Portraits and Poses
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Portraits and Poses: Female Intellectual Authority, Agency and Authorship in Early Modern Europe.

When looking at the impressive momentum of diplomatic networks in late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century Europe, the scientific and academic contacts of Austrian and Russian career diplomats are often overlooked. Envoys in cosmopolitan contexts like Brussels, Paris, The Hague, and Vienna not only worked incessantly on political-strategic and administrative matters but also fostered intellectual contacts with men of letters, scientists, and artists. Several of them even contributed to the creation and development of academies in Brussels, France, and the Dutch Republic. The cosmopolitan contexts they worked in provided unique settings for international meetings of minds. What is more, this cosmopolitan context also gave room for increased female intellectual agency, not only in the salon culture but also due to the forced mobility that was a consequence of the European revolutionary and military turmoil. ‘Celebrities’ like Baroness Germaine de Staël travelled the continent, and many other women contributed to contemporary political and intellectual discussions by moving between different national contexts and intellectual circles. In this chapter, I will focus on the intellectual mobility of two women who stood out because of their intense intellectual activity and the unanimous high regard they enjoyed from their political, diplomatic, and literary contemporaries. Moreover, they befriended each other in one of these cosmopolitan contexts. As they moved along different intellectual and national environments, their meeting also led to a friendship and correspondence that renders an interesting insight into the touchstones of their female intellectual authority.

Amalia Adelheid Gallitzin (1748–1806), earlier Schmettau, was married to the Russian ambassador in The Hague, Prince Dmitrii Alekseevich Golitsyn. Through her husband’s friendship with Karl Johann von Cobenzl, the minister
plenipotentiary to the Austrian Netherlands, she befriended the Belgian artist and writer Marie-Caroline Murray (1741–1831). Although Amalia Gallitzin never published during her lifetime, she remains widely remembered as a central member and host of the Kreis von Münster, a circle of philosophers and intellectuals who regularly met at her house. Marie-Caroline Murray, on the contrary, published several prize-winning works and was known as *la Muse Belgique* (‘the Belgian muse’), but is now almost forgotten. This leads to two questions: first, what are the causal mechanisms behind Gallitzin and Murray’s divergent legacies, especially because they started out with very similar trajectories? And second, which social, geographical, and historiographical factors legitimised or constrained their intellectual authority? Exploring the mechanisms behind their divergent legacies will bridge gaps in the diplomatic history of the long eighteenth century and will contribute to overcoming the paradigmatic separation of women intellectuals and intellectual history.

Hilda Smith points out that intellectual history as a specialty within broader historical scholarship has long omitted women and gender issues. She adds that these lacunae should be addressed by the analysis of the writings of early modern women, which ‘can offer useful insights as to how intellectual historians can more effectively open up their specialty to women’s knowledge and gender analysis’. I will do so by developing the concept of *legitimising mobility*. By looking for the reasons behind divergent legacies of female intellectuals, I will identify what sort of mobility (social, geographical, financial) legitimised their intellectual authority.

The professional and personal trajectories of the two women will be studied from the perspective of Theda Skocpol and Margaret Somers’s comparative historical analysis, which encompasses the interesting vector of looking at both the parallels in these case histories as well as taking into account the contrasting contexts of the two female intellectuals. I will start out by describing the biographical contexts and intellectual agency of Gallitzin and Murray to identify the social, geographical, and historiographical factors that legitimised or constrained their intellectual authority. Then I will focus on the networks these women navigated and their correspondence with members of these networks to assess the legitimising mobility and legacy.

**Acquaintance and Correspondence (1768–1770)**

In late 1767, the Russian envoy Prince Dmitrii Alekseevich Golitsyn (1734–1803) was recalled from his diplomatic mission in Paris and returned to Russia. During a stopover to take the waters in Aix-en-Chapelle, he fell in love with the young Countess Adelheid Amalia von Schmettau. She was the daughter of Prussian Field Marshal Samuel von Schmettau and then lady-in-waiting of Princess Ferdinand of Prussia. After a brief engagement, Golitsyn and
Schmettau married in Aachen on August 14, 1768. The newly-wed couple embarked upon a nearly two-year trip that led them from Brussels and Spa to Vienna, Prague, Dresden, Berlin, and their final destination, St Petersburg. There, Golitsyn received orders for a new posting as minister plenipotentiary in the Dutch Republic.

It was during this trip that Amalia Gallitzin met Marie-Caroline Murray. Prince Golitsyn was a patron of the arts and a middleman for Empress Catherine II, who sought to buy European paintings, sculptures, and books in Paris, Brussels, and The Hague. Golitsyn visited his friend Karl Johann von Cobenzl (1712–1770) to arrange the sale of Cobenzl’s collection of drawings to the empress. This collection would later on form the basis of the collection of the Hermitage.\(^\text{10}\) As Golitsyn took his new wife to Brussels to introduce her to Cobenzl and to discuss the sale, Amalia struck up a friendship with Marie-Caroline Murray, a good friend of Count Cobenzl.\(^\text{11}\) There was an eight-year age difference, but both women were known for their strong intellectual streak, and their meeting seemed to be a meeting of the minds. After the Golitsyns left, Amalia took up a correspondence with Marie-Caroline during her trip to Russia and invited her to come and stay in The Hague.

Although practically absent in the academic literature on eighteenth-century Brussels, Marie-Caroline Murray was actually relatively well known among the Brussels elite in the second half of the eighteenth century. Born in 1741, she was the daughter of Jean-Baptiste Murray, a lawyer at the Council of Brabant and Marie-Caroline Savage. Both her parents were of Scottish descent, their families having arrived as Scottish Jacobite refugees after the 1707 Act of Union.\(^\text{12}\) She was the eldest of seven children, of which three died in infancy. Marie-Caroline’s family were not well off, but not without reason: her parents were later described as ‘a couple more rich in children than in écus.’\(^\text{13}\) This can be derived from the limited number of servants listed in her mother’s household book and the different entreaties of her father to put in a good word for him professionally via her influential connections in diplomatic circles in Brussels, The Hague, and at the Austrian court.\(^\text{14}\) After her parents passed away, Marie-Caroline also became responsible for providing for her younger sisters.

Despite the family’s limited means, her father’s job at the Council of Brabant provided an interesting network, and the family atmosphere was decidedly intellectual. Later on in life, Murray wrote that she inherited the library that was started by her grandfather George Savage, who was a military man but also ‘a distinguished man of letters.’\(^\text{15}\) Because of the limited studies and literature about her life and work, correspondence needs to be used to derive an impression of how her personality and intellect was perceived in the Brussels elite. Two main characteristics surface time and again in the descriptions of her contemporaries: her exceptional beauty and her exceptional intelligence. As Charles Maroy put it in one of the rare articles that written about Murray: ‘Her cradle was watched over by two fairies, Beauty and Intelligence,’ which turned her into
one of the most beautiful persons Brussels had ever seen.'\textsuperscript{16} Charles-Joseph de Ligne had equal admiration for her intellect and described in his \textit{Fragments d'histoire de ma vie} how she outshone many of her contemporaries:

I do not know any man of letters as distinguished as Miss Murray: all literatures of all languages, perfect history, taste, judgement, the most beautiful verse you can write. Mme de Genlis and de Staël do not do this. Before, Mme de La Fayette and de Riccoboni also did not do this. Les Deshoulières and la Suze did too much, but no novels. Mme Dacier knew Greek but not French. Thus, I can assure you that all female authors can be only her ladies-in-waiting.\textsuperscript{17}

Despite the absolute consensus about her character, her occupations were a bit more diverse. Murray had many talents, among which music, writing, painting miniatures, and editorial work stood out. In different stages of her life, she was described as a writer, \textit{préceptrice}, or literary assistant. In the file that contains her request for an Austrian government pension after she fled Brussels in 1794, she describes herself as ‘artiste’.\textsuperscript{18} Yet in 1768, when she made her acquaintance with the young Amalia Gallitzin, she was mainly known as a talented and intellectual beauty who was well known and liked among the political, literary, and artistic elite in Brussels. Her friendship with Austrian minister plenipotentiary Cobenzl was noted in Charles de Lorraine’s secret ‘little black book’, which he kept about the clandestine relations of the Brussels elite.\textsuperscript{19} Although Cobenzl denied the liaison during his lifetime, on his deathbed in January 1770, he entrusted the abbé de Coudenberg with a valuable ring for Murray, to compensate all the discomfort their acquaintance had caused her.\textsuperscript{20} It seems that around that time, Murray considered it best to leave Brussels for a bit and to visit her new friends in The Hague. In March 1770, the Golitsyns arrived in The Hague, and Amalia was eager to receive her Belgian friend.

\textbf{The Hague (1770–1779)}

In The Hague, the Golitsyns had settled in the Russian diplomatic residence on Kneuterdijk 22. Apart from the ambassador’s diplomatic work, the couple received many friends and local and foreign dignitaries. Encouraged by his wife, Golitsyn engaged with scientists like Martinus van Marum and Petrus Camper on favourite subjects like mineralogy and natural electricity. The couple also developed cordial relations with the stadtholder Willem V and his wife Wilhelmina.\textsuperscript{21} Until the end of her life, Amalia Gallitzin maintained a correspondence with Wilhelmina. The stadtholder himself also took a real liking to the young princess. He allowed her to pursue her scientific interests with the assistance of Petrus Camper and kept her letters in a private folder labelled
'package and secret pieces of the Prince of Orange, which cannot be opened but by himself'. On the back of a letter by Golitsyna is written 'my Immortal Treasure'. Like Murray, Gallitzin stood out for her beauty and intellect. One of the famous guests at the Russian embassy was Denis Diderot, who passed The Hague in 1773 on his way to Russia and stayed there again for several months in 1774 on his way back to Paris. He wrote down his observations about Amalia in his famous correspondence with Sophie Volland:

She is a very lively woman, very cheerful and full of wit, and has a rather amiable figure; is more than young enough, educated and talented; she is well-read; knows several languages; this is the custom with German women; she plays the harpsichord and sings like an angel; she is full of ingenuous and sharp words; she is very good: [...] She is extremely sensitive; even a little too much for her happiness. As she is knowledgeable and accurate, she argues like a little lion. I love her madly, and I live between the prince and his wife, as between a good brother and a good sister.

Unlike her amiable friend, Gallitzin had a remarkably intense personality, which shone through in her correspondence. The same Diderot had pointed out his fears about her being a 'mauvaise tête' several years earlier in a letter to Volland. After the Golitsyns’ betrothal, Diderot received a letter of introduction from Amalia that left the impression of her being unbalanced. He wrote Volland about Amalia’s ‘bizarre’ letter, which contained ‘the most sanguineous, dishevelled, and indecent satire of herself’. If he hadn’t known from Golitsyn it was not written in a serious manner, he would have been ‘most worried’.

This is also corroborated by the memories of the Dutch-Swiss writer Isabelle de Charrière, who in later years reminisced about Amalia’s behaviour during her first years in The Hague:

One day I will exonerate Diderot in relation to Princess Gallitzine. To say the least she was very bizarre before she knew him. Her infatuation with the friend of an Austrian minister, governor – if I am not mistaken – of Brussels, caused much more sensation in The Hague than her cropped hair.

The 1769–1770 correspondence of Gallitzin to Murray that preceded Murray’s visit to The Hague indeed bears witness of this ‘engouement’: her discourse veers between intense feelings of friendship and slightly amorous expressions.

I always receive your letters with a new feeling of joy! The pleasure they give me finally decided the uncertainty I still was in whether I should bless or bemoan the moment I met you. The regrets that our separation gives me almost made me wish I had never known you, but my consolation is
in your letters. [...] I am delighted to see that you are doing my feelings the justice to be persuaded that I can ever erase you from my heart. You hold the high end to it and are so deeply engraved in it that you can only be torn away from it by ruthless death.27

Murray’s replies have not been found, but the formality of Murray’s regular correspondence, even to known lovers, seems to point in the direction that the intensity was not encouraged and simply may have been inherent to the personality of Gallitzin.28 Another sign of this intensity in her friendship is the fact that Amalia gave her daughter Marianne, born in 1769, the same nickname as Marie-Caroline had when she was with friends and family: Mimi.

After countless invitations (‘come here to never part with me’), Murray finally visited Amalia Gallitzin between April and October 1770.29 Afterwards, the more distant tone of the correspondence, which quickly petered out altogether, is obvious. The gossipy reminiscences of Isabelle de Charrière shed some light on what occurred during the visit, as she wrote about Murray:

This young lady was the daughter of a lawyer and became the mistress of Count da Cunha, the ambassador of Portugal. I will ask Baron Chambrier what has become of this wicked man as soon as he wants to come and see me.30

Indeed, Marie-Caroline Murray returned to Brussels and gave birth to a little girl, Josephine, who died several years later.31 Nothing remains of this episode in her life except the correspondence with Count José Maria da Cunha, which continued for more than a decade. Murray seems to have managed to avoid scandal (by disappearing due to illness) and, according to Lepeer, laughed off the few rumours.32

Interestingly, only two years later, Gallitzin broke with protocol and customs and made her own choice to leave her restricted way of life. She had developed a deep platonic friendship with the Dutch philosopher Frans Hemsterhuis and became increasingly fed up with the formalities and obligations at the Russian legation in The Hague. In their correspondence, Hemsterhuis addressed her as ‘Diotime’, referring to Socrates’s teacher, the philosopher Diotima of Mantinea, and signed his letters with ‘Socrate’ (Fig. 1).33 From 1774 onwards, Amalia Gallitzin rented a house in Scheveningen, which she aptly named Niethuys (alluding to the Dutch niet thuis, ‘not home’). There, she intended to quietly raise her children, according to the principles of Rousseau and the Enlightenment, together with only Frans Hemsterhuis and the children’s tutor, Dentan. Ambassador Golitsyn seems to have acquiesced in this separation. In 1779, Amalia Gallitzin moved with her children to Münster, where she enrolled her son in a Catholic gymnasium that was part of the University of Münster, founded in 1773 by the statesman Franz Friedrich Wilhelm von Fürstenberg.
She spent the rest of her life in Münster, where she became the central figure in the Kreis von Münster, a literary philosophical circle that supported pedagogical views based on Enlightenment ideas.

Despite their separation, the Golitsyns never divorced officially, and Amalia kept her name and title. This is interesting, because it implied that she retained her social status. She also returned to The Hague for official occasions, like the 1881–1882 visit of the tsarevich Pavel Petrovich and his wife. Prince Golitsyn visited his family once a year in Münster.34

Marie-Caroline Murray spent the remainder of her life in very different circumstances. Unlike Amalia Gallitzin, she never enjoyed high social status or fortune. Rather, she was always in a dependent social and financial position, either on her family or other ‘benefactors’.

After her return to Brussels, Murray worked as a literary assistant for the duke of Arenberg. Like so many who had close ties with the Austrian court, she fled Brussels in 1796 after the French conquest of the Southern Netherlands. She was invited to stay at the estates of Christian Auguste, prince of Waldeck, after which she moved to Münster in 1797. Devoid of funds, she had to earn a living by painting. No letters remain to verify whether she and Gallitzin met there.
again. To be able to receive the small state pension from the Austrian court, she moved to Vienna in 1798. There she remained the rest of her life, protected from poverty by her influential friends: prince de Ligne, Cobenzl’s daughter the Comtesse de Thiennes de Rumbeke, and the duke of Arenberg. She outlived them all and died in solitude in 1831, aged ninety.

‘Diotime’ and ‘La Muse Belgique’: Networks and Legacy

These biographical portraits recount how these women’s lives evolved from parallel trajectories to contrasting contexts. They were not entirely on an equal social footing when they met in 1768, but they both lived in elite settings and were two young women who shared a decidedly intellectual outlook on life. At the end of her life, Gallitzin could look back on a life filled with learning, intellectual contacts, sound intellectual recognition, and a legacy that resonates to this day. Marie-Caroline Murray, on the contrary, seems to have vanished into thin air. She lived until 1831 but the last reference to her is in 1815, in a secret police report during the Vienna Congress. Moreover, it is a reference by association, as she is identified as ‘de Ligne’s good friend Mme Murray’. Despite her descent into anonymity and her financial problems, she continued her intellectual and editorial work, albeit more often than not in a secondary role. When Madame de Staël took up the idea of publishing a selection of prince de Ligne’s memoirs, it was Murray who assisted her in compiling the 1809 edition of his *Lettres et Pensées* (‘Letters and Reflections’). In the second part of this chapter, I will look for causal mechanisms behind their divergent trajectories. As Skocpol and Somers point out, there are two ways of comparing historical trajectories, and they often overlap. If one starts out from a ‘parallel logic’, one seeks to show that a theory holds good from case to case. Differences among the cases are seen as contextual ‘particularities’ that overall do not curb the generality of the process with which one is concerned – in this case, intellectual mobility of women in the late eighteenth century. Conversely, the ‘contrast of context logic seeks to bring out the unique features of each particular case selected and to show how these unique features affect the working-out of general social processes.’ Here also, these unique features or contextual particularities overlap, which makes these two women’s trajectories an interesting case for comparison.

Starting out on practically the same footing, their intellectual development seems to have evolved in a parallel manner, yet other (socio-economic) parameters determined their trajectories diverged significantly. In this comparative historical analysis, I will take different factors into account: social status, geographic mobility, network and male patronage, oeuvre and legacy. In the conclusion, I will discuss what seems to have been crucial in establishing not only intellectual authority but also what I call *legitimising* mobility: if one’s
intellectual authority is recognised through a certain legacy, then what are the reasons behind divergent legacies of female intellectuals? By taking into account the above-mentioned factors, I will explore what sort of mobility (social, geographical, financial) legitimised their intellectual authority.

### Social Status and Geographic Mobility

Both women spent different parts of their lives in different places and thus navigated not only different geographic but also different social contexts. The main difference between Gallitzin and Murray is, however, that Gallitzin's social status remained unchanged even after her separation from ambassador Golitsyn, whereas Murray’s social independence decreased over the years and even became the main reason for her geographical mobility. Amalia Gallitzin traded her life as the lady-in-waiting of Princess Ferdinand of Prussia for a life as a princess consort in one of the oldest noble families of the Russian Empire. Even though she shared her life with her husband at the embassy for only four years, they remained married for the rest of their lives and she retained her status and the title of Princess Gallitzin, by which she remains known to this day. Her move to Niethuys in Scheveningen might have raised some eyebrows, but did not decrease her social prestige, nor did her later move to Münster. This can be partly explained by the fact that, although like Murray, she befriended famous intellectuals, she remained financially independent throughout.

Murray may not have been born into nobility, but her father’s position as an avocat at the Council of Brabant put her into contact with the highest elite in Brussels, as is shown by her early friendships with Philippe Goswin de Nény, prince de Ligne, and minister plenipotentiary Cobenzl, through whom she befriended Golitsyn and his wife. This last friendship led her to spend some time in The Hague. This geographic change of surroundings was not permanent, yet due to her changed circumstances after her return, her social status seems to have altered. More than her friendship with Cobenzl or Nény, her relation with the duke of Arenberg during her last years in Brussels implied a connotation of dependence. This is obvious from their correspondence, in which expresses her friendship and high regard for him, but also shows a professional sérieux:

> Politics turns my head, Monsieur le Duc, or to put it better, the desire to guess your wishes and to carry them out [...] I have undertaken a response, criticism, and analysis of what you like of Mirabeaux’s [sic] work. This strange enterprise dates from yesterday, and I have already written fourteen pages [...] Berg, to whom I read my work this morning, maintains that it is not so bad, and consequently he will send your secretary tomorrow to copy this beginning first in order to send it to you right away for you to judge whether it is worthwhile to continue.38
Her self-expressed dependence on his opinion unveils how she, financially supported by the duke, strived to be of (intellectual) use to Arenberg.

Compelled to leave Brussels because she was considered too *joséphiste*, her subsequent stay with the prince de Waldeck, her move to Münster, and her eventual trip to Vienna were all undertaken out of financial concerns. Whereas Gallitzin seems to have ‘upgraded’ her social status and well-being through her geographic mobility, Murray’s geographic mobility was prompted by the urgent need for funds. As a recently retrieved file in the Haus-, Hof und Staatsarchiv shows, she could not claim the small state pension attributed to her by the Austrian emperor from Münster, so she needed to move to Vienna to be able to receive this very necessary income.\(^39\)

**Network and Male Patronage**

Throughout her life, Amalia Gallitzin created a solid network of which the Kreis von Münster proved to be the most lasting. In the Dutch Republic, she first navigated the diplomatic and scientific network of her husband. When she moved to Niethuys outside The Hague in 1774, his role was taken over by the Dutch philosopher Frans Hemsterhuis, who became a fixture in her new household. He had a lot of input in her children’s education and also played a crucial role in her move to Münster. It was Hemsterhuis whose work was known in Germany and who took her to visit the schools around Münster founded by Fürstenberg. His introduction to the latter proved to be the end of his (not so) platonic relationship with his ‘Diotime’. Despite a continued correspondence with Hemsterhuis after moving there in 1779, Amalia Gallitzin expanded her network in Münster through cordial friendships with Franz von Fürstenberg, Friedrich Heinrich Jacobi, Johann Georg Haman, and later on, Goethe. She surrounded herself with a group of like-minded intellectuals, professors, and artists, which later crystallised in literary philosophical salon meetings of the Kreis von Münster, which was known for their opinions on education (with a focus on practical skills, sports, and learning living languages instead of Latin or Greek) and Catholic charity.

Like Amalia Gallitzin, Marie-Caroline Murray surrounded herself with an interesting network of successful and intellectual men. She enjoyed a lifelong warm friendship with prince de Ligne. She had consecutive friendships with the statesman Philippe Goswin, count de Nény, Guillaume Bosschaert (who later became the first director of the Brussels Museum of Fine Arts), Austrian minister plenipotentiary Count Karl Johann von Cobenzl, Portuguese ambassador José da Cunha, and the blind Duke August Engelbert of Arenberg. Unlike Gallitzin’s, Murray’s network was not a coherent circle of friends. Although some of them enjoyed the same salons (Cobenzl, de Ligne, Goswin de Nény), diplomatic circles (da Cunha, Golitsyn), or social status (de Ligne, Arenberg),
they were not all professionally or intellectually interlinked and did not subscribe to the same line of thought, ambitions, or goals like the Münster Kreis. What they did have in common was their acquaintance with and deep esteem for Marie-Caroline Murray. The extensive correspondence between Murray and Ligne, Arenberg, Nény, and Bosschaert illustrates how her intellectual qualities and intelligence was widely appreciated and sometimes even adored, as was her beauty. As her childhood ’ami de Coeur’ Nény wrote:

My dear friend, you are unique. Poets and novels never even imagined anything that looks like you, and with a little delicacy it is no longer possible to love anything when you have been loved by you. You have forever spoiled any other affair for me.  

In his short letters about the edition of a selection of his memoirs in which she assisted him, Ligne usually addressed her as the ‘woman whom I love more than those I love, and whom I admire more than those I admire.’

Yet despite their adoration, their esteem for her intellectual and artistic qualities led many of these men to solicit her help or even assistance. She not only assisted in editing Staël’s edition of de Ligne’s memoirs but also served as a literary assistant to the blind duke of Arenberg and as a préceptrice to his children. In her younger years, she was a companion to the Cobenzl children. Her relations with these men veered between friendship and patronage: musical scores written by Murray and her sister can be found in the Arenberg archive in Enghien, which suggest leisurely stays at the Arenbergs.

Nevertheless, as the passing of her father in 1779 confronted her with more financial responsibilities, Murray gradually turned into a literary assistant of the duke of Arenberg. She took care of his paperwork and prepared a lot of informative mémoires to be read to the blind duke. One of the most famous ones is the memorandum on the proposal to create a theatre in Brussels that was later presented by the duke of Arenberg, Fernand Rapedius de Berg, and Marie-Caroline Murray. The draft memorandum in the Arenberg archive shows that this proposal was entirely written by Marie-Caroline Murray. The duke showed his gratitude and admiration for all her intellectual essays and secretarial work by providing financial support and a small house in the Rue aux Laines. In 1791, during his Italian travels, he, moreover, nominated her as a member of the Accademia degli Arcadi in Rome.

Interestingly, the lack of funds actually also increased her literary activity. In the early 1780s, as she bore the brunt of her deceased father’s debts and responsibility for her sisters, the incentive to submit her work for prizes or to publish it to make a small income increased substantially. Later in life, she used her literary skills to earn a small income as a ‘literary assistant’ or tutor. As her good friend de Ligne, who saw her struggle financially in Vienna and tried to help her where possible (despite his own dire finances), wrote compassionately to her:
Be proud to be poor, dear friend, and to receive. A log of Pauline does you honour, a louis of Corinne [Madame de Staël] too. Her printer earns more than a hundred from us. How and why do you have nothing? Think about it and be proud. First England, then the Netherlands, then France and the Devil took you. Allow gratitude and admiration to take its place and pity me for not being able to make you cry [like other charitable people].

Oeuvre and Legacy

Interestingly, Amalia Gallitzin never published anything during her life. She was a keen correspondent and a mediator of ideas as a central figure of the Münster Kreis, but she never ventured to turn any of her ideas into a publication. Only after she passed away were parts of her diaries and of her correspondence with Frans Hemsterhuis published. Still, from the nineteenth century onwards, she was widely remembered, both in historiography as well as in a broader cultural legacy. Already twelve years after her death, in 1828, a biography of Amalia Gallitzin was published by Theodor Katerkamp, a professor in theology at the University of Münster who had known her personally. It is significant that even on the title page, she was remembered through her connections, as it reads: ‘Memorabilia from the life of Princess Amalia von Gallitzin, née Countess von Schmettau, with specific reference to her closest connections: Hemersthuys, Fürstenberg, Overberg and Stolberg.’ Outside Münster, in Angelmodde, where she is buried, her house was temporarily turned into a museum, remembering her and her role in the Kreis von Münster. Also, the Gallitzin-Stiftung pays testimony to her legacy to this day. The stiftung focuses on charitable work and promotes scientific work, mainly literary studies and art studies related to the cultural area of Westphalia or to Amalia Gallitzin. They also award a Gallitzin preis for dissertations on literary studies or art history.

So it seems that, despite such a limited output, Gallitzin’s high societal visibility, status, and famous friendships contributed to her lasting legacy in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. This is in sharp contrast with Marie-Caroline Murray, whose intellectual output was remarkable but whose visibility and therefore also legacy was almost non-existent.

Unlike Golitsyna, Murray was a published author in her lifetime. Initially, she wrote many poems and musical scores. Under increased financial pressure after the death of her father in 1779, she upped her publication strategy by writing laudatory pamphlets about the Austrian rulers Maria Theresa (Essai d’éloge historique de Marie Thérèse, ‘Attempt to a historical eulogy of Maria Theresa’, 1781) and Joseph II (Stances pour l’Arrivée de l’Empereur, ‘Stanzas for the Arrival of the Emperor’, 1781). These publications ensured Murray a state pension from the Austrian court. In 1785, she became the first female laureate of the Prix de l’Académie Impériale et Royale des Sciences et Belles-Lettres de
Bruxelles for her *Eloge et Mémoire historique et politique sur la vie de Jean de Carondelet* (‘Eulogy and Historical and Political Memorandum on the Life of Jean de Carondelet’). In later years, she added to this oeuvre of ‘official’ laudatory literature a *Discours sur la Mort de l’Empereur Leopold II* (‘Essay on the Death of the Emperor Leopold II’) (1792) and an *Ode sur la Mort de Cathérine II* (‘Ode on the Death of Catherine II’) (1796). In 1800, her last published work, *Aventures et anecdotes francoises tirées d’une chronique du XIV siècle* (‘French Adventures and Anecdotes Taken from a Fourteenth-Century Chronicle’), appeared in Vienna.

Apart from her published work and her unpublished poems and essays, Murray was also responsible for a considerable amount of ‘invisible’ editorial and translation work. As mentioned before, she assisted Germaine de Staël in her selection of de Ligne’s *Lettres et Pensées*. In 1772, she was approached by ambassador da Cunha to translate the poem *Os Lusiadas* (‘The Lusiads’) by the poet Luís Vas de Camoens, which resulted in her *Essai d’imitation libre de l’Episode d’Ines de Castro dans le poéme des Luziadas de Camoens* (‘Attempt at Free Imitation of the Episode of Ines de Castro in the Poem the Lusiads by Camoens’).

Other (unpublished) translations of works by Alexander Pope and Ossian have been mentioned but have not been found in her papers. Apart from her publications, Murray was also a distinguished painter and an entertaining correspondent. She discussed Voltaire and other Enlightenment thinkers in her lively letters to Cobenzl, Arenberg, Ligne, and Nény. All these activities and the interesting essays and poems she sent them contributed just as much to her reputation of *la Muse Belgique* as her printed oeuvre did.

### Intellectual Authority and Legitimising Mobility

At the outset of this chapter, I briefly mentioned the letters of the young Amalia Gallitzin to Marie-Caroline Murray. The tone in Gallitzin’s letters to Murray is different from the more reserved and intellectual tone in the correspondence of her Münster days. Her letters to Murray are those of a young woman desperate to engage in conversation and friendship with a woman well acquainted with society life. There are no intellectual references, no engaging discussions on Voltaire or Rousseau, but letters about lace cloth that has been bought or bouts of jealousy about her husband’s earlier affairs. These two women, in later years recognised by their contemporaries as intellectuals in their own right, do not seem to have discussed any literary, societal, or political topics. We of course have to take into account their age, but it seems that these women did not look at each other to legitimise their intellectual authority; this was relegated to their contacts with men. Two observations corroborate this. First, the lifelong correspondence between Golitsyna and Wilhelmina, the wife of the stadtholder, is of a comparable tone: friendly, confidential, cordial even, discussing mutual
friends and household affairs, and absolutely devoid of any literary, political, or philosophical references. This was very different from the correspondence with men like Frans Hemsterhuis, which is one long intellectual exchange.\textsuperscript{57} Second, despite her young age, Murray’s epistolary exchange with Philippe Goswin de Nény, among others, discusses his meeting Rousseau and visit to Voltaire in Ferney, which gives a good impression of the level of intellectual exchange between Nény and Murray at an age younger than when she met Gallitzin.\textsuperscript{58}

As a preliminary conclusion, male patronage seems to be an important factor used by both women to legitimise their intellectual authority. The importance of male patronage, however, does not explain the unequal legacies of Murray and Gallitzin. Other aspects like social status and geographical networks also seem to have been decisive factors in the legitimising mobility and constraints of female intellectual authority. These factors shed more light on the parallel agency and the contrasting contexts of Murray and Gallitzin’s intellectual trajectories.

Both women were well-read, gifted intellectuals in their time. Both also enjoyed the support and encouragement of a remarkably extensive network of male patrons. Gallitzin evolved from supporting her husband’s scientific efforts into being the intellectual sparring partner of Frans Hemsterhuis, and eventually became known as an intellectual in her own right at the centre of the Münster Kreis.

Murray was maybe even more established and recognised for her intellectual prowess than Gallitzin, not only because of the famous praise immortalised in prince de Ligne’s memoirs but also because of her publications on Jean de Carondelet, Empress Maria Theresa, Emperor Leopold, and Empress Catherine II, as well as her translation of Camoens and her editorial work for de Ligne and Staël. Moreover, her literary output extended far beyond her published work. Her correspondence is full of poems, essays, and reflections on societal and political questions. Murray’s friends and patrons were all part of the cosmopolitan and diplomatic elite in Brussels and later Vienna. Apart from her youthful acquaintance with Philippe Goswin de Nény, her friendship with Cobenzl, Arenberg, and de Ligne in particular implied access to the highest echelons of the Belgo-Viennese society. As pointed out in the discussion of her oeuvre, her financial vulnerability after the death of her father seems to have been an incentive to increase her literary output in order to provide an income from publications and literary prizes. Yet at the same time, the vulnerability of her social status and ‘invisible’ work as a literary assistant might also have been her undoing, as her limited legacy and absence in historiography shows.

Despite their parallel trajectories and brief acquaintance, we can thus summarise three major contrasts between these two learned women. The most obvious contrast lies in their oeuvre: Murray’s is rather extensive, and Gallitzin’s is not. A second important contrast lies in their status and financial independence. Gallitzin retained both throughout her life, while Murray lost
both in the 1770s. As Murray grew into old age, she also lost her male patronage, outliving most of her contemporaries who had supported her after her move to Vienna.\(^{59}\) This led to a third important contrast: the difference in mobility of Gallitzin and Murray. The first chose where to go and to settle socially as well as geographically (The Hague, Niethuys, Münster), whereas Murray’s geographic mobility was determined by financial constraints: she moved to the place where she could get a state pension, as this was her only source of income. This necessary move, however, placed her in a fascinating cosmopolitan setting where, together with Charles Joseph de Ligne, she found herself at the apex of a conservative counter-revolutionary network that would later determine the outcome of the Vienna Congress.\(^{60}\)

This late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century European setting, in which these women negotiated their intellectual authority, men still set the intellectual norm. Based on the parallel trajectories and contrasting contexts of Amalia Gallitzin and Marie-Caroline Murray discussed in this chapter, one can conclude that legitimising mobility was fostered by social status, male patronage, and geographical network rather than by their oeuvre. Gallitzin’s legacy as Hemsterhuis’s ‘Diotime’ and as the central figure in the Kreis von Münster legitimised her intellectual authority. Despite being a published author and well-known *homme de lettres*, Murray faced social dependence, the loss of male patronage, and subsequent disappearance of her network in old age. These major constraints obliterated the legacy of *la Muse Belgique*. 
Notes


5. As the wife of Prince Dmitrii Alekseevich Golitsyn, her official name was Princess Amalia Golitsyna, yet due to her time in Münster, she is more commonly known under the German version of her name, Amalia Gallitzin. Since most of her legacy, like the Gallitzin Haus, the Nachlass Gallitzin, and the Gallitzin Fund, is known under this name and distinguishes her from her husband Dmitrii Golitsyn, we will use her ‘German’ name in this chapter.


15. ‘Mon grand-Père qui quoique militaire était un homme de lettres distingué’ (Marie-Caroline Murray on her grandfather and his library, State Archives, AGR LA 10092).


17. ‘Je ne connais pas un homme de lettres aussi distingué que Mlle Murray: toutes les littératures de toutes les langues, l’histoire parfaitement, le gout, le jugement, les plus jolis vers qu’on puisse faire. Mme de Genlis et de Staël n’ont font pas. Autrefois Mme de La Fayette et de Riccoboni non plus. Les Deshoulières et la Suze n’en faiasaient que trop, mais point de romans. Mme Dacier savait le grec mais point le français. Ainsi, je puis assurer que toutes les femmes-auteurs peuvent être que ses dames de palais’ (Prince Charles Joseph de Ligne and Félicien Leuridant (ed.), Fragments de l’histoire de ma vie, vol. 2, Paris, Plon, 1928, 8).

18. Vienna, Österreichisches Staatsarchiv, Finanz- und Hofkammerarchiv, Kamerale rote Nummer 2308, 2309, 2310.


20. Antoine Hennequin de Villermont, Le Comte de Cobenzl, Bruges, Desclée, de Brouwer et Cie, 1925, 247–248. Unfortunately for Murray, the spendthrift Cobenzl left massive debts after he passed away, and she was asked to restore the ring to meet the urgent demands of his debtors. On his financial affairs, see Duquenne’s article, ‘Le prince Dmitri Galitzine (1734–1803)’.


22. ‘Paquet et pièces secrets au Prince d’Orange qui ne doit être ouvert que par lui’ and ‘Mon trésor Immortel’ (Royal House Archive, Letter from Willem V, A31, 92). For the correspondence with Wilhelmina, see Koninklijk Huisarchief A 32, 147, 148.

23. Golitsyn and Diderot’s friendship dated back to ten years earlier, when Golitsyn was a young diplomat in Paris. Diderot had been invited several times to Russia before, the first time in 1762, when he wrote to his friend Sophie Volland: ‘j’ai oublié de dire que j’ai reçu, il y a une quinzaine de jours, par le prince Gallitzin, une invitation, de la part de l’impératrice regnante de Russie, d’aller achever notre ouvrage à Petersbourg’ (Denis Diderot to Sophie Volland, Paris, October 3, 1762, in J. Assezat et M. Tourneux (eds.), Oeuvres complètes de Diderot, vol. XIX, Paris, Garnier, 1875, 145–146).

24. ‘C’est une femme très-vive, très-gaie, très-spirituelle, et d’une figure assez aimable; plus qu’assez jeune, instruite et pleine de talents; elle a lu; elle sait plusieurs langues; c’est l’usage des Allemandes; elle joue du clavecin et chante comme un ange; elle est pleine de mots ingénus et piquants; elle est très-bonne: […] Elle a d’une extrême sensibilité; elle en a même un peu trop pour son bonheur. Comme elle a des connaissances et de la justesse, elle dispute comme un petit lion. Je l’aime à la folie, et je vis entre le prince et sa femme, comme entre un bon frère et une bonne sœur’ (Denis Diderot to Sophie Volland, La Haye, July 22, 1772, in Assezat and Tourneux, Oeuvres complètes, vol. XIX, 341–343).

25. When Diderot heard the news of their betrothal and received three letters by Golitsyn and his new wife, he wrote to Sophie Volland on August 24, 1768: ‘J’ai reçu trois lettres d’Aix-la-Chapelle; deux du prince, une de sa femme. J’ai bien peur que Mme la princesse Gallitzin ne soit une mauvaise tête. Imaginez que sa lettre est anonyme; qu’elle contient la satire d’elle-même la plus sanglante, la moins ménagée et la plus indécente; et cela avec tant de sérieux et de vérité, que, si le prince ne m’eut pas dit le mot de l’épigne, je m’y serais trompé, et j’en aurais à coup sûr conçu la plus cruelle inquiétude. Que dites-vous
de cette bizarrerie ? Cette lettre est incroyable. Il faut la voir. Grimm, à qui je l’ai montrée, doute encore qu’elle soit d’elle, en dépit de l’avis du prince qui ne permet pas d’en douter. On me recommande fort de ne la communiquer à personne, parce qu’elle pourrait compromettre la réputation de la femme et du mari. Madame Galitzin ! et si, par hasard, on l’avait décachetée à la poste ? Vous penserez comme moi qu’avec un peu de sens, d’esprit et de dignité, on n’aurait point eu recours à une espièglerie aussi maussade, dans une circonstance sérieuse et qui prêtait par elle-même à des choses tendres, douces, honnêtes, touchantes et délicates. Au milieu de son ivresse, le prince ne me paraît pas sans quelque souci sur un mariage contracté avant d’avoir obtenu le consentement de sa famille et l’agrément de sa cour. Mais il croit qu’on le boudera pendant quelque temps et qu’ensuite tout ira bien’ (Denis Diderot to Sophie Volland, Paris, August 24, 1768, in Assezat and Tourneux, *Oeuvres complètes*, vol. XIX, 265–269).


27. ‘Je reçois vos lettres toujours avec un nouveau transport de joie! Le plaisir qu’elles me causent a enfin décidé l’incertitude dans laquelle j’étais toujours encore si je devois bénir ou pleurer l’instant où j’ai fait votre connaissance. Les regrets que notre séparation me donne m’avais presque fait désirer de ne vous avoir jamais connue, mais ma consolation est dans vos lettres. […] Je suis ravie de voir que vous rendez à mes sentiments, la justice d’être persuadé que jamais je puis vous effacer de mon cœur. Vous y tenez le haut bout et y êtes si profondément gravé qu’il y a que l’impitoyable mort qui puisse vous en arracher’ (Galitzin to Murray, Vienna, January 23, 1769, ARG MG 7451/05).

28. Gallitzin’s correspondence is kept in the Gallitzin-Nachlass in the Universitäts- und Landesbibliothek Münster. No letters from Murray have been found there.

29. ‘venez-y pour ne vous en séparer jamais’ (Gallitzin to Murray, Berlin, February 28, 1770, AGR Arenberg MG 7451–04).

30. ‘Cette demoiselle était la fille d’un avocat et devint la maîtresse du Comte da Cunha, envoyé de Portugal. Je demanderai à M. le baron Chambrer, ce que ce méchant homme est devenu, la première fois qu’il voudra bien me venir voir’ (Isabelle de Charrière to Jean-Pierre de Chambrer d’Oleyres, July, 15, 1802, in Candaux, *Oeuvres complètes*, vol. 6, 501).


34. They remained in correspondence about their children, especially when worries arose about their youngest son, Dmitrii, who travelled to America in 1792 and decided then and there to become a Catholic priest and to settle in the Alleghanies.

voudrait bien faire penser de lui. L'empereur aime plutôt à faire penser qu'il fait que de faire lui-même en effet. Ce n'est pas une tête, ce n'est que du fumo [...] (August Fournier, Die Geheimpolizei auf dem Wiener Kongreß. Eine Auswahl aus ihren Papieren, Vienna, Tempsky, 1913, 305).


37. Skocpol and Somers, 'The Uses of Comparative History'.

38. 'La politique me tourne la tête Monsieur le Duc, ou pour mieux dire, le désir de deviner votre volonté et de les exécuter [...] j'ai entrepris la réponse, la critique, l'analyse à tous ce qui vous plaiera, de l'ouvrage de Mirabeaux [sic], cette étrange entreprise datte de hier, et j'ai écrit déjà quatorze pages [...] Berg à qui j'ai lu ce matin mon ouvrage, soutient que cela n'est pas si bête, et en conséquence il m'enverra demain votre secrétaire pour copier d'abord ce commencement afin de vous l'envoyer tout de suite pour que vous jugiez s'il vaut la peine de continuer' (Murray to Arenberg, May 6, 1785, AGR MG 7450/01).

39. Vienna, Österreicherischs Staatsarchiv, Finanz- und Hofkammerarchiv, Kamerale rote Nummer 2308, 2309, 2310.

40. 'Ma chère amie, vous êtes unique. Les poètes et les romans n'ont même jamais rien imaginé qui vous ressemble, et avec un peu de délicatesse il n'est plus possible de rien aimer quand on a été aimé de vous. Vous m'avez gâté à jamais tout autre liaison' (Nény to Murray, July 1, 1766, MG 7452/3).

41. 'Femme que j'aime plus que celles que j'aime, et que j'admire plus que celles que j'admire' (Ligne to Murray, lost letter quoted in Jeroom Vercruysse, 'Le Portefeuille de Marie-Caroline Murray', 75).

42. And later, in Vienna again, she was dame de compagnie of Cobenzl's daughter, the comtesse de Thiennes de Rumbeke (known in Vienna as 'Madame Rombec'), see Georges Engelbert, 'Une amie de Prince de Ligne et dame cosmopolite au XVIIIème siècle: la Comtesse Charlotte de Thiennes de Rumbeke née Cobenzl', in Nouvelles Annales Prince de Ligne, 1998, 12, 145–165.


This work was published a year later, in 1786: Marie-Caroline Murray, *Éloge et Mémoire historique et politique sur la vie de Jean de Carondelet*, Brussels, Antoine d’Ours, 1786.

Murray wrote the ode to Catherine II as part of a literary contest in Hamburg, where she stayed briefly after she had fled Brussels, probably out of financial necessity. She did not win the first prize, but her ode was published in *Monument littéraire consacré aux mānes de l’auguste Catherine II, imperatrice de toutes les Russies*, Hamburg, s.l., 1798.


Lepeer, *Marie-Caroline Murray*, 40, 44.

State Archives, Arenberg Archive, MG 7450,02; MG 7450,03.

Eleven of these letters are in the State Archive, AGR MG 7451/04.

Gallitzin to Murray, 1769–1770, AGR MG 7451–04.


Like his brother Louis Engelbert Arenberg, Auguste Marie Raymond Arenberg, known as the comte de la Marck, rented a house for Murray where she could live in Vienna. See Leuridant, *A propos de la première anthologie*, 10, and Vercruysse, ‘Le Portefeuille de Marie-Caroline Murray’, 86.