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Emily Butterworth

## Subject to Dispute

### Constructions of the Author in François Béroalde de Verville's *Palais des curieux* (1612)

The emergence of the figure of the author has inspired enormous critical interest over recent years. In sixteenth-century French studies, critics have read in Clément Marot's poetry an individualism that demonstrates a decline of the poetic corporatism characteristic of the work of the *grands rhétoriciens*, and a new attitude towards printing and publishing. At the other end of the sixteenth century, Montaigne's *Essais* remains a key text in this story, revealing a self-reflexive author at work on his own text.<sup>1</sup> This article explores another miscellany, *Le Palais des curieux* (1612) by mathematician, alchemist and polymath François Béroalde de Verville (1556–1626). This text, like Montaigne's *Essais*, portrays a strong authorial “je” that directs and sometimes misleads the reader's attention. In less explicit, but no less significant ways, Verville's text assays the self that produces it, providing an arresting case study in the development of the authorial figure. In what follows, I propose to trace the constructions of the authorial persona that emerge from this palace of curiosities, and to argue that Verville manipulates this persona in a number of ways, producing a relationship between author, text and reader that often appears as a kind of game.<sup>2</sup> Like Montaigne's *Essais*, Verville's *Palais* exhibits an authorial identity that is mobile and provisional; I wish to argue that this identity is also deliberately provocative, and that its construction is evident in the methodologies and strategies of the text. In his analysis of Verville's allegorical *Voyage des princes fortunez*, Terence Cave explores the deployment of the first person pronoun, concluding that the text “racont[e] les péripéties indéfiniment suspendues d'un ‘je’ singulier.”<sup>3</sup> I hope to show how the “je” that emerges in *Le Palais*

*des curieux* similarly insists on its own peculiarity and on its own subjectivity, privileging the subjective viewpoint as both a structuring principle and an ethical imperative.<sup>4</sup>

Both *Le Palais des curieux* and the *Essais* play with the conventions and expectations associated with the miscellany. The early modern miscellany was a vast and varied genre ranging from the collection of commonplaces (such as Jean-Pierre Camus's *Diversitez*, 1609–1618) to the more peculiar *Essais* (1580–1595) which nevertheless started life as a commentary on Montaigne's reading.<sup>5</sup> As a permutation of the encyclopedia, the miscellany was explicitly engaged in the problem of order in cataloguing the topics it dealt with, and more specifically, in the relation between general and particular: how did the instances of the particular example relate to, or illustrate, the general category under discussion? The role of the author in the miscellany participated in this problematic, since the authorial "je" could be given a more or less prominent place in the text: providing, in fact, an especially subjective instance of the particular. The more present the "je" became in the ordering of the text, the more particular and subjective it seemed.

The question of order recurs in critical treatments of Verville's work. In his study of alchemical literature in early seventeenth-century France, Frank Greiner considers Verville's fictional and allegorical work, *Le Voyage des princes fortunez*, and concludes, like Terence Cave, that the predominant structural feature is one of textual order. While Cave's exploration concentrates on the use of the newly popular *ordo artificialis*, Greiner emphasizes the role of the allegorical secret in the text, arguing that "le secret béroaldien [est] avant tout le secret d'un ordre."<sup>6</sup> Verville was, among many other things, a practicing alchemist, and I will argue that the notion of the allegorical or alchemical secret plays a central role in the rhetorical strategies of *Le Palais des curieux*.

### **Subjective viewpoint and the authorial persona**

The question or problem of order is raised in the preliminary "Advis" to *Le Palais des curieux*. It is an informally organized, digressive text, a treasure-house of *objects* (as its eighty chapters are called) drawn together on the model of the chance encounter (or *rencontre*) in which the author-figure plays a prominent role.<sup>7</sup> The "Advis" prepares the

reader for the work's discontinuous style and begins to construct a strong authorial identity predicated on curiosity and free opinion.<sup>8</sup> This discontinuity may itself be an echo of alchemical literature, in which, as Frank Greiner shows, order is deliberately confused, and words have unusual meanings, for the purpose of misleading the uninitiated.<sup>9</sup> Verville describes his *Palais* through an analogy with painting, in which he contrasts the work of Apelles, “ce magnifique et excellent ouvrier,” and “un pauvre ratraceur qui se presumoit peindre” (*Le Palais*, 2–3).<sup>10</sup> In Verville's account, Apelles produced *trompe-l'oeil* paintings that made natural objects seem like poor imitations: “on estimoit presque que les veritez naturelles, n'estoient que les pourtraicts de ce qu'il avoit elabouré” (2–3). In contrast, Verville adopts the role of the “pauvre ratraceur”:

[S]ans cesse et avec une importune ardeur il importunoit le pinceau, s'y arrêtant soigneusement selon que son esprit luy suggeroit [. . .]. Tellement que s'il avoit eu volonté de représenter un poisson, il mettoit un écriteau autour le vain corps de ses desseins, et y escrivoit c'est un poisson [. . .], afin que par cette declaration les regardans fussent relevez de la peine qu'ils eussent eüe d'esplucher instamment avec les yeux pour sçavoir et discerner ce que se pouvoit estre que l'object offert. Ainsi maintenant qu'il y a tant de bons Maistres de bien dire [. . .], je me presente comme ce miserable artiste . . . (3–4)

Like the “crotresques” that Montaigne is content to daub around the accomplished central “tableau” of La Boétie's writings, Verville's chapters are the equivalent of the labored, disturbing depictions of the second-rate painter.<sup>11</sup> Both produce unrecognizable objects that are difficult to decipher: Verville's text is “ce chaos,” “ce ramas confus” (4–5). This discontinuous and “chaotic” subject matter means that Verville, like the bad artist, must label his work in order to avoid confusion or unease: “à ce que ce ramas confus ne vous trouble, et donne peine par sa rencontre” (5). These labels, or chapter headings, might render the order of *Le Palais* less troubling, but they also risk masking the pleasurable diversity that Verville is equally at pains to emphasize. Far from being unequivocal, these titles are, as Neil Kenny has described them, an “entrance to a labyrinth in which readers have little idea where they will end up.”<sup>12</sup> In drawing attention to a potential univocal and comfortable reading, Verville throws the art involved in writing and reading into relief, suggesting a more positive side of the untalented artist's labored technique (rather as Montaigne ultimately

points out the value of the *crostesque*). If Apelles's works confuse the distinctions between representation and reality so that natural objects look like poor art and his paintings seem natural, his skill effaces and neutralizes his own subjective position within his paintings, a position that is repeatedly valorized in *Le Palais*.

From this preliminary "Advis," the "je" is an important focus in *Le Palais*—a fallible and ostensibly modest presence, perhaps, but one that is nevertheless shown clearly to be the producer of the text: "Je vous dy que c'est un recueil de ce que j'ay pensé de plus beau selon le jugement de mes yeux, et de plus doux à la discretion de mon oreille, ce donc je vous avise" (4–5). Verville insists on his first-person presence in the text, gesturing towards the reader it is true with frequent direct address ("je vous dy," "je vous avise"), but ultimately relying on the authority and coherence of the first person pronoun to convince and to seduce. Verville's personal voice is never far from the discussions in *Le Palais*. His "je" is active, offering opinions, autobiographical anecdote, digressing, always making his presence felt: "J'en mettray en avant selon que ma fantasie me le dictera" (114); "je dirois ce que j'en penserois assez librement" (162); "je me donneray carriere de dire ce que je remarque en tous sujets" (293–94); "j'aime mieux estre comme je suis, et suivre mon grand chemin" (366–67). In these ways, Verville repeatedly emphasizes the subjective ordering of the topics of knowledge in *Le Palais*, for which he seems to expect some criticism, but remains nevertheless unrepentant.<sup>13</sup>

### Disguise and doubling

The "je" that appears so insistently in *Le Palais* is not straightforward or even self-identical, however. On the contrary, Verville explicitly flags up various points in the text where he expresses a deliberately provocative argument, disguising his persona—or indeed drawing attention to its artificial nature—the better to provoke discussion or to generate argument, like the "esprit de contradiction" who appears as a provocative presence throughout Verville's prose miscellanies.<sup>14</sup> For example, after a passionate discussion of intellectual property and the conventional practice of quotation Verville suddenly adopts a more nonchalant stance: "aussi je ne m'en romps gueres la teste, ce m'est tout un, je me suis degoisé pour flestrir l'honneur des audacieux" (410). Here a disguised authorial *ethos* is adopted for punitive purposes, in

order to identify and to correct certain abuses of the humanist practice of quotation, already under strain and discussion in 1612.<sup>15</sup> However, it is a temporary and pragmatic adoption. Verville claims the right to retreat back into equanimity, the “honneste complaisance” that is an ostensible guiding principle throughout *Le Palais*: “En conscience je ne sçay si je suis trop critique” (410).<sup>16</sup>

Elsewhere, the disguised persona acts in more self-reflexive ways. It is not simply a device to correct writers or scholars with whom Verville does not agree: he is also keen to employ it against himself, to use it to test or try out his own hypotheses. In a chapter on the dangers of calumny, he describes how easily idle talk might slip into slander without any malicious intention on the part of the speaker. To make the thought experiment more vivid, he deliberately adopts the role of that idle speaker: “Et pour m’eguillonner moy-mesme, je faindré que c’est moy” (205). Verville exploits the role that he has taken on in order to encourage himself to greater achievement, as a spur to further exploration and endeavor. Like the poet-Proteus of the Italian tradition, the “je” in the *Palais* is a shape-shifter, able to incorporate multiple personae which, as Frank Greiner argues in a different context, seem in dialogue with one another.<sup>17</sup>

This procedure appears a conscious form of the unconscious doubling that, for Verville, happens in dreams. In the chapter “Des songes,” Verville describes “cét autre que nous devenons,” the dream-self who listens, travels and lives in the compressed time of dreaming.<sup>18</sup> For Verville, dreaming seems to be another form of investigation where objects of knowledge can be encountered. Describing a dream in which a migraine remedy was dictated to him, and which he could remember and study on waking, he surmises: “souvent j’ay discouru, et ayant retenu quelque clause de ce que je cuidois avoir prononcé j’y trouvois ce que je n’avois point encore appris” (34). The migraine remedy appears either as an echo of Verville’s own half-remembered discussions, or as an elaboration of a truth that the waking conscious self does not yet know, just as Cicero described dreams as “remnants” of waking thoughts and deeds, or as echoes of conversations with other souls.<sup>19</sup> In this Neoplatonic explanation of dreaming souls, the model of the *rencontre* is again privileged: one may stumble across knowledge one did not know one had. Verville continues: “Il faut par cela qu’il y ait quelque partition sans division, ou quelque chose de

semblable qui ne peut estre exprimé" (34). In this theory of dreaming knowledge and waking knowledge, some parts of the self are partitioned off from the conscious self, only accessible in dreams; although the ineffable nature of the precise make-up of the soul remains undisturbed. In this, Verville echoes the pre-Cartesian philosophers that Ian Maclean has described, who, in dividing the mind into an active and a passive intellect, allowed the possibility that some mental regions were not always accessible to conscious thought.<sup>20</sup> Verville goes further, and describes the dream experience as radically other: "J'ay songé autresfois que j'estois un autre, et je me voyois en lieu où je considerois ce qu'il m'estoit advis que j'avois esté" (34–35). In this particularly dense phrase, the self seems to undergo a double doubling, being able to consider himself considering what he had done, or been, before.

This fundamentally self-reflexive doubling appears emblematic of the more deliberate strategy undertaken in *Le Palais*, in which Verville describes or exhibits himself as "other" in order to provoke debate. He represents his own authorial disguises and performances, in other words, like any other topic encountered in *Le Palais*: as an object to be considered, and learned from. In this, and in his emphasis on free opinion, his text resembles the slightly later "libertine" novels by the group of "free thinkers" who collected around Pierre Gassendi (Théophile de Viau, Tristan L'Hermite, Cyrano de Bergerac, Charles D'Assoucy). The *libertins* created, in Joan DeJean's account, an innovative style of autobiographical fiction, in which the "division of 'I' into subject and object is a matter of central concern."<sup>21</sup> In these novels, the play between the name of the author and the pseudonymous character or narrator creates a series of masks which hide the authority and origin of the author, protecting him from possible accusation. Verville's own life was qualified by his seventeenth-century biographer Guillaume Colletet as "libertine" but, despite its emphasis on free opinion and free dispute that the Jesuit François Garasse would condemn in his work against Théophile de Viau, *Le Palais* escaped censure on those grounds, as far as is known (Colletet does not condemn it in any way): perhaps because it was published within the period 1600–1620 in which Louise Godard de Donville argues the term *libertin* all but disappeared from religious polemic.<sup>22</sup> Equally, Verville's emphasis on free opinion reflects earlier poetic and theo-

logical debates on free will, freedom of conscience and personal interpretation of sacred texts. François Rigolot has shown how Clément Marot claimed a poetic liberty in his defensive poetry: the right to “tout lire,” but also to “élire”—to decide what to accept and what to reject from this comprehensive reading.<sup>23</sup> Verville inherits this demand for intellectual liberty and, in *Le Palais*, examines its ethical implications.

### Obscure objects of desire

If the deliberate display or exhibition of the authorial persona renders the “je” another object for readers of *Le Palais*, this objectified subject has a wider significance within the ethical framework of Verville’s project. In the chapter on calumny, he argues that self-knowledge (the “Cognoy-toy” of the Delphic oracle) necessarily entails the recognition that, for others, we exist as objects of their perception and understanding: “on est l’objet des autres, comme nous sommes leur objet” (210). A concept of a personal self-reflexive subject as distinct from the perceived object emerges, then, as the implicit partner of that object we become in others’ perception. This recognition is an important limit to Verville’s thinking about the acquisition of knowledge and how it affects others.<sup>24</sup> The process of this recognition—that “on est l’objet des autres”—is moreover evident in the methodology of multiple personae that Verville adopts in writing *Le Palais*.

In another chapter, “De se rapporter aux Experts,” Verville plays provocatively with the notion that his authorial “je” becomes an object for any reader who chances across his text. The chapter begins with a statement of self-exhibition: “Souvent je me mets sur les rangs et dis de moy-mesme plusieurs choses avantageuses comme en ce qui suit” (268). “Mettre sur les rangs” was translated by Cotgrave in his 1611 dictionary as “to make mention, have speech of; to remember, bring upon the Stage.”<sup>25</sup> In *Le Palais*, Verville displays himself like an actor on stage, commemorates himself even, committing himself to the reader’s memory. A second meaning, according to Cotgrave, was synonymous with “tenir sur les rangs”: “to deride, ride, mocke, gibe, scoffe, or jeast at,” making Verville’s self-exhibition perhaps more of a risky procedure than it first appears, despite being an exercise in self-praise in which he recounts “choses avantageuses.” Again, a di-



dactic purpose is asserted for this practice: “Je ne le fay pas par gloire, je ne le dis pas à bon essient car je serois insolent, mais je le dy de moy comme d’un tiers pour former un esprit” (268). Referring to himself as a third party, as an “object” of his own argument, and thus of his readers’ understanding, Verville echoes the ethical imperative of the chapter on calumny.

The desired outcome of this strategy becomes clearer as the chapter continues.

Donques tout ainsi que la cloporte se sentant toucher se ferme, et ayant caché ses pieds dedans soy s’arrondit, si que la voir est regarder un petit globe vivant: Je vous diray que de mesme quand je sens quelqu’un qui n’ayant veu, vient à me presser pour non content de me voir, desirer aussi me considerer jusques à l’interieur. Je tends à deux fins me presentant rond de toutes parts, sans aucune difficulté, et en cette habitude pour contenter chacun je roule comme on veut . . . (268–69)

Like the woodlouse, which rolls up into a ball when it feels threatened, Verville protects himself when he feels intimidated by a particularly aggressive encounter. He describes himself explicitly as an object of desire in the perception of these aggressive interlocutors: “non content de me voir, desirer aussi me considerer jusques à l’interieur.” The response to this desiring, curious and invasive gaze is to curl up like the woodlouse does “me presentant rond de toutes parts,” displaying the surface only, the outer edges, concealing and protecting the desired interior. Verville’s duplicitous “rond” appearance thus acts as a mask or a decoy for the unsuspecting interlocutor, a parody perhaps of “honneste complaisance” (“je roule comme on veut”). But equally, this smooth mask offers a mystery, some allure for the more discerning reader. A hasty reader might be content with the apparent and pleasant plenitude of Verville’s well-rounded exterior; certain readers, however, might look beyond appearances. These readers who “sçavent recognoistre la capacité de la sphere” (269; an alchemical symbol of perfection as well as an image of the encyclopedia) perhaps fall into the two categories on the title page of *Le Palais*: the “Doctes” (professional scholars) and “ceux qui desirent sçavoir.” Here, then, is an invitation to read through the given text to a hidden meaning that would be available only to initiates, those capable of the “right” reading.

### Steganography and the role of the reader

Verville describes this coded writing in the preface to *Le Voyage des princes fortunez* as “steganographie,” a term he uses after the German alchemist Johannes Trithemius.<sup>26</sup> While steganography, or hidden writing, seems to have referred to a system of codes or ciphers for Trithemius and his followers, in the *Voyage* Verville associates it with the visual technique of anamorphosis in which a secret picture is concealed beneath a more obvious one. Steganography, for Verville, entails a process in which “on discourt amplement de sujets plausibles, lesquels envelopent quelques autres excellences qui ne sont cognues que lors qu’on lit par le secret endroit qui se descouvre les magnificences occultes à l’apparence commune.”<sup>27</sup> Both artistic and literary techniques involve a certain surrender of autonomy on the part of the viewer or the reader: the deeper mysteries will only be revealed “quand on regarde par un certain endroit que le maistre a designé” (a iiii v). As Terence Cave has argued, this renders steganography a technique subject to considerable authorial control, a discourse of mastery in which hidden secrets are only revealed in the right, carefully controlled circumstances.<sup>28</sup> In *Le Palais*, only the proper desiring, non-aggressive attitude will reveal the “key” to a deeper understanding of Verville’s text. Moreover, as in the alchemical literature that Verville’s text often resembles, this appears a deliberately provocative strategy that seeks to exclude unworthy readers.<sup>29</sup>

In other works, Verville seems to advocate much less ambiguously the method of hidden meanings and allegorical readings. His 1600 translation of Francesco Colonna’s *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* includes a preface in which he decodes the symbols on the title page and indicates that the whole text should be read as an allegory for the alchemical Great Work.<sup>30</sup> Both this and the 1610 *Voyage* are thus fictional allegories, in which an invitation to read “steganographically” can perhaps be taken at face value. In *Le Palais*, Verville appears engaged in a complex and teasing game of promising a hidden sense and then withdrawing that promise, in ways similar to those André Tournon uncovered in his study of *Le Moyen de parvenir*. In the context of *Le Palais* as a fragmented encyclopedia, the parody could even be explicitly targeted at the promise apparent in some formulations of encyclopedism, where a single group of secrets would provide the key to the whole of learning.<sup>31</sup> In this parodied promise, the authorial per-

sona appears as the bait to lure the reader—to “desirer me considerer jusques à l’interieur.” From this perspective, the sudden withdrawal of the promise of a hidden sense could also be read as a reminder that a miscellany is *not* an allegory: there is no one comprehensive hidden meaning—even for the initiates. What is offered and valued is, as Neil Kenny has argued, quest rather than revelation.<sup>32</sup> It is perhaps the removal of the protection offered by the fictional allegory that motivates this parody of the hidden promise: other strategies must be deployed to counter the threat of an aggressive reading encounter.<sup>33</sup> Like Montaigne, he seems to fear being “pris en eschange par ceux à qui il arrive de connoistre mon nom,” and indeed, the equation between text and author is one made by Colletet, who condemns *Le Moyen de parvenir* and Verville’s life in very similar terms.<sup>34</sup> If Rabelais counters the dangers of misinterpretation by shifting the responsibility from author to reader in his prologues to *Pantagruel* and *Gargantua*, as Frédéric Tinguely has argued, Verville seeks to confuse any straightforward identification of the authorial “je.”<sup>35</sup>

The text thus oscillates between revealing and concealing what might or might not be a hidden sense, playing out its promises between literality and allegory.<sup>36</sup> While the “je” insists on the good faith of the text—“Quelques fois comme icy je suis en cette egalité, je ne passe point outre le sens literal” (*Le Palais*, 269)—it is perhaps unwise to take anything on face value from the authorial persona of disguises and masks, who confesses to presenting himself “tout rond”—naively and simply—as a decoy for the *insuffisant lecteur*. And indeed, Verville presents this smooth and rounded surface, he goes on to claim, “afin que si quelque curieux les sonde, il ne presume y trouver que ce que je veux manifester” (269), recalling the authorial control evident in his description of steganography. This aspect of control suggests that, as Terence Cave has argued, the reader is not invited to partake in an indefinite free “play” of meaning. In a final “Notte” on the text, Verville suggests darkly, “aujourd’huy il y a jeu à jouer, et jeu à gagner” (583). The possibility of winning and of profiting from the game complicates the ludic relationship between text, author and reader, making it more competitive than would first appear. If, for Roland Barthes in 1968, “la naissance du lecteur doit se payer de la mort de l’auteur,” here, at the historical “birth” of the author, the reader is fundamentally implicated in an adversarial sport where readers can become authors’ rivals.<sup>37</sup>

Despite these denials, an invitation to look beyond the surface nevertheless seems to inhabit *Le Palais*. In the “Notte,” Verville makes an analogy between his book and its place of sale, the colonnades of the Palais Royal in Paris, where his publisher had her shop.<sup>38</sup> “[E]s Palais on avance ce qui peut attirer les yeux et les desirs; le reste qui est tout excellent est és arches interieures, où le precieux est conservé” (578–79). A seductive display is made in order to entice the purchaser, while the precious treasures are concealed, or at least removed, to the back of the shop, the *arrière-boutique*.<sup>39</sup> In his own *Palais*, I have argued, Verville makes a similar display of his authorial persona, offering a provocative or seductive mask in order to entice the reader into discussion. Similarly, in his earlier miscellany, *Le Cabinet de Minerve*, any debate and discussion between the participants is fundamentally sociable, and even flirtatious.<sup>40</sup> The authorial persona in *Le Palais* is offered as the lure to provoke and continue discussion and to further the pursuit of knowledge, just as in esoteric writing there is bait to encourage further reading and interpretation: Frank Greiner has argued that alchemical texts may even provoke the distrust of their readers in order to encourage investigation and research.<sup>41</sup> At certain points, Verville explicitly invites correction and disagreement with the “je” in the text in order to promote just the vital dispute that he considers necessary for the progress of knowledge.

The authorial inscription—the “je” as it appears on the page—effectively renders that “je” an object, or series of objects, for the reader. Verville manipulates the “je” throughout the text, repeatedly indicating another, secondary level of signification, addressing his readers only “*comme si je vous disois*” (359, emphasis added).<sup>42</sup> The “je” becomes multiple through these assumed roles, offering a succession of subjective positions that are not necessarily consistent or even mutually reconcilable.<sup>43</sup> As such, the “je” inscribes textually the subjective and provisional ordering of knowledge that emerges as the organizing principle of *Le Palais*. Ostensibly, these alternative authorial personae are offered in order to further scholarly dispute: “je vous prie que je sois cét autre, et dites vos pensees” (107), Verville pleads with any reader who may be reluctant to engage in this endeavor. However, the artificial and somewhat misleading nature of such a series of masks is made explicit: “tellement qu’une chymere en engloutit une autre” (107). The persona is offered and withdrawn in a complex play of

disguise and display that mimics or parodies the promise of a hidden meaning in esoteric writing, strategies that were taken up in the later libertine novel. In this way, the result of the adoption of multiple masks oscillates between an ethical recognition of the subjective position of the other and an imposition of authorial control. Verville's inscription and manipulation of the "je" emphasizes at once its singularity and its artificiality—both of which, as for his near contemporary Montaigne, are put to the service of the literary project.

### *King's College London*

## Notes

I would like to express my gratitude to Thomas Dixon and Neil Kenny, and to the two anonymous readers for *French Forum*, for their invaluable suggestions on earlier versions of this article.

1. For accounts of the development of the figure of the author, see Yves Delègue, *Le Royaume d'exil: le sujet de la littérature en quête d'auteur* (Paris: Obsidiane, 1991); Jean Leconte, *L'Idéal et la différence: la perception de la personnalité littéraire à la Renaissance* (Geneva: Droz, 1993); Florian Preisig, *Clément Marot et les métamorphoses de l'auteur à l'aube de la Renaissance* (Geneva: Droz, 2004); François Rigolot, *Poésie et Renaissance* (Paris: Seuil, 2002) 67–113; and Alain Viala, *Naissance de l'écrivain: sociologie de la littérature à l'âge classique* (Paris: Minuit, 1985). Terence Cave's work on the emergence of the term "le moi" has nuanced and complicated the broader narrative of the development of the "self": *Pré-histoires: textes troublés au seuil de la modernité* (Geneva: Droz, 1999) 109–76.

2. Critics have emphasized the ludic aspect of Verville's writing. See, in particular, Jean-Raymond Fanlo, "Image édifante et poisson soluble: la *Pietà* du *Cabinet de Minerve*"; Sylviane Bokdam, "Le Désir et ses objets: de l'art au songe dans le *Cabinet de Minerve*"; and André Tournon, "Des Puzzles à pièces erratiques," in *Béroalde de Verville 1556–1626, Cahiers V.-L. Saulnier* 13 (1996): 57–82, 83–97, 201–12.

3. *Pré-histoires*, 164.

4. For a discussion of the use of terms from modern criticism such as "self" and "writing subject" in the exploration of early modern subjectivity, see Michael Moriarty, *Early Modern French Thought: The Age of Suspicion* (Oxford UP, 2003) 10–14.

5. On the miscellany in general and on Verville in particular, see Neil Kenny, *The Palace of Secrets: Béroalde de Verville and Renaissance Conceptions of Knowledge* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991).

6. Cave, *Pré-histoires*, 155–64; Frank Greiner, *Les Métamorphoses d'Hermès: Tradition alchimique et esthétique littéraire dans la France de l'âge baroque (1583–1646)* (Paris: Champion, 2000) 534. Florian Preisig also argues that one of Marot's innovative techniques was a focus on the "je" as a "principe organisateur qui annonce *Les Essais*": *Clément Marot*, 27.

7. François Béroalde de Verville, *Le Palais des curieux. Auquel sont assemblées plusieurs diversitez pour le plaisir des Doctes, et le bien de ceux qui desirent sçavoir* (Paris: veuve M.

Guillemot and S. Thiboust, 1612). Verville uses the *rencontre* elsewhere to motivate the organization of topics: see Kenny, *Palace of Secrets*, 106–9, 120.

8. *Le Palais*, 1–5. Later, Verville explicitly renounces any possibility of ordering his material: “Je sçay bien pourtant que je n’y mettray pas ordre” (453). On discontinuity as an explosion of encyclopedic principles, see Kenny, *Palace of Secrets*, 110–26; and on Verville’s concept of free opinion, see Neil Kenny, “*Car le nom mesme de libéralité sonne liberté: les contextes sociaux et économiques du savoir chez Béroalde de Verville*,” in *Béroalde de Verville 1556–1626*, 7–24.

9. Greiner, *Métamorphoses*, 296.

10. On the popular concept of *ut pictura poesis*, of which this could be considered a narrative variant, see Jean Howard Hagstrum, *The Sister Arts: The Tradition of Literary Pictorialism from Dryden to Gray* (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1958); and Rensselaer W. Lee, “*Ut pictura poesis*”: *The Humanistic Theory of Painting* (New York: Norton, 1967).

11. Montaigne’s “crotiques” feature in “De l’amitié,” *Essais*, eds. V.-L. Saulnier and Pierre Villey (Paris: PUF, 2004) I: 28, 183–95 (183).

12. Kenny, *Palace of Secrets*, 124.

13. See *object* 46, 358.

14. For the “esprit de contradiction et non de science,” see *Le Palais*, 40; Kenny, “*Car le nom*,” 19.

15. On the declining importance of quotation, see Marc Fumaroli, *L’Age de l’éloquence: rhétorique et “res literaria” de la Renaissance au seuil de l’époque classique* (Paris: Albin Michel, 1994) 685–705; Ann Moss, *Printed Commonplace-Books and the Structuring of Renaissance Thought* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996) 255–66. Marc Bizer argues that the practice of quotation and imitation necessarily implied self-consciousness and the development of a sense of literary subjectivity that is at stake here: *La Poésie au miroir: Imitation et conscience de soi dans la poésie latine de la Pléiade* (Paris: Champion, 1995) 10.

16. See *object* 51, “De l’honneste complaisance. Qu’il est mal seant de faire son mestier à table,” 385–94. “[U]ne juste complaisance [. . .] qui faict que je trouve bon tout ce que chacun approuve et veut eslire pour soy” (386).

17. Greiner, *Métamorphoses*, 523. On the orator and the poet as Proteus, see Lecointe, *L’Idéal et la différence*, 441–42. On the Renaissance dialogue as a representation of the “dialogue intérieur,” see Kushner, *Le Dialogue à la Renaissance: Histoire et poétique* (Geneva: Droz, 2004) 285.

18. “Des songes,” 28–37 (33). See Gisèle Mathieu-Castellani, “‘J’ai songé que j’étais un autre . . .’: Les songes de Béroalde de Verville dans *Le Palais des curieux*,” *Littératures classiques* 25 (1995): 45–55.

19. Cicero, *De divinatione*, in *De senectute, De amicitia, De divinatione*, trans. William Armstrong Falconer (Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 1971) 222–539 (“remnants” at 2.67.139, pp. 526–27). Cicero argues that “since the soul has lived from all eternity and has conversed with numberless other souls, it sees everything that exists in nature”: 1.51.115, p. 349. Verville also echoes Neoplatonic ideas: “l’homme est appellé petit monde, ayant en soy toutes les natures sensibles, et toutes images en son esprit” (*Le Palais*, 36). For further discussions of dream theory in the Renaissance, see *Le Songe à la Renaissance*, ed. Françoise Charpentier (St-Etienne: Association d’études sur l’Humanisme, la Réforme et la Renaissance, 1990).

20. Ian Maclean, “Language in the Mind: Reflexive Thinking in the Late Renaissance,”

in *Philosophy in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries: Conversations with Aristotle*, eds. Constance Blackwell and Sachiko Kusukawa (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1999) 296–321 (298).

21. Joan DeJean, *Libertine Strategies: Freedom and the Novel in Seventeenth-Century France* (Columbus: Ohio State UP, 1981) 65.

22. Guillaume Colletet, *Vies des poètes tourangeaux*, eds. Lenita Locey, Michael Locey and Janis L. Pallister (Tübingen: Narr, 1989) 17–40 (22). Louise Godard de Donville, *Le Libertin des origines à 1665: un produit des apologètes* (Tübingen: Narr, 1989) 69. Garasse's comments on true liberty consisting in an interior freedom, and not the social freedom of "discourir librement," are made in his *Doctrine curieuse* (1623), quoted in *Le Libertin*, 308.

23. Rigolot, *Poésie et Renaissance*, 106–8. The poem in question is the 1535 "Épître au Roy, du temps de son exil à Ferrare" (quoted at 107).

24. On the distinctions between subject and object in this chapter, see Emily Butterworth, *Poisoned Words: Slander and Satire in Early Modern France* (Oxford: Legenda, 2006) 47–49.

25. Randle Cotgrave, *A Dictionarie of the French and English Tongues* (Columbia: U of South Carolina P, 1950).

26. On Trithemius, see Greiner, *Métamorphoses*, 300.

27. "Avis aux beaux esprits," *L'Histoire veritable, ou le voyage des princes fortunez* (Paris: Pierre Chevalier, 1610), a iii v. On perspective and anamorphosis in the period, see Jurgis Baltrušaitis, *Anamorphoses ou thaumaturgus opticus* (Paris: Flammarion, 1984); Ernest B. Gilman, *The Curious Perspective: Literary and Pictorial Wit in the Seventeenth Century* (New Haven: Yale UP, 1978). On anamorphosis with specific reference to Verville, see Cave, *Pré-histoires*, 155–64; Greiner, *Métamorphoses*, 505–41; and Ilana Zinguer, *Le Roman stéganographique: "Le Voyage des princes fortunez" de Béroalde de Verville* (Paris: Champion, 1993).

28. "[U]ne structure globale, totalisante, et pas du tout [. . .] un jeu aléatoire où l'auteur inviterait le lecteur à trouver des sens à plaisir." *Pré-histoires*, 161.

29. Greiner, *Métamorphoses*, especially 280–84.

30. *Le Tableau des riches inventions couvertes du voile des feintes amoureuses, qui sont representees dans le Songe de Poliphile, desvoilees des ombres du songe et subtilement exposées par Beroalde* (Paris: Matthieu Guillemot, 1600). On Colonna's work and its fortunes in France, see Anthony Blunt, "The *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* in Seventeenth-Century France," *Journal of the Warburg Institute* 1 (1937–1938): 117–37. On Verville's translation, see Gilles Polizzi, "Les Riches Inventions de Béroalde de Verville," *Béroalde de Verville 1556–1626*, 111–40.

31. André Tournon, "La Parodie de l'ésotérisme dans *Le Moyen de parvenir* de Béroalde de Verville," in *Burlesques et formes parodiques*, eds. Isabelle Landy-Houillon and Maurice Menard (Tübingen: Narr, 1987), 215–30. On esoteric encyclopedism, see Kenny, *Palace of Secrets*, 25; A. Levi, "Ethics and Encyclopaedia in the Sixteenth Century," in *French Renaissance Studies 1540–70: Humanism and the Encyclopaedia*, ed. P. Sharratt (Edinburgh: Edinburgh UP, 1976) 170–84 (179).

32. *Palace of Secrets*, 191–203.

33. For a summary of theories of the "reading encounter," see Emma Wilson, *Sexuality and the Reading Encounter: Identity and Desire in Proust, Duras, Tournier and Cixous* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1996) chap. 1.

34. Montaigne, "Sur des vers de Virgile," *Essais* III: 5, 847; Colletet, *Vies des poètes tourangeaux*, 22, 33–34.

35. Frédéric Tinguely, "D'un prologue l'autre: vers l'inconscience consciente d'Alcofrybas Rabelais," *Etudes rabelaisiennes* 29 (1993): 83–91. Michel Foucault argues that the emergence of the "fonction auteur" was motivated as much by a juridical demand to make the author (as well as the printer) responsible for their text as it was by an authorial desire for intellectual property rights: "Qu'est-ce qu'un auteur?" [1969], in *Dits et écrits*, vol. 1 (1954–1988), eds. Daniel Defert and François Ewald (Paris: Gallimard, 1994) 789–821 (799). See also Roger Chartier, *Culture écrite et société: l'ordre des livres (XIV–XVIII siècle)* (Paris: Albin Michel, 1996) 64–65.

36. On allegory, hidden sense and anamorphosis, see Cave, *Pré-histoires*, 162; Fernand Hallyn, "Anamorphose et allégorie," *Revue de littérature comparée* 56 (1982): 319–30; Zinguer, *Le Roman stéganographique*, 82–83.

37. Roland Barthes, "La Mort de l'auteur," in *Le Bruissement de la langue: Essais critiques IV* (Paris: Seuil, 1984) 61–67 (67).

38. The title page states: "Chez la Veufve M. Guillemot, et S. Thiboust, au Palais, en la gallerie des prisonniers." On the printer widow Guillemot, see Neil Kenny, "Le Moyen de parvenir: The Earliest Known Edition, its Date, and the Woman who Printed it," in *Studies on Béroalde de Verville*, ed. Michael J. Giordano (Tübingen: Narr, 1992) 21–41.

39. An echo of Montaigne's *arrière-boutique* ("De la solitude," *Essais* 1: 39, 241) occurs in Garasse, who describes the *libertin* as lacking such a retreat: the *libertin* becomes his mask (Donville, *Le Libertin*, 313). Verville seems keen to retain the possibility of the *arrière-boutique*.

40. *Le Cabinet de Minerve* (Paris: S. Moulin, 1596).

41. Greiner, *Métamorphoses*, 293. See also Tournon, "La Parodie de l'ésotérisme," 224.

42. See also 106, 162, 204, 274, 281, 290, 362, 574. For a discussion of the early modern author as an "être-comme," see Delègue, *Le Royaume d'exil*, 85–88. Rather than a figure of absence and lack, as the author is for Delègue, I would argue that Verville's multiple identifications reveal an imagined dialogue that, although it can appear threatening, in theory at least has a positive value.

43. For an expression of similar, if more explicit, non-self-identity, see Montaigne, "Du repentir": "C'est un contrerolle de divers et muables accidens et d'imaginacions irresoluës et, quand il eschet, contraires: soit que je sois autre moy-mesme, soit que je saisisse les subjects par autres circonstances et considerations." *Essais*, III: 2, 805.