [...], actes, titres, lettres et autres pièces manuscrites qui n'ont pas encore paru» mentioned in the book's subtitle. She writes with authority. The «faible femme» pose is nowhere in evidence. Yet she continues to endorse for women «le partage de leur sexe»¹⁵, the restrictive gender norms of modesty, private virtue, and domesticity prevalent in her culture, even as she, herself a public figure, showcases their *public* achievements.

This apparent contradiction was exacerbated during the Revolution. With the inaugural issue of *Journal d'État et du citoyen* in August 1789, Louise

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 150, note 2.

¹² *Ibid.*, pp. 150-151, note 2.

¹³ «Jusqu'ici nous n'avions pas vu en France d'Historienne; Mlle de Keralio, je pense, est la première femme qui ait appliqué ses talents à ce genre», noted Mallet du Pan in the *Mercur de France* (23 June 1787, p. 152).

¹⁴ «[C]es deux ouvrages feraient honneur à nos littérateurs les plus savants; [...] ils supposent la connaissance de plusieurs langues tant anciennes que modernes, la littérature la plus vaste et la plus variée». G.-H. Gaillard, «Journal des Savants», Oct. 1787, p. 656.

¹⁵ *Collection des meilleurs ouvrages français composés par des femmes*, Paris, vol. 1, p. xiii.

de Keralio became the first woman in France to publish a political newspaper. In her journalism, along with her husband, François Robert¹⁶, she was an early and ardent advocate for republicanism. She was also a long-standing admirer of Rousseau. It is well known that republican political ideology, following Rousseau, was predicated on the notion of incommensurable difference between the sexes. Simply put, women were to be wives and mothers; they were to instill civic virtue in the domestic sphere, while political action in the public sphere was reserved for men. To legitimize the expression of her *political* views, to get away with being a woman expressing such views, Keralio was compelled to relay this gender ideology: «Des femmes! toujours des femmes dans tout ce qui menace la France! [...] partout où l'on a vu des femmes dans ce qui tient à la chose publique en France, partout on les a vues dans l'ivresse!»¹⁷ This was her way of negotiating with the dominant ethos¹⁸. But by the end of 1792, her endorsement of gender ideology in its new republican guise had finally caught up with her. It required *her* silence too and her retreat from the public eye: «qu'y a-t-il pour que tu oses me tirer de ma retraite où je remplis en silence les devoirs d'épouse et de mère, où je me borne modestement à la place que m'assignent les lois de la nature, et les lois locales»¹⁹. She would not publish anything again for sixteen years.

Then, in the space of just three years, from 1808 to 1810, Keralio bursts back onto the public stage, publishing three novels²⁰ and the two translations of Carr, sixteen volumes in all, signed Mme Keralio-Robert. In both the novels and the translations, Keralio addresses central issues of the Enlightenment: reason opposed to fanaticism and superstition, religious tolerance, political power and the ideal form of government, commerce, luxury, issues of social justice. In the translations, through prolific use of paratexts she invades the margins, turning the supplemental and subordinate into the central and preminent. Building on the reputation she had acquired in the 1780s as an authoritative historian²¹, she deploys her erudition in extensive footnotes, translator's notes and prefaces,

¹⁶ They were married in 1790. Later that year, Robert published *Le républicanisme adapté à la France*.

¹⁷ Review of *Rapport dans l'affaire de MM. d'Hosier et Petit-Jean*, par J. P. Brissot, «Mercure national», 22 August 1790, p. 445. *Mercure national* is one of several name changes of *Journal d'État et du citoyen*.

¹⁸ This has also led many critics to characterize her as a 'sexist republican,' an oversimplification that has clung to Keralio since the publication by A. Geffroy of *Louise de Keralio-Robert, pionnière du républicanisme sexiste*, «Annales historiques de la Révolution française», 2, 2006, pp. 107-124.

¹⁹ *Louise Robert à Monsieur Louvet*, Paris n.d. [1792?], Paris, p. 2. See also V. Mistacco, «*Le Corps petit, mais l'âme grande*»: Voicing a Woman's Ambition in *Louise de Keralio*. Her newspaper had ceased publication in July 1791.

²⁰ *Amélia et Caroline, ou l'Amour et l'amitié*, Paris 1808; *Alphonse et Mathilde, ou la Famille espagnole*, Paris 1809; *Rose et Albert, ou le Tombeau d'Emma*, Paris 1810.

²¹ «Madame Kéralio-Robert, déjà avantageusement connue par plusieurs ouvrages et particulièrement par son histoire d'*Elisabeth*, reine d'Angleterre, a placé à la tête de sa traduction de John Carr, un discours préliminaire qui renferme un aperçu rapide et très bien écrit, des accroissements de la république de Hollande et des formes diverses de son gouvernement». *Journal général de la littérature de France*, 1808, p. 337.

lengthy preliminary discourses (68 and 182 pages, respectively) and a 225-page disquisition on Dutch commerce. She positions herself as historian and *philosophe* («la philosophie peut s'exercer sur de singuliers contrastes dans l'esprit d'un gouvernement»²²), that is to say, as an Enlightenment intellectual whose mission is to work toward the common good through the spread of *lumières*.

1. Translation and Travel Writing

The translation of John Carr's travelogues becomes the pretext for an explosion of ideas that had been bottled up since the 1790s. By choosing this venue rather than publishing her philosophical reflections in a book of her own, Keralio was avoiding the epithet *femme philosophe*, already considered a «syntagme infamant»²³ by the mid-eighteenth century. To make matters worse, during the Revolution, republican ideology had contributed to a backlash against women in the public sphere. The thinking woman was even less appreciated in the era of Napoleon – one need only recall how Napoleon's Civil Code of 1804 had subordinated women to their fathers and husbands and consigned them to domesticity, and how the Emperor had exiled Germaine de Staël for her ideas and banned the publication of her 'un-French' *De l'Allemagne*. Yet, in choosing this venue, Keralio was not simply being prudent²⁴. Translation and travel writing are marks of her ambition. French foremothers had made a name for themselves by translating and commenting on major Enlightenment texts. Sophie de Grouchy, marquise de Condorcet, had translated Adam Smith's *Theory of Moral Sentiments* to which she appended her *Lettres sur la sympathie* (1798), a critique of Smith. Émilie du Châtelet had earned international renown for her translation of Newton's *Principia mathematica* (complete edition with commentary, 1759): «the commentary was as significant to her contemporaries and to the wide dissemination of Newton's ideas on the Continent as the translation of the text from Latin into French»²⁵. Grouchy and Du Châtelet had participated in the Enlightenment conversation and contributed to the dissemination of *lumières* on an equal footing with the thinkers they challenged and elucidated. Carr's travelogues were hardly on a par with these works by Smith and Newton. Nevertheless, Keralio used her translation of *Voyage en Hollande* as the occasion to take on abbé Raynal for his renowned *Histoire des deux Indes* in her essay on Dutch trade.

²² «Avertissement du traducteur», *Voyage en Hollande*, vol. 1, np.

²³ F. Lotterie, *Le genre des Lumières. Femme et philosophe au XVIII^e siècle*, Paris 2013, p. 16.

²⁴ In effect since 1800, censorship received heightened attention from Napoleon in the years 1808-1810. In February 1810, the Conseil d'État promulgated a decree preventing publication of anything that might undermine the sovereign and the interest of the state. H. Welschinger, *La Censure sous le Premier Empire*, Paris 1882, pp. 13-31.

²⁵ J. P. Zinsser, *Translating Newton's «Principia»: The Marquise du Châtelet's Revisions and Additions for a French Audience*, «Notes and Records of the Royal Society of London», 55 (2), 2001, p. 232.

In the eighteenth century, travel literature had inflected the thinking of *philosophes* and played an important role in the circulation of Enlightenment ideas. As voyagers like Bougainville and Cook were exploring the far reaches of the globe, they created a tremendous thirst for knowledge about these newly discovered places and peoples²⁶. Works such as Bougainville's *Voyage autour du monde* (1771), with its idyllic descriptions of Tahiti and its concept of the 'noble savage' untainted by European civilization, afforded a critical perspective on European culture. In choosing to comment on Carr's travelogues, Keralio is capitalizing on the genre's potential for philosophical critique. Usurping the typically masculine position of the traveler and subject of the enunciation, she expresses astonishment at what Carr left out and supplements and corrects his account, most spectacularly with her long, polemical essay on Dutch commerce:

Je ne sais pas si John Carr est parfaitement instruit dans ces détails sur l'esprit de calcul commercial des Hollandais dans les temps antérieurs: il ne parle peut-être ici que de l'esprit mercantile [...] qui est très différent de l'esprit commercial. C'est ce que je me permettrai d'examiner dans quelques observations qui seront à la suite du Voyage²⁷.

The translation of travel writing becomes a vehicle for enlightened reflection on commerce, «un maître mot des Lumières»²⁸, a much-debated economic, political and philosophical issue of her time.

In the translator's preface to *Voyage en Hollande*, Keralio does a clever job marketing her translations to an enlightened readership, «les sages observateurs», while still appealing to those more interested in an enjoyable read conforming to French taste than in confronting their prejudices. She even bestows on little-known Ireland an aura of trendy exoticism.

La Hollande est un pays d'une si grande importance en Europe, par sa situation, son commerce, ses arts, la sagesse de son caractère et la simplicité de ses mœurs [...]. Ce voyage intéressera les sages observateurs; les gens du monde, les femmes, les jeunes gens y prendront tous beaucoup de plaisir. L'auteur porte dans ses écrits un enjouement qui tient du caractère français. [...]

Son ouvrage, intitulé: *L'Étranger en Irlande*, est d'un intérêt plus majeur encore: tout ce qui peut faire connaître un pays, étranger aux nations les plus éclairées, même à celle qui se l'est asservi, porte avec soi un très grand objet de curiosité [...]²⁹.

²⁶ A large portion of the Keralio extensive family library was reserved for travel narratives, including a French translation of Cook's voyage. *Vente mobilière M. et Mme de Keralio à Mlle Abeille*, 2 Oct. 1789, MC/ET/X/784, Archives Nationales, Paris. They continued to be popular in 1809 as the numerous works under the rubric «Voyages» in *Journal général de la littérature de France* (Paris 1809) testifies.

²⁷ *Voyage en Hollande* vol. 1, p. 282n1.

²⁸ A. Lilti, *L'Héritage des Lumières*, Paris 2019, p. 163.

²⁹ «Avertissement du traducteur», *Voyage en Hollande*, vol. 1, np.

Her nod to patriotism and to the primacy of French taste was sure to please (appease?) the Napoleonic police then in charge of censorship. But she is writing first and foremost for «les sages observateurs».

2. Censorship and Patriotism

To understand how Keralio managed to circumvent the perils of censorship while championing ideas antithetical to imperial politics, namely, republicanism, anti-imperialism, and cosmopolitanism, it is useful to recall a concept developed by Elaine Showalter in the early days of second-wave feminism: double-voiced discourse³⁰. One can read Keralio's interventions in these translations as having both a *dominant* and a *muted* voice. Here the issue is not gender, but politics. The dominant voice displays national pride, lavishes praise on Napoleonic institutions and denounces France's enemy, England, while the muted voice remains that of the enlightened republican. Keralio signals her rejection of empire and imperial politics by omitting Napoleon's name³¹. We need to place these translations under the sign of two as well as read them together as *a pair* to bring out the muted story they tell. Broadly speaking, and at the risk of oversimplification, *Voyage en Hollande* allows Keralio to use the positive example of the Dutch republic to reassert indirectly her republican ideals and *L'Étranger en Irlande* to condemn imperialism by vilifying the English for brutally exerting their dominion over Ireland and their colonies. However different in subject matter—a prosperous and tolerant republic, on the one hand, and, on the other, a country victimized by intolerance, 'colonized', oppressed and impoverished—the two works were in her mind intertwined, if not complementary. Keralio underscores their relatedness: the translator's preface to *Voyage en Hollande* points to the forthcoming *L'Étranger en Irlande*, while the translator's preface to *L'Étranger en Irlande* refers the reader back to *Voyage en Hollande*.

The attacks against England are prime examples of Keralio's use of double-voiced discourse: the dominant discourse is the patriotic condemnation of England's imperialist behavior, whether in Ireland or its colonies, the muted one condemns imperialism itself³². Both hiding and revealing subversive thinking, these instances of double-voiced discourse constitute oblique condemnations of the Napoleonic imperialist agenda.

³⁰ E. Showalter, *Feminist Criticism in the Wilderness*, «Critical Inquiry», 8 (2), 1981, p. 204.

³¹ Keralio names him only once, in a brief note in *Étranger en Irlande* referring to the Musée Napoléon (vol. 2, p. 278).

³² Keralio denounces «l'insolence du plus extravagant despotisme» of their colonial governors and «leur ton impérieux, qui ne peut que choquer, déplaire et paraître toujours nouveau de la part d'hommes qui prétendant aimer la liberté, ne respectent celle de personne» (*Voyage en Hollande*, vol. 2, p. 385).

3. Authoritative History vs. the Authorities

One of the challenges faced by Enlightenment thinkers was convincing the public of the validity of their ideas; the challenge was even greater when the thinker was a woman³³. How does Louise de Keralio establish her intellectual authority?

Keralio had already shown herself to be a meticulous researcher with her *Histoire d'Élisabeth* and her *Collection* of French women's writing, and her approach is not substantially different in the paratexts to these translations. She takes pains to show that she is refuting renowned historians and political philosophers such as Raynal and that she is making an authoritative, well-informed contribution to the Enlightenment conversation. She makes no reference to her gender.

In the closing «Note du traducteur» of *Voyage en Hollande*, Keralio foregrounds her scrupulousness and acknowledges her long list of sources, including Raynal and her main source for historical data about Dutch commerce, *La Richesse de la Hollande* by Accarias de Sérionne (1778). She continues:

J'ai lieu d'espérer qu'après avoir employé beaucoup de soins à éviter toutes erreurs historiques, il ne s'en sera point glissé dans ces recherches que j'ai cru pouvoir joindre à la traduction du Voyage intéressant de sir John Carr, et qu'on ne lira pas sans quelque plaisir, un tableau de la situation commerciale de cette nation, plus resserré qu'on ne pourrait le trouver dans les nombreux ouvrages qui ont été composés sur son histoire, depuis son origine jusqu'à nos jours³⁴.

Adopting the rigorous historical method of the Benedictines of Saint-Maur³⁵, Keralio relies first on authentic primary sources (legal documents, letters, public records—Mabillon's famous «originaux des choses»), then uses reason and logic to compare and critique a wide range of respected secondary sources to arrive at historical accuracy. Following a common practice in her time, she copies or paraphrases judiciously chosen passages from them. Building on the accurate historical record thus compiled, she editorializes, philosophizes about history and historiography, and shares political insights. As this translator's note attests, her fundamental urge is to gather and transmit, to compile from a vast array of material an all-encompassing digest, «un tableau», that will bring together conveniently in one repository knowledge which is scattered. In this respect, her method and goal do not differ fundamentally from those of the *philosophes* Diderot and d'Alembert in the *Encyclopédie* or of the many authors of dictionaries, histories and tableaux published throughout the Enlightenment.

³³ A. Lilti, *Héritage des Lumières*, pp. 270-275. Lilti discusses the challenge that enlightening *le peuple* posed to elite thinkers. He addresses issues of class, not gender.

³⁴ *Voyage en Hollande*, vol. 2, pp. 453-454.

³⁵ In *De re diplomatica* (1681), Jean Mabillon, a Benedictine of the Congregation of Saint-Maur, had established the method for the scientific analysis of original archival documents that became the model for all types of historical inquiry. In her *Collection*, Keralio paid tribute to the exacting method and exhaustive research done by the Benedictines of Saint-Maur for their *Histoire littéraire de la France* (Paris 1733-1763).

She is practicing the same form of creative rewriting³⁶. Keralio positions herself as an authority within the general project and methodology of the Enlightenment. With the Carr translations, following the example of female forebears like Émilie du Châtelet and Sophie de Grouchy, she is attempting to enhance the reputation she had earned for her richly documented histories in the 1780s as an *intellectual* of distinction on the Enlightenment scene, while bracketing her image as an *activist* during the Revolution. She seems to be curating her image for posterity.

Hence her criticism of the authorities who had previously written about Dutch commerce, including Accarias de Sérionne³⁷. As a dispassionate and rational historian intent on eradicating prejudice, she takes issue with his xenophobia. In *La Richesse de la Hollande*, he had argued that the influx of foreigners brought in to compensate for a shortage of labor in Holland had adulterated Dutch mores and identity.

Quant à ce que dit ce même auteur, que les familles *hollandaises* deviennent rares en *Hollande*, et qu'il s'y établissait déjà, il y a un demi-siècle, tant d'étrangers que bientôt les habitants n'auraient plus leur *origine primitive*, qu'il nous soit permis d'en douter, et de regarder cette assertion comme un mouvement d'humeur que lui inspire le défaut de prospérité de sa nation. [...] C'est comme si, à cause que Paris ne rassemble peut-être pas deux tiers d'habitants, dans la classe des ouvriers, qui soient vraiment d'origine française, on disait: La France ne sera bientôt plus peuplée que d'étrangers. Une pareille proposition se réfute d'elle-même³⁸.

By questioning the value of his account as history, by exposing his bias, his prejudices and his faulty reasoning, by ridiculing his conclusions as more emotional than rational, she shows herself to be the better historian. With her option for reason and logic over prejudice and tradition, Keralio comes across as the more enlightened thinker.

But it was not enough for Keralio to question the qualifications of a relatively obscure historian like Accarias de Sérionne. In *Voyage en Hollande* her primary target is abbé Raynal for his *Histoire philosophique des établissements et du commerce des Européens dans les deux Indes*, as the title of her essay echoing his suggests: «Recherches sur le commerce des Hollandais. Établissement des Compagnies des Indes orientales et occidentales». What better way to prove her worth as a historian than to question the historical validity of a work that had made its mark as the first major example of global history, as the first history of European colonialism, and that was for many the bible of anti-slavery and anti-colonialism? First published in 1770, it was a *succès de scandale*. The Catholic Church put it on the Index of Forbidden Books in 1772. It gained even greater notoriety in 1781 when the Parliament of Paris condemned the third edition to

³⁶ L'«*Histoire des deux Indes*»: *réécriture et polygraphie*, ed. by H.-J. Lüsebrink and A. Strugnell, SVEC 333, 1995.

³⁷ Similarly, in *L'Étranger en Irlande* Keralio critiques various lesser-known historians who have written about Ireland, and she questions the authority of Carr himself.

³⁸ *Voyage en Hollande*, vol. 2, pp. 414-415.

a public burning for its intensified critique of colonialism and civil and religious authority and Raynal went into exile to avoid arrest and imprisonment. *Histoire des deux Indes*, as it is commonly known, enjoyed multiple reprints and circulated throughout Europe and North America in numerous translations. It was widely recognized as an important work even when it provoked disagreement. Yet it was also criticized as dense and incoherent. A compilation which borrows extensively from other works, it is likewise the result of a collaborative effort under the aegis of Raynal involving many anonymous contributors, Diderot foremost among them. Whether Keralio was aware of the collaborative nature of the *Histoire des deux Indes* or not, she refers to its author simply as Raynal and does not stress the book's contradictions or lack of cohesiveness.

She generally concurs with its optimistic portrayal of «le doux commerce», while she essentially overlooks its criticisms of or ambivalence about the unsavory aspects of global trade. She skirts controversial issues like slavery and the treatment of colonized peoples. Her main critique of Raynal is that his historical methods are sloppy and tainted by bias, and therefore lead to false conclusions. A central preoccupation is thus historiography itself. Taking her cue from Accarias de Sérionne who in 1778 had criticized the as yet unnamed author³⁹ of *Histoire des deux Indes* for not going far back enough in time to account for Dutch preeminence in commerce, she excoriates Raynal for dating it only to their revolution against the Spanish and their proclamation of an independent republic. In a first assault, Keralio musters her most powerful methodological and rhetorical arms, not the least of which is to cite Raynal ironically against himself. It is worth examining at length:

La chute de la marine espagnole, dit Raynal, fit passer le sceptre de la mer aux mains des Hollandais. L'orgueil de leurs anciens tyrans ne pouvait être mieux puni que par la prospérité d'un peuple forcé par l'oppression à briser le joug. Lorsque cette République levait sa tête hors de ses marais, le reste de l'Europe était plongé dans les guerres civiles par le fanatisme. Dans tous les états, la persécution lui préparait des citoyens. L'inquisition, que la maison d'Autriche voulut étendre dans les pays de sa domination; les bûchers que Henri II allumait en France; les émissaires de Rome que Marie appuyait en Angleterre: tout concourut à donner à la Hollande un peuple de réfugiés. Elle n'avait ni terres ni moissons pour les nourrir, il leur fallut chercher une subsistance par mer dans le monde entier. Lisbonne, Cadix et Anvers faisaient presque tout le commerce de l'Europe sous un même souverain que sa puissance et son ambition rendaient l'objet de la haine et de l'envie. Les nouveaux républicains échappés à sa tyrannie, excités par le ressentiment et le besoin, se firent corsaires, et se formèrent une marine aux dépens des Espagnols et des Portugais qu'ils détestaient. [...] Ainsi les Hollandais s'assurèrent des établissements partout où ils voulurent porter leurs armes; s'affermirent dans leurs acquisitions, avant qu'on pût en être jaloux, et se rendirent insensiblement maîtres de tout le commerce par leur industrie, et de toutes les mers par la force de leurs escadres⁴⁰.

³⁹ Raynal's name first appears on the third edition, published in 1780.

⁴⁰ Cf. *Histoire des deux Indes*, Geneva 1780, vol. 4, pp. 569-570. Diderot is not the author of this passage.

Tel est le tableau tracé par un grand écrivain, dont la plume séduisante peut induire en erreur ceux qui se sentent entraînés en le lisant; mais avec tout le respect que l'on doit aux hommes illustres, surtout quand ils ne sont plus⁴¹, on peut observer que c'est un récit tout à fait romanesque [...]. Quand les Hollandais se révoltèrent contre l'excès de la tyrannie espagnole, ce n'était pas un peuple enfoncé dans des marais; ce n'était point un peuple asservi à un joug despotique: les provinces avaient des contrats, des privilèges, des franchises et des libertés. La multitude des citoyens dont parle Raynal, et que le fanatisme, dit-il, leur amenait de tous côtés, n'en fit point une troupe de corsaires, et ils n'eurent pas besoin de se former une marine aux dépens de celle des Espagnols et des Portugais. Ce n'était pas une nation qui, au quinzième siècle, avait pu envoyer une flotte au secours de Charles VII; qui avait fait la guerre aux villes hanséatiques, avait combattu les flottes réunies de l'Angleterre et de la France, avait protégé la pêche du hareng, et forcé les escadres françaises qui la troublaient à se retirer dans leurs ports; qui avait mis ses escadres en mer pour protéger son commerce; qui vers 1525 avait fait encore des armements contre la France et l'Angleterre réunies une seconde fois; qui avait armé en 1533 soixante vaisseaux contre Lubeck et le roi de Danemark: ce n'était pas, dis-je, une nation capable de déployer tant de puissance, qui, à l'époque de sa révolution *«levait la tête au-dessus de ses marais»*. Aurait-elle résisté à l'Espagne si elle avait eu besoin de *se faire corsaire* pour exister? N'est-ce pas une nation bien riche et bien florissante que celle qui, sous Henri II, perd quinze vaisseaux armés contre l'Espagne, vaisseaux qui furent pris par l'amiral des galères de France, sur une flotte de vingt-quatre, sortie de ports de la Zélande? Et où la Hollande aurait-elle pris non seulement les frais de tant d'armements qu'elle fit pour se défendre; mais où aurait-elle trouvé tout à coup les matériaux de construction? où aurait-elle acquis, et des hommes pour monter ses vaisseaux, et les plus grands hommes pour les conduire, et les hommes d'état pour diriger les opérations à l'intérieur? Tout cela se trouve-t-il à la minute, sans préparation, sans acquisitions, sans éducation préalable? Si Raynal avait parlé ainsi du temps où César avait vaincu les Romains qui, sous le commandement d'Arioviste, s'étaient opposés au progrès de ses armes, il aurait pu dire en effet que les Bataves *avaient levé la tête au-dessus de leurs marais*. Mais les traiter ainsi dans le temps où ils couvraient de leurs vaisseaux les mers des deux Indes, c'est, avec un génie très remarquable, s'exposer à la réflexion de Voltaire «et voilà comme on écrit l'histoire»⁴².

Raynal has written fiction, not history⁴³. His book is nothing but a captivating and extravagant fantasy by a *literary* genius who goes to the extreme of portraying the Dutch, after they overthrew the Spanish, as newly forged privateers struggling to subsist given their tiny swampy and unproductive homeland. Instead, as an intellectual committed to dispelling beguiling falsehoods and to spreading *lumières*, Keralio opposes fact to fantasy. She piles on the point-by-point refutations, first by a series of denials of his claims, then by a series of accomplishments which logically demonstrate the power the Dutch wielded well before they overthrew Spanish domination. This lengthy accumulation, reminiscent of the polemical rhetoric of her revolutionary journalism, is meant to assure the triumph of her word over his: we go from «dit Raynal» and «dit-il»

⁴¹ Raynal had died in 1796.

⁴² *Voyage en Hollande*, vol. 2, pp. 258-263.

⁴³ Cf. «Raynal, qui a souvent fait des romans dans son ouvrage sur le commerce, approche davantage de la vérité, lorsqu'il parle des causes du décroissement du commerce de la Hollande». *Voyage en Hollande*, vol. 2, pp. 378-379.

to «dis-je» as she adduces the many facts that contradict his narrative. In the process, her pen transforms his «levait la tête au-dessus de ses marais» into an ironic leitmotiv used throughout her essay to discredit Raynal for his lack of knowledge (or lack of acknowledgment) of Holland's longstanding history of excellence in commerce and navigation. This ironic leitmotiv is all the more effective since the image of the «marais» as a metaphor for Holland and an impetus for Dutch commerce occurs repeatedly in *Histoire des deux Indes*. A series of rhetorical questions next highlights the absurdity and illogicality of his narrative and intensifies her attack on the historian's qualifications. Raynal is not the enlightened historian his many readers may think, she implies, because his history is neither factual nor rational. The end of the passage returns to the main point: the Dutch («les Bataves») were already capable of resisting attack by Caesar's army; they had already raised their heads above their swamps by the time of Caesar. At this point, Keralio tacks on a long erudite footnote to hammer the point in: Caesar «se proposait d'attaquer les Suèves et les Celtes *dans leurs marais*, lorsque ces peuples vinrent au-devant de lui, et qu'il les reconnut, sous le nom de Bataves, comme amis et alliés»⁴⁴. In a final polemical flourish, she summons Voltaire's devastating irony to deal the ultimate blow to Raynal's reputation as a reliable historian: «et voilà comme on écrit l'histoire». The polemical style, the impassioned rhetoric and the sheer length of this rebuttal suggest how important it was for Keralio to use these translations to secure her own reputation as a superior historian, as one who is more reasonable, more knowledgeable and more methodical than this «grand écrivain», this «homme illustre» thought to possess «un génie très remarquable».

The critique of Raynal, backed up by scholarly footnotes, surfaces intermittently and often at considerable length in the essay on Dutch commerce. Keralio raises a fundamental objection to his historiography, namely that he did not write history in the modern scholarly way following the practice of the Benedictines of Saint-Maur, with accuracy and objectivity in mind, but rather in the discredited old-fashioned way, to flatter the high-born and curry favor with the king. He wrote more like a royal historiographer than a scholarly historian⁴⁵. Accusations such as these seem designed to create the impression that Raynal's reputedly *novel* history, tainted as it was by a now-extinct aristocratic ethos and pro-French prejudice, was in reality something of a dinosaur.

Keralio returns to her *idée fixe* in the conclusion. In a final paragraph that runs to nearly four pages, Keralio accumulates examples of early Dutch scholars—scientists, historians, literary figures, linguists, grammarians, translators, antiquarians, theologians, inventors. She deploys one last time the ironic leitmotiv inspired by Raynal, her own encyclopedic knowledge of the facts, and an appeal to the Enlightenment tools of rationality in the face of absurd claims,

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, vol. 2, p. 263, note 1.

⁴⁵ On this distinction, see R. Chartier, *Historiography in the Age of Absolutism*, in D. Hollier (ed.), *A New History of French Literature*, Cambridge, MA 1989, pp. 345-350.

and to the exercise of one's own good judgment in lieu of blind deference to authority:

cela répondrait à l'assertion plus que hasardée de l'auteur, qui croit persuader qu'à cette époque la Hollande *levait la tête au-dessus de ses marais*. Elle était donc bien promptement sortie des ténèbres de l'ignorance, cette nation de *misérables pêcheurs*, qui n'eût pas plutôt pris les armes contre l'Espagne, que tout à coup il se trouva chez elle, des peintres, des professeurs de langues anciennes et de langues orientales, des hommes habiles dans les mathématiques, la botanique et la physique. On ne poussera pas plus loin la discussion sur des points d'histoire si moderne qu'on peut, s'il est permis de s'exprimer ainsi, ouvrir les yeux, et juger par soi-même⁴⁶.

«Ouvrir les yeux, et juger par soi-même»: Keralio echoes Kant's famous injunction to dare to know, *sapere aude!* This is what she wants the readers to notice she has done. She has dared in the essay to pit her understanding of the history of Dutch commerce against that of Raynal and she invites readers, through her capable intercession, to open their eyes and question his authority too, even as they recognize hers. For, as Antoine Lilti observes regarding the project of Enlightenment, «La vérité ne se dévoile pas d'elle-même, il revient aux philosophes de dissiper les préjugés et de propager les lumières»⁴⁷.

4. Enlightenment, Republicanism, Cosmopolitanism, Anti-Imperialism: Toward a «République universelle»

Her authority thus established, what then is Keralio using the Carr translations to advocate?

Keralio is writing from a place of political and economic turmoil. The French Revolution has upended the old hierarchies, war convulses Europe, and Dutch commerce has fallen into decline. Now she is using the unlikely venue of translation to help shape politics. As in her journalism during the Revolution, she is attempting to put philosophy into action. She begins her essay on Dutch commerce:

On a pensé que dans un moment où l'Europe change de situation politique, où il doit y avoir par conséquent des variations dans les avantages dont jouissait chacune des nations qui la composent, une nouvelle balance des intérêts qui les unissent et dans leurs relations commerciales, il serait intéressant de rassembler en un seul point de vue les moyens que la nation la plus commerçante que l'on connaisse, a employés pour devenir à cet égard *maîtresse du monde*, ainsi qu'on l'appelle depuis si longtemps⁴⁸.

⁴⁶ *Voyage en Hollande*, vol. 2, p. 452.

⁴⁷ *Héritage des Lumières*, p. 21.

⁴⁸ *Voyage en Hollande*, vol. 2, p. 227.

Understanding how Holland came to be preeminent in commerce is a matter of public utility; it is meant to lead to well-informed political policies and action.

Her review of the history of commerce in the Dutch Republic culminates in a new vision for Europe. Breaking free from the sources she has used to paint a picture of Dutch commerce prior to the revolutions and the wars that have completely altered the political dynamics, in the final pages Keralio can talk about the present and the role Holland should play in the new political environment, relative power having been redistributed among the nations. Again, history yields to politics. In a modern international politics based on economic relationships, she argues, Dutch prosperity is essential for maintaining a balance of powers.

Cette nation qui ne sera jamais que négociante, puisqu'elle n'est pas agricole, ne peut être que précieuse et utile, et jamais dangereuse. [...] elle n'est, ni peut être ambitieuse de domination. [...] Non, la Hollande est amie et alliée naturelle de tous les états; elle va porter en tous lieux, les biens qui naissent de ses travaux et de son industrie; elle fournit aux besoins et aux jouissances du monde entier, et ne peut ni ne veut être l'ennemie de personne. [...]

L'Europe a donc besoin d'elle et de sa prospérité⁴⁹.

A prosperous Dutch Republic offers Europe a nonhierarchical model of international relations, a model of economic and cultural exchange without domination. This is Keralio's optimistic vision for a future Europe at peace and the example she dares to propose to imperial France. Like many Enlightenment thinkers, Keralio views free trade as an existential necessity for an enlightened society, as a civilizing force inextricably bound to *lumières*: «Le commerce renaîtra [...]; les connaissances humaines ne périront pas; et pour fournir [...] aux progrès des lumières, il faut du commerce, et un commerce très actif»⁵⁰. In a new global economy born of exploration and colonization, commerce, the free exchange of goods, is the form now assumed by sociability⁵¹. This nonhierarchical paradigm of international and human relations joins religious tolerance, freedom of thought and republicanism in Keralio's symbolism of Holland as an emblem of Enlightenment for the modern world.

The same paradigm underlies the grand utopian vision of an enlightened society and enlightened relations among nations Keralio sets forth in the «Discours préliminaire» of *L'Étranger en Irlande*. Here the context is not so much the free circulation of goods as the free circulation of ideas: intellectual commerce. In contrast to the English who deprive the Irish of the benefit of education in order

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, vol. 2, pp. 446-447.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, vol. 2, p. 287, note 1.

⁵¹ S. Pujol, *La logique des échanges dans l'«Histoire des deux Indes»*, in C. Courtney and J. Mander, *Raynal's «Histoire des deux Indes»: Colonialism, Networks and Global Exchange*, Oxford 2015, pp. 24-25. A. Lilti, *Héritage des Lumières*, p. 163.

to maintain them in subjugation, Keralio envisages a transnational *universal republic* grounded in shared knowledge:

Le développement des lumières peut seul adoucir [les passions des hommes], et former entre eux un lien bien plus fort que celui qui résulte des premiers besoins de la vie; un lien qui les attache non seulement sur le sol qui les vit naître, mais qui se communique entre les nations, et forme de tous les peuples politiques une *république universelle*, où les travaux de l'esprit et les découvertes utiles sont en communauté, où chacune s'en sert pour son avantage et celui des autres par une correspondance active entre tous les savants et les hommes de génie⁵².

This revolutionary idea of a new and peaceful world order without boundaries between individuals or nations where knowledge and goods could circulate freely was not unique to Keralio, although few French thinkers were still promoting it in 1809 *imperial* France. The notion of a *république universelle* had been variously entertained by Enlightenment philosophers and thinkers ranging from Anacharsis Cloots in *La République universelle, ou Adresse aux tyrannicides* (1792) to Immanuel Kant in *Perpetual Peace: A Philosophical Sketch* (1795), particularly during the years 1792-1795⁵³. For Kant the universal republic was a logical moral *ideal* to which one must aspire, but which remains unattainable. In the end, he advocated a more pragmatic Federation of Free States, «something *analogous* to a universal state»⁵⁴. Nevertheless, Kant retained an essential principle of all these utopias and one that is central to Keralio's thinking as well: cosmopolitanism⁵⁵. It put her further at odds with the Emperor.

To understand why, let us consider the example of Keralio's near contemporary Germaine de Staël (1766-1817). Napoleon destroyed the manuscripts and printing forms of her *De l'Allemagne* and reduced the book to a pulp, then he banished her from France. In proposing a foreign culture as a model for the French, *De l'Allemagne* posed a threat to Napoleon's authority. He aimed to suppress such differences the better to consolidate the hegemony of what he deemed to be Frenchness. In contrast to his static view, Staël and Keralio were both exploiting the double meaning of *translatio*, as movement from one place to another as well as between languages. Translation, travel, intercultural exchange, cosmopolitanism: in their view, these go hand in hand to spread *lumières* and promote a culture's evolution and progress. Cosmopolitanism is inherently anti-imperialist: it means openness to alterity without the need either to dominate or to unify in order to bring about conformity to a dominant culture. It rejects the Napoleonic spirit of domination and annexation. For Keralio this

⁵² *Étranger en Irlande*, vol. 1, p. 4 (italics mine).

⁵³ A search for «république universelle» using Google Books Ngram Viewer shows a spike between 1792 and 1795 and a low point in 1809.

⁵⁴ I. Kant, «Perpetual Peace: A Philosophical Sketch», *An Answer to the Question: «What is Enlightenment?»*, trans. by H. B. Nisbet, London 2009, p. 55 (italics mine).

⁵⁵ «[I]ndividuals and states, coexisting in an external relationship of mutual influences, may be regarded as citizens of a universal state of mankind (*ius cosmopoliticum*)». *Ibid.*, p. 108n4.

cosmopolitanism is also figured by Holland. For the Dutch Republic's culture of tolerance correlates with its welcome of refugees from different nations. And, thanks to its genius for commerce, it facilitates the circulation of goods among nations, thereby both mimicking and promoting cultural exchange.

By hiding her modern progressive point of view—her enlightened republicanism and her anti-imperialist stance—in a massive pile of erudition tucked into the translations of two unassuming travel narratives, Louise de Keralio avoided the fate of Germaine de Staël without having to renounce any of her revolutionary principles or her audacity. Yet, there was a downside to this mode of self-expression.

5. The Misfortunes of Both/And

Why would a writer with Keralio's intellectual ambitions be content to lay out this remarkable array of ideas, these sweeping proposals, this profound philosophizing about such important topics in the margins of John Carr's travelogues? Who would find them there? How could they work to the benefit of society if they were hidden in such a venue? Why not in a book of her own?

Beyond the wish to avoid censorship for her republican ideas and anti-imperialist stance, Keralio's choice to present her enormously ambitious philosophical reflections in the periphery of Carr's text can partially be explained as her way of negotiating the fraught situation then faced, as mentioned earlier, by a *femme philosophe*. In her essays, Staël, for example, aimed to put forth her ideas like a man, that is, without regard to gender; instead, she was rebuffed as a woman⁵⁶. There was no escaping gender.

At the same time, there were a number of women writers who were, paradoxically, producing fiction which warned women against becoming writers or philosophers and which upheld gender norms. Focusing on the stigma associated with being a woman author, Félicité de Genlis had published *La Femme auteur* in 1802 in which she warned that the search for celebrity as a writer came at the expense of a woman's happiness. Likewise, in *La Femme philosophe*, published in 1804, she had parodied and pilloried Staël for her philosophical writing and novel *Delphine*. Adélaïde Dufrénoy would later publish *La Femme auteur, ou les inconvénients de la célébrité* (1812) in a similar vein. In *De l'Allemagne*, Staël echoes Genlis in equating any glory a woman writer might attain with «un deuil éclatant du bonheur». This dysphoric stereotype had in fact become a commonplace in women's writing.

These varied strategies illustrate how women writers negotiated with the dominant gender ethos in order to legitimize their writing and publish. Genlis, Dufrénoy and others repeated the *doxa*, much as Keralio does in her earliest publications. Staël lamented it, had her heroines succumb to it, but carried on

⁵⁶ M. Reid, *Le Dix-neuvième siècle, 1793-1914*, in M. Reid (ed.), *Femmes et littérature: une histoire culturelle*, vol. 2, Paris 2020, p. 31.

nevertheless. Whether they reiterated or bemoaned the *doxa*, all these women themselves continued to write and to publish.

Keralio's adoption of a different strategy, expressing herself in the margins of Carr's travelogues rather than in a philosophical work bearing her own signature, was not so much a matter of circumventing the conflict between public recognition and personal happiness. She doesn't exactly fit into this prevailing either/or paradigm. Since she doesn't make an issue of her gender in these translations or lament the fact that her reflections on such issues as global commerce, republicanism or colonialism would not be welcome in a philosophical essay published under her own (woman's) name, her choice cannot be interpreted as an attempt to avoid the fate of a Romantic writer heroine like Staël's Corinne (*Corinne, ou l'Italie*, 1807). Rather Keralio is still struggling with the fundamental dilemma that has plagued her from the beginning, between the Enlightenment ambition to better society by sharing her ideas with the public and conformity to an ethos of incommensurable difference and complementarity of the sexes. Inculcated during her aristocratic childhood, this ethos was reinforced by the Rousseauian and Revolutionary republicanism to which she remained committed, and which pulled her in the opposite direction, away from publicity, towards modesty and discretion. In the Carr translations, Keralio compromised by writing/philosophizing in a non-gender-inflected way like a man, but in the margins of a man's writing – in a space permitted to women. This compromise represents a new attempt to find a *both/and* solution to the dilemma of being a woman, with all the connotations of modesty, privacy, soft-spokenness—and indeed marginality—implied, as well as an intellectual who makes her reflections public. The rigid gender expectations of the post-revolutionary Napoleonic context only intensified what was for her a long-standing dilemma, a quandary shaped and reshaped by her personal trajectory which gave it a rather different aura than that of the Romantic stereotype of the woman writer.

Keralio was a compulsive thinker and writer. Notwithstanding the long interval of forced silence, she was still impelled by the aspirations of her «*âme grande*» to improve society by sharing her knowledge through writing and publishing. If the space now available to do so had contracted to the margins of these travelogues and to novels, that would not stop her from filling it with her most expansive, most wide-ranging ideas. From this perspective, it is hardly surprising that she published sixteen volumes in just three years, eight in 1809 alone, and that her supplements to the Carr translations added another volume to each book. She pounced on this opportunity to express herself.

But one could legitimately ask of her a question Antoine Lilti poses about Diderot's prudent strategy of indirection to avoid censorship: «A vouloir écrire entre les lignes, ne perd-on pas de vue l'efficacité immédiate du discours philosophique, et donc son utilité sociale?»⁵⁷ Writing between the lines of Carr's text, Keralio doesn't seem to be worried about how she would reach her

⁵⁷ *Héritage des Lumières*, p. 310.

audience. Whether in the publicity for the books in the two translator's prefaces or the notes or the discourses or the essay on commerce, in all her interventions her voice exudes confidence that her writing is useful, that her *lumières* will not fail to spread, that they will inspire her readers to critical thinking and positive action. Regardless of having to rely on double-voiced discourse, regardless of the risk never to be discovered in the margins of a work bearing another's signature, she is propelled by the urgency of the mission of the *philosophe*:

Il n'y a pas plus de lâcheté à choisir la prudence que de folie à prendre des risques. L'essentiel est de ne pas abandonner le combat pour la vérité, de ne pas renoncer à la philosophie, pensée comme un rapport non seulement intellectuel mais militant à la vérité. Elle n'est pas une forme de sagesse solitaire [...], mais une arme au service du progrès de l'humanité⁵⁸.

Lilti wrote these words about Diderot. They could very well have been written about Keralio. Her folly was the full-throated voice she adopted during the Revolution in her journalism; her prudence was writing around the edges of Carr's travelogues. In each instance, the goal was the same.

Because Carr's travelogues were popular, she thought she would find an audience. But herein lies the downside of her *both/and* solution. She did *not* find the audience she expected, or rather, the audience did not find her. Even when the two books were first announced in the press, there was little mention of her rather sizeable contributions. No one suggested that the books were worth reading just for them. One reviewer gives her some credit for a well-written preliminary discourse and essay on commerce and for having appropriated material from the best available sources⁵⁹. That reviewer sees her only as a compiler, not as an original thinker. The reviewer of *L'Étranger en Irlande* calls her preliminary discourse «un excellent tableau historique» that saves the reader from getting bogged down in the tiresome details in Gordon (*Histoire d'Irlande*), even though the reviewer judges Gordon the more talented historian⁶⁰. Similarly, the reviewer of *L'Étranger en Irlande* in *La Gazette de France*, who goes by the initial T., judges her preliminary discourse worth reading: «Cet extrait ne manque ni de clarté ni de précision, c'est à peu près ce que ces deux volumes renferment de plus intéressant», but he concludes by roundly condemning both her choice and her translation: «il ne fallait pas choisir ce voyage pour le traduire, et l'ayant traduit, il ne fallait pas le publier»⁶¹. Every instance of praise is accompanied by an apparently irrepressible remark to discredit Keralio as an original thinker

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 316.

⁵⁹ *Journal général de la littérature de France*, 1808, p. 337.

⁶⁰ *Journal général de la littérature de France*, 1809, p. 116.

⁶¹ *Gazette de France*, 16 June 1809, pp. 715-716.

and a superior historian. Could it be because of unexamined assumptions about women? Could it be a misogynistic reflex? In all likelihood, the unnamed reviewers were men. The erasure of Keralio's authorship would be complete when an excerpt from the preliminary discourse of *Voyage en Hollande* appearing in an 1840 article on Dutch commerce was simply attributed to «un écrivain»⁶². Absent even the title of the book, there was no way it could be traced back to her.

No one seems to have seriously considered the substance of Keralio's supplements to Carr's texts, and no one has given her sufficient credit for them. These translations are listed among her works in most nineteenth-century biographical dictionaries, but only P. Levot's *Biographie bretonne* (1857) even mentions that she contributed a preliminary discourse and the essay on Dutch commerce to *Voyage en Hollande*. Keralio fares only slightly better in the twentieth century. Condescending, Louis Antheunis alludes to her additions in exasperation that she has written so much and on so many topics. He derides her ideas («des considérations d'un haut comique»), labels her a «bas-bleu», and gloats that this «vieille jacobine» who had helped dethrone the king was now obliged to mince words so as not to offend the Emperor⁶³. More sympathetic, Geneviève Mazel acknowledges that what is important in the Carr translations are the notes and preliminary discourses which «nous renseignent un peu sur l'évolution de la pensée de leur auteur depuis la Révolution et confirment toujours sa grande culture»⁶⁴. However, she touches on them only briefly, mainly to point up the impact of Napoleonic censorship on them and to express surprise at the former revolutionary's apparent ideological turnabouts⁶⁵. Each biographer accords only a scant two pages to the Carr translations.

Historian Nicole Pellegrin deserves credit as the first to have taken a closer look at some of Keralio's paratexts in these translations. We agree that Keralio remains a polemicist, that this work on the Carr books provides her a platform to continue her «combats personnels», and that it is both «érudit et engagé», even if we come to different conclusions about the nature of Keralio's political commitment and militancy⁶⁶. Pellegrin acknowledges the provisional nature of her study and calls for further research capable of evaluating «toute l'originalité

⁶² *Commerce de la Hollande*, «Le Magasin pittoresque», 8, 1840, p. 114.

⁶³ L. Antheunis, *Le Conventionnel belge François Robert (1763-1826) et sa femme Louise de Keralio (1758-[1822])*, Wetteren 1955, pp. 81, 83, 81.

⁶⁴ G. Mazel, *Louise de Keralio et Pierre François Robert, précurseurs de l'idée républicaine*, «Bulletin de la Société de l'histoire de Paris et de l'Île-de-France», 1989, p. 232.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 232-233. Mazel believed that Keralio renounced her republicanism and supported Napoleon's agenda.

⁶⁶ N. Pellegrin, *Une traductrice historienne: Louise de Keralio-Robert et les voyageurs anglais*, in A. Fidecaro, H. Partzsch, S. van Dijk, and V. Cossy, *Femmes écrivains à la croisée des langues, 1700-2000/Women Writers at the Crossroads of Languages, 1700-2000*, Geneva 2009, pp. 80-81. Like Mazel, Pellegrin considers Keralio as one of many *girouettes* who turned with the political winds and bowed to the Emperor.

de ses travaux et les stratégies qui les sous-tendent»⁶⁷. I hope to have gone some distance toward filling that gap.

For the scope, complexity, and boldness of her thinking demonstrated by these works, for her unswerving commitment to human progress through shared knowledge, Louise de Keralio deserves to be read with new eyes, not primarily as a revolutionary activist as historians have tended to portray her, but as an ambitious *philosophe des Lumières*.

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⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 70.

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