“[S]ome employment in the translating Way”: Economic Imperatives in Charlotte Lennox’s Career as a Translator

Marianna D’Ezio

Although motivated by a genuine passion for writing, money was a constant and pressing issue in Charlotte Lennox’s (1730?-1804) career as a writer, as well as in her personal life. In 1747 she married Alexander Lennox, an employee of the printer William Strahan, but their union was unfortunate, especially with regards to financial matters. Lennox eventually achieved much-coveted recognition with the success of her novel *The Female Quixote*, published anonymously in 1752. However, her work as a translator is an aspect of her literary career that has not been adequately researched, and indeed began as merely a way to overcome the distressing financial situation of her family. This essay examines Lennox’s activity as a translator as impelled by her perpetual need for money, within a cultural milieu that allowed her to be in contact with the most influential intellectuals of her time, including Samuel Richardson, Samuel Johnson, Giuseppe Baretti (who likely taught her Italian), and David Garrick, who produced her comedy *Old City Manners* at Drury Lane (1775) and assisted her in the publication of *The Female Quixote*.

Diamonds may do for a girl, but an agent is a woman writer’s best friend

SANDRA CISNEROS, *The House on Mango Street* (1984)

In the last years of her life, Charlotte Ramsay Lennox received an anonymous letter. Its purpose was to reprimand one of the most successful British women writers of the eighteenth century for having become inappropriately shabby, noting that “Several Ladies who met M^{rs} Lennox at M^r Langton’s were astonish’d

FIGURE 9.1 Portrait of Charlotte Lennox (née Ramsay) by Francesco Bartolozzi, after Sir Joshua Reynolds, stipple engraving, published 1793.

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to see a Gentlewoman's hands in such a horrid order". The author of the letter continued to advise that she "for God's sake wash them & rub back the skin at the roots of the Nails", and ironically – if not cruelly – closes the short epistle by signing it as "a friend" who is pitilessly offering "a hint".¹ Lennox had recently applied to the Royal Literary Fund to obtain financial support for what another anonymous correspondent described, in a letter of recommendation

¹ Anon. to Charlotte Lennox, possibly between 1795 and 1801, MS Eng 1269 (47), Houghton Library, Harvard University, reprinted in *Charlotte Lennox. Correspondence and Miscellaneous Documents* ed. Norbert Schürer, Lewisburg 2012, 245–46. Before Schürer's first comprehensive edition, Lennox's correspondence could only be found in Miriam Rossiter Small, *Charlotte Ramsay Lennox: An Eighteenth-Century Woman of Letters*, New Haven 1935, and especially Duncan Isles, "The Lennox Collection" *Harvard Library Bulletin*, xviii/4 (October 1970), 317–44; xix/1 (January 1971), 36–60; xix/2 (April 1971), 165–86; xix/4 (October 1971), 416–35.

to the committee, as “very great want, poverty & distress”.² Receiving such an outrageous note from “a friend” must have represented the public sanction of a desperate situation which was not likely to change. Notwithstanding the allowance she received from the Royal Literary Fund, which stood as “Ten Guineas” in May 1792, “Twelve” in August 1793, “Ten Pounds” in January 1802, and “Seven [additional] Guineas” in March of the same year³ until the final decision of granting her “1 Guinea a week”,⁴ Lennox died miserably poor on 3 January 1804.

One may wonder at the reasons behind Lennox's failure in accomplishing some kind of economic stability, since she had pursued all the possibilities for financial reward that the eighteenth-century book market could offer an author: patronage (both royal and private), literary peerage, publication by subscription, and well-placed connections with “the male literary establishment of editors, printers, and authors”.⁵ Furthermore, she had tried her hand at a large number of genres, particularly in translation, and selected those that appeared to be more remunerative to ride the wave of literary trends that might guarantee marketable products to the booksellers. Lennox's situation was not too dissimilar from the stereotype of Grub Street hacks, as her mentor Samuel Johnson knew very well. Evidently, not being an aristocrat who could cultivate writing as a mere pastime, she *did* need to write to make a living, although her status as a woman writer contributed little to relieve her economic position (see figure 9.1.). Additionally, she also faced difficulties in her marriage, with her husband, Alexander Lennox, seemingly unable to assist her and their two children in providing life necessities. When considering the limitations of her surroundings – a male-dominated literary marketplace, the challenges of being legitimised as

2 “Mrs Charlotte Lennox, Authoress of *The Female Quixote*, *Euphemia*, *Eliza*, *The Translation of Sully's Memoirs*, *Madame La Valiere's Meditations &c.* – Brumoire's [sic] *Greek Theatre*, &c.&c.&c.&c. ... is now Living, though at an extremely advanced age, & in very great want, poverty & distress – She has always been highly regarded by people of the first distinction & particularly so, by the late Duke & Duchess of Newcastle”. Anonymous Letter of Recommendation, May 1792, reprinted in Schürer, *Charlotte Lennox*, 253–54.

3 Lady Frances Chambers requested that the “7 guineas additional” [double underlining in the original, MDE] be immediately given to Charlotte Lennox, “too ill & now too old to be able to assist herself in any way”, for her “immediate relief” in consideration of her “great distress for the common necessities of life”. Lady Frances Chambers to David Williams, 20 January 1802, reprinted in Schürer, *Charlotte Lennox*, 273–74. At the time “a guinea (£1 1s) was the minimum annual contribution possible” (Schürer, *Charlotte Lennox*, 259 n. 5) that the Royal Literary Fund would grant. Since Lennox apparently received much more money than it was usually conceded, we may assume that her case was indeed desperate.

4 All documents and minutes of meetings related to Charlotte Lennox's Royal Literary Fund Case File have been reprinted in Schürer, *Charlotte Lennox*, 247–305.

5 Dustin Griffin, *Literary Patronage in England, 1650–1800*, Cambridge 1996, 191.

a professional and independent woman writer, the wretched condition of an unfortunate marriage, and her particularly quarrelsome attitude to boot – the reality that the book market of the time did not provide her with financial stability is not too implausible. However, I argue that the main justification for Charlotte Lennox's failure to achieve financial independence was instead connected to the impossibility for a woman writer and translator to move away from the system of patronage to gain independence as a professional author in her own right, and even start her own literary enterprise. Disillusioned by her failed attempt to emancipate herself from the patrons and publishers she appeased in the first half of her career, Lennox longed to be in charge of her own periodical and to have the copyright to her own writings. It stands to reason that the restrictions placed on eighteenth-century women writers solely functioned to prevent their acknowledgement as self-determining authors.

By looking at Lennox's career as a translator, this chapter will show that overcoming her economic imperatives did not help Lennox either to overcome the limitations imposed on her sex. In her case, she was eventually defeated by the boundaries of double-edged limitations: at once, a needy author writing for money, and a woman writer struggling to find a niche in the male domain of published literature.

Lennox and Patronage

Unlike the wealthy Elizabeth Montagu, "Queen of the Bluestockings" and one of the distinguished "Nine Living Muses of Great Britain",⁶ Lennox came from a different background which may partly explain her adverse relationships with a number of contemporary women writers. The daughter of a Captain of an independent company, Charlotte Ramsay was born (possibly) in Gibraltar in 1729 or 1730, moved to New York in 1739, and returned to Britain to live with a wealthy aunt in Essex after her father's death in 1743. Her aunt was ultimately the only person left in the family who could provide a shelter for her. At the age of thirteen, Charlotte found upper-class support for the first time. She left the guardianship of her aunt because the latter "had either gone insane or died",⁷

6 The "Nine Living Muses of Great Britain", namely Elizabeth Carter, Anna Letitia Barbauld, Angelika Kauffmann, Elizabeth Linley, Catharine Macaulay, Elizabeth Montagu, Elizabeth Griffith, Hannah More, and Charlotte Lennox, were the subject of a famous painting by Richard Samuel (1779) originally titled "Portraits in the Characters of the Muses in the Temple of Apollo", now housed at the National Portrait Gallery of London.

7 Schürer, *Charlotte Lennox*, xxx.

and went under the protection of Isabella Finch, Lady of the Bedchamber to Princesses Amelia (Emily) and Caroline. Lady Isabella had her own private library and was well connected, both at Court and among the intellectual elite of London, as her lodgings in No. 44, Berkeley Street attracted learned visitors ranging from Lady Mary Wortley Montagu to Horace Walpole.

Being admitted to such exclusive coteries of first-rank intellectuals and patrons of the arts was “by any reckoning an auspicious start to a literary career”,⁸ and prompted Lennox’s first literary endeavour, which was dedicated to Lady Isabella and possibly aimed at publicly recognising “the obligations you have conferr’d on me”.⁹ In 1747, although the author signed her dedication to *Poems on Several Occasions* as “Charlotte Ramsay”, she had already married Alexander Lennox, who later proved to be “the most ungrateful of men”¹⁰ and “a most unnatural father”¹¹ and yet, at the time of their marriage, was a competent employee of London printer William Strahan.¹²

Her “low” marriage with Lennox could have been reason for the reluctance of her first benefactor to continue patronage. She was forced to find other ways to sustain herself and her husband, such as acting in performances at Richmond in the years 1748–50, still under the name of Charlotte Ramsay. In the same period, she befriended Samuel Johnson and was introduced to his entourage in a famous episode at the Ivy Lane Club, where the Doctor promoted a “whole night of festivities” to celebrate Lennox’s first novel *Henrietta*, and thus sanctioned her official “admission” into the literary arena.¹³ This episode was symbolic in many ways. On one hand, being literally “crowned” as an author allowed Lennox to identify herself as a professional writer who could follow in the footsteps of her mentors – Samuel Johnson, David Garrick, James Boswell and Samuel Richardson – and aim to become a waged producer of the new commodity of her age: the novel. From that moment, she might have started to view herself, and her career, as ambitiously turning from a mercenary writer still learning the ropes, to a specialised author whose financial reward would guarantee her a solid literary reputation. On the other hand, however, as

8 Norma Clarke, *Dr Johnson's Women*, London 2000, 68.

9 [Charlotte Lennox], *Poems on Several Occasions: Written by a Young Lady*, London 1747.

10 Charlotte Lennox to James Dodsley, 30 January 1793, MS Hyde 10 (413), Houghton Library, Harvard University, reprinted in Schürer, *Charlotte Lennox*, 214–16.

11 Charlotte Lennox to [Richard Johnson], 22 August 1793, Royal Literary Fund Archive, reprinted in Schürer, *Charlotte Lennox*, 234–36.

12 For full biographical details on Lennox see Small, *Charlotte Ramsay Lennox*; Isles, “The Lennox Collection”, and Schürer, *Charlotte Lennox*. Susan Carlile has recently published a new biography entitled *Charlotte Lennox. An Independent Mind*, Toronto 2018.

13 The whole story is narrated in Sir John Hawkins, *The Life of Johnson, LL.D.*, ed. O.M. Brack, Jr., Athens and London 2009, 286–87.

Catherine Gallagher has clearly demonstrated, her “entrance into the world of letters” was *also* perceived by those attending the ceremony with uneasiness, since “the respectable domestication of female authorship” represented by Lennox’s sanctioned position as an intellectual occurred at “the Devil’s tavern” and rather resembled a “debauch”.¹⁴ This “double” attitude of her contemporaries towards Lennox’s position as a woman writer characterized her entire literary career, which was dominated by both the need for money and the want of recognition as an author legitimised by her own professional writing.

Lennox’s official acknowledgement implied a reassessment of her literary reputation based on the assumption that prestigious, aristocratic patronage was *one* facet of the manifold options the book market had to offer. Publishers and booksellers, she realised, could also be “patrons” themselves. In order to establish a solid network of associations with the most prominent publishers of the time, she had to reconsider which literary genres could allow her secure and profitable publications, as well as a stable status in the literary marketplace. Indeed, novels could be rewarding; however, they were neither a “safe” genre through which to establish a significant reputation, nor would they promise a permanent source of income.¹⁵ Lennox therefore launched into a versatile literary career, which only partially consecrated her name as a novelist – in fact she only wrote six novels¹⁶ – and instead included works ranging from collections of poems, plays, serialised essays, a periodical, and translations. In keeping with the stereotype of the Grub Street author, she modelled herself after Dr Johnson, the “patronless poet [who] had become virtuous through privateness and privation”.¹⁷ Lennox also fashioned her own “public” figure through the rhetoric of underestimating her own skills, as in the following excerpt from one of her letters to Samuel Johnson:

Tho I am far from thinking writing my talent [and] I am sure it is not my inclination, yet since my ill[ness o]ne has made it the only means of my

14 Catherine Gallagher, *Nobody's Story. The Vanishing Act of Women Writers in the Marketplace, 1670–1820*, Berkeley and Los Angeles 1994, 145–47.

15 As a matter of fact, “[t]he average copyright fee from one novel was roughly equivalent to the annual wages of a laundry, scullery, or dairy maid, and therefore entirely inadequate [...]”. To obtain a respectable income of at least £50 per annum, a novelist would have to write and publish as many as ten novels a year”, Cheryl Turner, *Living by the Pen. Women Writers in the Eighteenth Century*, London and New York 1992, 116.

16 In chronological order: *The Life of Harriot Stuart*, London 1750; *The Female Quixote*, London 1752; *Henrietta*, London 1758; *Sophia*, London 1762; *The History of Eliza*, London 1767; *Euphemia*, London 1790. On the authorship of *The History of Eliza*, see Norbert Schürer, “A New Novel by Charlotte Lennox”, *Notes & Queries* n.s. 48/4 (December 2001), 419–22.

17 Gallagher, *Nobody's Story*, 151.

Subsistence [at] present if you think me not wholly unworthy of your recommendation I woud [sic] intreat your interest with the Booksellers to procure me some employment in the translating Way, as this woud [sic] be a great deal easier then [sic] Composition, I am perswaided [sic] can make it as advantagious [sic] by industry and having been already engagd [sic] in it know what I am capable of doing by proper application [...].¹⁸

Samuel Johnson was not the only literary peer Lennox asked to negotiate with publishers to “procure [her] some employment in the translating Way”, especially between the decades of 1750 and 1770, when the pace of her literary activity was at its peak. In 1751, Lennox had lamented “the Condition to which fortune [had] reduced [her]” to Samuel Richardson, himself a printer. Feeling “wholly unfit [...] to struggle with the mortif[ic]ations of a dependant State”,¹⁹ she took the liberty to send him the second volume of *The Female Quixote* to solicit his opinion on it.

Besides mentoring his young protégée,²⁰ Richardson also enthusiastically provided work for Lennox. In April 1752, he wrote to mediate between her and Robert Dodsley concerning the translation of Voltaire's *Siècle de Louis XIV* (1751),²¹ which was her first, official work as a translator, although her name did not appear in the printed edition.²² This experience not only emphasised the nature of a translator's work as something accomplished “behind the scenes”, with little or no public recognition, but also taught Lennox the hardships of the “translating Way”. Richardson wrote to propose the endeavour at the beginning

18 Charlotte Lennox to [Samuel Johnson], 3 February 1752, MS held at the Chicago Historical Society, reprinted in Schürer, *Charlotte Lennox*, 23–25.

19 Charlotte Lennox to [Samuel Richardson], 21 November 1751, TS 934.5, III, 296 (TSM 394.39), Harvard Theatre Collection, Houghton Library, Harvard University, reprinted in Schürer, *Charlotte Lennox*, 8–10.

20 “You are a young Lady have therefore much time before you, and I am sure, will think that a good Fame will be your Interest. Make therefore, your present work [i.e. *The Female Quixote*] as complete as you can, in two Volumes; and it will give Consequence to your future Writings, and of course to your Name as a Writer”. Samuel Richardson to Charlotte Lennox, 13 January 1752, MS Eng 1269 (19), Houghton Library, Harvard University, reprinted in Schürer, *Charlotte Lennox*, 21–22.

21 “Madam, M^r. Dodsley has a small Thing to translate from the French with Dispatch. You have asked me if I knew of any thing of that kind. I know not a better Writer, nor a worthier Bookseller, to recommend to each other, than Mrs. Lennox and Mr. Dodsley”. Samuel Richardson to Charlotte Lennox, 6 April 1752, MS Eng 1269 (20), Houghton Library, Harvard University, reprinted in Schürer, *Charlotte Lennox*, 34–35. Lennox's translation was published by Robert Dodsley in July 1752 as *The Age of Louis XIV. Translated from the French of M. De Voltaire*.

22 In 1751 she had already published extracts of her translation of the French *Memoires de Maximilien de Bethune* (see below) in one volume as *The Memoirs of the Duke of Sully*;

of April 1752, and her translation appeared in July of the same year: Lennox thus took around two months to complete her *Age of Lewis XIV*, which was published in two volumes. Meanwhile, the second edition of her most successful novel, *The Female Quixote*, was under publication (it appeared on 2 July) and – as her correspondence with one of her collaborators, John Boyle, Earl of Cork and Orrery, dated May 1752, shows – she had also started the project *Shakespear Illustrated*.

In his way, Johnson proved extremely helpful in another direction – that is, writing dedications for her works. As Schürer notes, Fleeman listed seven recognisable dedications that Johnson wrote for Lennox's publications.²³ Accordingly, Johnson further promoted her fame among his circles of friends and intellectuals, and encouraged their illustrious and genuine concern for her career. Oliver Goldsmith, for example, wrote the epilogue to her comedy *The Sister* (1769), based on her novel *Henrietta*, although the play failed ignominiously and was withdrawn after its first performance at Covent Garden. David Garrick patronised the staging of her play *Old City Manners* (1775)²⁴ at Drury Lane, and other intellectuals, writers, or simply amateurs contributed to Lennox's translations and to her periodical *The Lady's Museum*. Interestingly, she found herself surrounded by male contributors. In the development of her career, which ran parallel to the polishing of her skills and objectives, her collaborators also transitioned from the literary patrons of the London literary scene, such as Johnson, Richardson, and Goldsmith, to young writers seeking their fortune who she herself patronised and mentored.

While Lennox elbowed her way through the literary marketplace of eighteenth-century London to procure work to subsidise her family income, it is difficult not to conceive of her success without observing her reliance on

During his Residence at the English Court; to which he was sent Ambassador from Henry IV. of France, upon the Accession of King James the First, London 1751, and Dublin 1751. According to Schürer, "the question of whether Lennox also translated that version will probably never find a satisfactory answer" (57 n. 2). However, since the two translations are very similar to each other, it is quite obvious that Lennox worked on both.

23 John David Fleeman, *A Bibliography of the Works of Samuel Johnson*, 2 vols, Oxford 2000, I, 709–12. See also Allan Hazen, *Samuel Johnson's Prefaces and Dedications*, New Haven 1937. Johnson wrote dedications for *The Female Quixote*, *Shakespear Illustrated*, *Henrietta*, *Philander*, *The Greek Theatre of Father Brumoy*, *The Memoirs of the Duke of Sulby*, and *Memoirs for the History of Madame de Maintenon* (Schürer, *Charlotte Lennox*, xxxvii).

24 *Old City Manners. A comedy. Altered from the original Eastward Hoe, written by Ben Jonson, Chapman, and Marston. By Mrs Lennox. As it is performed at the Theatre-Royal, in Drury-Lane*, London 1775, was an adaptation of the Jacobean play *Eastward Ho!* (1605) by George Chapman, Ben Jonson, and John Marston. It was successfully performed at Drury Lane six times in November 1775 and then published at the end of the month.

more traditional patrons: aristocrats. In fact, the (anonymous) publication of her *Poems* in 1747, dedicated to Lady Isabella Finch, her admittance to Samuel Johnson's own "court" of literati, and Lennox's reliance on Johnson's fame and judgment could not fully guarantee her access to the literary scene as a professional: she needed the official sanction of the court environment. Lennox's career as a writer, and especially as a professional translator, significantly evolved parallel to the prestige bestowed by those to whom she dedicated her works (through Johnson). Her ascent in the London literary milieu of the mid-eighteenth century, which proceeded very rapidly and employed aristocrats' support, in fact reached its climax with the most remarkable patrons – the Duke of Newcastle and Queen Charlotte – to then decline when she purposefully and mindfully emancipated from patronage to establish herself as an independent, professional author. In other words, her career – and consequently her income – worsened when she defied the establishment and attempted an autonomous career as a woman writer and literary entrepreneur. A focus on translation when considering her production is therefore particularly relevant, since, as M. Pieretti put it, translating was "both [...] an emblem of the female condition and [...] a writing strategy that empowered women writers to assume a more central role in the published writings of the eighteenth century" as a practice "that would [...] challenge limits imposed on women writers".²⁵ Firstly limited only to the "proper" spheres of literature to which a woman writer could apply and translate – French novels, rather than Greek and Latin classics, which were male dominions – translation became Lennox's tool to unfetter both her creativity and her critical opinion on a literary scene dominated by men, and aspire to a recognised status. The "hybridity" of translation as a professional activity represented an essential means to define such status, and at the same time described Lennox's *own* hybrid position in eighteenth-century London: poised between professionalism, dilettantism, social classes, patronage, sponsors, and constantly in search of a role for herself as a woman writer aware of her position and potential, as well as her limited prospects.

From Patronage to Independence: The Role of Translation

Lennox's early attempts at translation convinced her that, as well as being a successful novelist, she could also become a "labourer" of the book market.

25 Marie-Pascale Pieretti, "Women Writers and Translation in Eighteenth-Century France", *The French Review*, LXV/3 (February 2002), 474–75.

Novel writing could expose her to public credit, but also wrath and prejudice. The failure of her comedy *The Sister*, in 1762, emphasised that although “some [playwrights] of her own Sex”²⁶ had achieved success by writing for the stage (for example, Elizabeth Inchbald), respectability and consistency were also essential to her profession, guided as it was by economic imperatives. Undoubtedly, a career in translation, once she had found the “right” sponsors, could be equal to a steady occupation, a proper *job* in its own right; however, despite the demands of the reading public of her time, Lennox was well aware of the risks that female translators could run by selecting “inappropriate” sources. In 1785, for example, Charlotte Smith was forced to withdraw her translation of Prevost's *Manon Lescaut* because many considered it an immoral novel.²⁷ Most of the translations Lennox undertook in the years between 1753 and 1760, as Norma Clarke remarks, were “serious works of scholarship”²⁸ by which Lennox intended to establish her fame and, at the same time, claim a niche for herself as a professional woman writer.

Her early experiences as a translator served the purpose of carving out a position in the book market that offered both monetary reward and public visibility. Furthermore, as Pieretti suggests, since translation was perceived as “an endeavour demanding less talent and fewer qualifications than other literary activities,”²⁹ Lennox could justify her presence in the male-dominated domains of high literature after having acquired prestige with her publication of *The Female Quixote*. The book translated “by the Author of the Female Quixote”, *The Memoirs of Maximilian de Bethune, Duke of Sully*,³⁰ was published by Millar in London in 1755. It was very popular and had numerous editions (both official and pirate), which attest to its reputation. Additionally, together with the previous abridged edition of *Sully* (1751, also possibly translated by Lennox) and her *Age of Lewis XIV*, she had decisively oriented her translating career to

26 Charlotte Lennox to [David Garrick], 25 October 1768, Add.Ms. 29300, f.45, Department of Manuscripts, British Library, reprinted in Schürer, *Charlotte Lennox*, 115–17.

27 For further examples, see Maristella Trulli, “La traduzione tra trasgressione e formazione: Charlotte Lennox e le altre”, in *Traduttrici. Questioni di gender nelle letterature di lingua inglese*, ed. Oriana Palusci, Naples 2010, 67.

28 Clarke, *Dr Johnson's Women*, 117.

29 Pieretti, “Women Writers”, 476.

30 *Memoirs of Maximilian de Bethune, Duke of Sully, Prime Minister to Henry the Great. Containing The History of the Life and Reign of that Monarch, And his own Administration under Him. Translated from the French, by the Author of the Female Quixote. To which is added, the Tryal of Ravallac for the Murder of Henry the Great. In Five Volumes*, London 1756. The French *Memoires de Maximilien de Bethune, Duc de Sully, Principal Ministre de Henry le Grand* (1745) was itself an adaptation of Sully's own *Memoires* (1638) by Pierre Mathurin de l'Écluse des Loges.

“safer” genres – in this case, historical memoirs. Lennox’s first experience in translation had thus been one of preparation, and had had a positive outcome. *Sully* became her official introduction into the realm of translation, more so than through novel writing. As she had produced the (anonymous) publication of extracts, the book only needed the endorsement of an influential patron to ensure undisputed success. *Sully* was dedicated to the Duke of Newcastle, then Prime Minister, and it was Samuel Johnson – more skilled at this kind of literary practice – who wrote the dedication.

At the time of its publication, *Sully* provided Lennox with agreeable consequences, that is, “a most liberal present” from the Duke, who “declared that he would recommend her to the King as a person who well deserved a pension”.³¹ However, on a more practical level it seems that she struggled to obtain full payment for it. In a letter to Millar, she pleads for the money owed for her translation; the letter also exemplifies the difficulty of negotiating this business with publishers and booksellers, since on one side she clearly makes her point about being paid, while on the other is mindful of her reliance on Miller for further work:

Sir,

I hope you will not think it an unseasonable importunity, if now that I have entirly finishd [sic] my work, I beg the favour to see you to morrow or next day as it shall suit your conveniency. I was resolved, however pressing my exigencies might be, that I would not trouble you as I have too often done with application for money before it was due, and althoug[h] I have now completed the work, I would wait your leisure, were it not for a disagreeable circumstance that forces me to solicit you to come sooner than you without knowing my reasons probably intended.

[...] Do not imagine I want to importune you, but let me say this once that [...] the Work I proposed [i.e. her next translation], which I am sure will be an advantageous [sic] to you, I will undertake it with more chearfulness [sic] than ever I did any thing in my life.³²

31 Griffin, *Literary Patronage*, 206. Griffin also clarifies (206–7) that “[r]oyal pensions paid to other writers in the 1750s and 1760s commonly amounted to £200 to £300 per annum, and at this point Charlotte Lennox would have probably found such an amount sufficient to support herself and her husband”.

32 Charlotte Lennox to [Andrew Millar], 28 July 1755, Ms.Montagu d.8, ff.124–26v., Bodleian Library, Oxford, reprinted in Schürer, *Charlotte Lennox*, 55–59.

Despite such monetary hindrances, Lennox's launched her career as a translator, and she safely relied on translation as a source of income. Such endeavour, which Mirella Agorni defines as a "secondary activity", given the "derivative nature of translation",³³ broadened Lennox's network of high-rank relationships and provided her and her family with the economic support they needed. The Duke and Duchess of Newcastle in fact later arranged for Lennox to live in apartments in Somerset House for several years. This occurred after the publication of a new edition of Lennox's third novel *Henrietta* (1758), dedicated to the Duchess as a "debt of gratitude" which the author was "impatient to pay".³⁴ However, it is still unclear and puzzling to Lennox's scholars that she unceremoniously declined the Duke's offer to recommend her to the King for a pension in favour of her husband, for whom "she solicited a place, which the Duke promised to procure him the first opportunity".³⁵ She nonetheless regretted this decision later in life, when out of job, in need for money, and "break[ing] through decorums" she would address several former patrons, literary peers, and publishers, and literally beg them to procure some work to save her and her son – her daughter had died in 1783 at the age of 17 – from destitution:

Sir,

It is with great confusion that I take the liberty to importune You, who know me only by name, with this application and my distress may be easily imagin'd [sic], when it forces me to break through decorums which I always wish'd [sic] to observe – but I am a Mother, and see an only child upon the brink of utter ruin. Driven as he was first, to desperation by a most unnatural father; and then deserted, and left exposed to all the evils that may be well expected from the dreadful circumstances he is in [...] I have in vain used my utmost endeavours to mortgage the poor income I hold from a husband, whose fortune I have made by the sacrifice of my own [...].³⁶

33 Mirella Agorni, "A Marginal(ized) Perspective on Translation History: Women and Translation in the Eighteenth Century", *Meta: Journal des Traducteurs*, L/3 (2005), 819.

34 "I shall never forget Your Grace relieved my distress last Winter", Charlotte Lennox to the Duchess of Newcastle, 6 October 1760, Add.Ms. 33067, f.230, Department of Manuscripts, British Library, reprinted in Schürer, *Charlotte Lennox*, 106–8. The protagonist of the novel, *Henrietta*, has the same name as Lennox's correspondent and patroness Lady Henrietta (Harriet) Godolphin Duchess of Newcastle.

35 Griffin, *Literary Patronage*, 207.

36 Charlotte Lennox to [Richard Johnson], 22 August 1793, Royal Literary Fund Archive, reprinted in Schürer, *Charlotte Lennox*, 234–36.

The 1750s and 1760s proved to be Lennox's most productive years: in two decades, she managed to publish three novels, one critical edition of Shakespeare's sources, a pastoral drama, six substantial translations, and a periodical. The aura of protection of her patrons and literary peers developed accordingly. From Lady Isabella Finch, to the literary advice of intellectuals gathered around Richardson and especially Johnson; from the dedication of her works to the Duke and Duchess of Newcastle and the Countess of Northumberland, to the climax of her public career with the dedication of her *Greek Theatre of Father Brumoy* (1759) to the Prince of Wales, and eventually a subscription edition of her *Original Works* – comprising her novels, her comedy, and the pastoral drama of *Philander* (1757)³⁷ – to Queen Charlotte, these years also allowed Lennox to learn the literary trade. Writing for money was subject to the rules of the book market, as well as the taste of the reading public. Learning about both, although labouring very intensely, promised the security of indisputable revenues, and raised the condition of an author to a way of life.³⁸

Besides having ensured the support of patrons and literary peers, Lennox achieved a status that other contemporary women writers had not managed to accomplish: being a leader of several intellectual ventures. At this stage of her career, her personal and literary experience retraced that of her principal mentor, Samuel Johnson. *Shakespear Illustrated* (1753–1754),³⁹ and particularly the three volumes of the *Greek Theatre of Father Brumoy* (1759), represented Lennox's highest achievements in the literary milieu of her time, and definitively sanctioned her official and prestigious presence in the marketplace. Financed by “a congerie of booksellers”⁴⁰ – Millar, Vaillant, Baldwin, Crowder, Johnston, Dodsley, Wilson and Durham – the scholarly translation into English of Brumoy's French edition of classical Greek plays was a remarkable example of literary collaboration in which Lennox acted as mentor and manager of a

37 The proposal for a subscription edition of Lennox's *Original Works consisting of The Female Quixote; Shakespear Illustrated; Henrietta; Sophia; Eliza; The Sister, a Comedy; Philander, A Dramatic Pastoral, And Other Pieces, never before printed*, was “almost certainly written by Johnson”. As Schürer points out, in drafting her proposal Lennox was “appealing to her readers [...] to recognise (or at least believe) that prior to 1775, the main beneficiaries of publishing were the booksellers, while this particular edition [...] would bring *her* profit” (152–56).

38 On this, see also Manuel Portela, “Writing for Money, or The Distresses of a Hired Writer”, Paper written for the 25th Annual Conference of the Portuguese Association for Anglo-American Studies, Universidade de Trás-os-Montes e Alto Douro (Vila Real, 22–24 April 2004), 5.

39 See *Women Reading Shakespeare 1660–1900. An anthology of criticism*, eds Ann Thomson and Sasha Roberts, Manchester 1997, 15–21.

40 Clarke, *Dr Johnson's Women*, 117.

learned coterie of men of letters. Samuel Johnson, the Earl of Cork and Orrery, James Grainger, John Borryeau, Gregory Sharpe, and "an unnamed 'young gentleman'"⁴¹ all contributed to the success of her project, and the creation of a much-coveted reputation.

At the same time, after having established her authority as a translator of scholarly works, she could also safely move into the realm of "lighter" literature, and hazard the translation of entertaining novels and memoirs, such as *The Memoirs of the Countess of Berci* (1756), *Memoirs for the History of Madame de Maintenon* (1757), and later, *Meditations and Penitential Prayers, by the celebrated Dutchess de la Vallière* (1774).⁴² With the exception of *Vallière's Meditations and Prayers*, translated and published in the 1770s, and bearing the full name of its translator on the cover page, both *Berci* and *Maintenon* still quote their translator as "the Author of the Female Quixote". However, given the limited success – if not patent failure – of *Berci*, which was torn to shreds by many critics and reviewers, it might have relieved Lennox that her translation of two French works combined into the *Memoirs of the Countess of Berci* had no indication of the author. Her name was, therefore, not involved in a critical attack.⁴³ *Berci* fused Vital d'Audiguier's *Histoire trage-comique de nostre temps, sous les noms de Lysandre et de Caliste* (1616) with Claudine de Tencin's *Memoires du Comte de Comminge* (1735), a short tale that at the time of its publication was protected by anonymity.⁴⁴ However, when Lennox translated it, the novel was well

41 Fleeman, *Bibliography*, II, 1006–7.

42 *The Memoirs of the Countess of Berci. Taken from the French by the Author of the Female Quixote. In Two Volumes*, London 1756; *Memoirs for the History of Madame de Maintenon And of the Last Age. Translated from the French, by the Author of the Female Quixote. In Five Volumes*, London 1757; *Meditations and Penitential Prayers, Written by The celebrated Dutchess de la Vallière, Mistress of Lewis the Fourteenth of France. After her Recovery from a dangerous Illness, when she first formed the Resolution of quitting the Court, and devoting herself to a Religious Life. Translated from the French. With some Account of her Life and Character, extracted from Voltaire, Sevigné, and other Writers of that Time. By Mrs. Charlotte Lennox*, London 1774.

43 Despite the harsh reviews of *Berci*, Lennox's reputation was not affected; in fact, the *Critical Review* praised her for having "performed her part extremely well" as the translator of an "old romance newly vamped up [...] which contains all the pomp of knight-errantry", Anon., *The Critical Review: or, Annals of Literature. By a Society of Gentlemen*, London 1756, 313. Lennox later reused parts of her translations, and in the 1780s republished some portions changing most of the characters' names. See Schürer, *Charlotte Lennox*, 72 n. 16, and Fredrick W. Vogler, "Vital d'Audiguier and Charlotte Lennox: Baroque Studies, Women's Studies, and Literary Resurrection", *Romance Notes*, xxxvi/3 (Spring 1996), 293–99.

44 Claudine Alexandrine Guérin de Tencin's novel was attributed to her after her death (1749) by Guillaume-Thomas-François, abbé Raynal, yet she was known to be the author-ess, at least among her circle of friends. See Marianna D'Ezio, "Introduction" to *Claudine*

known as having been written by “scandalous” Madame de Tencin.⁴⁵ Indeed, both d'Audiguier's *Lysandre et Caliste* and de Tencin's *Comminge* can be considered as odd choices for translations. Little or no evidence remains to explain Lennox's reasons for translating such works, which may well have arisen from the demands of the reading public. Yet her exaggerated reaction to the miserable failure of the volumes, as attested by Samuel Johnson's reply,⁴⁶ suggests an unusual interest for genres that she had not yet practised in translation. Not surprisingly, she released her next translation within the following months, this time sponsored by a coterie of booksellers, and with a prestigious dedication that Johnson wrote for the Countess of Northumberland on behalf of Lennox. *Memoirs of Madame de Maintenon* was in fact a “rehabilitation” for Lennox in terms of reputation and prestige, and as she received £86 for her translation, she was “being paid at the high end of the scale”,⁴⁷ thus confirming her influence in literary matters, and aligning her position with that of other European translators, such as Luise Gottsched, who was translating *Maintenon* into German the same year.⁴⁸ Vallière further confirmed Lennox's status as translator. A receipt she received from James Dodsley indicates that, by 1774, she was paid “several months in advance”,⁴⁹ which might be a clear sign of the respect she had earned, compared to two decades earlier, when she had had to “beg the favour” and “appl[y] for money before it was due” to publisher Andrew Millar.

The Failure of Independence: From Success to Poverty

Given the success Lennox had achieved throughout the years 1750–1760, it is surprising that on 6 October 1760, writing to the Duchess of Newcastle, she still – and vehemently – lamented her dismal condition:

I have the comfort of hearing [...] that Your Grace continues Your favourable intentions with regard to M^r Lennox, and this hope supports me in

Alexandrine Guérin de Tencin, *The History of the Count de Comminge, translated by Charlotte Lennox*, Newcastle upon Tyne 2011, 1.

45 René de Castries, *La Scandaleuse Madame de Tencin (1682–1749)*, Paris 1986.

46 Samuel Johnson to Charlotte Lennox, 30 July 1756, MS Eng 1269 (8), Houghton Library, Harvard University, reprinted in Schürer, *Charlotte Lennox*, 67–73.

47 Publication Ledger for *Maintenon*, reprinted in Schürer, *Charlotte Lennox*, 76–79.

48 Johann Christoph Gottsched, Luise Gottsched, and Dorothea von Runckel, *Nachrichten, die zum Leben der Frau von Maintenon und des vorigen Jahrhunderts gehörig sind*, 3 vols, Berlin and Stettin 1757–1761.

49 Receipt (Charlotte Lennox from James Dodsley), 10 January 1774, MS Hyde 10 (418), Houghton Library, Harvard University, reprinted in Schürer, *Charlotte Lennox*, 140.

my present Slavery to the Booksellers, whom I have the mortification to see adding to their heaps by my labour, which scarce produce me a scanty and precarious subsistence.⁵⁰

If translation had given Lennox some importance in the literary marketplace, and a reputation as an intellectual “worker”, it had also apparently drained her energy. From *Berci to Brumoy*, in a time span of three years, she had released four significant translations, and by the beginning of the 1760s, right after the launching of her own periodical, *The Lady's Museum*, she became ill. Her literary enterprises had given her publicity and fame. Publishers and booksellers would now offer her work and she herself drafted several projects, which she later abandoned. However, her constant need for money prompted her future decisions in terms of publication: she attempted to regain the copyright of all her works, and meanwhile, launched into the composition of a periodical, which proved a fiasco. In addition, during the last decades of her life, although she tried to recuperate the positive influence of aristocratic patrons, she found herself alone and destitute. Besides relying on James Boswell and his family for support, and eventually on the Royal Literary Fund, she lost the protection of the prestigious relationships that in the past had allowed her to dedicate her works to the Prince of Wales and to the Queen. In late 1775, for example, after asking permission to dedicate her play *Old City Manners* to the Countess of Bute, the latter replied bluntly that “[she] would be Glad to be of any service to her, but is averse to seeing her name in print”.⁵¹

In fact, Lennox's intention to become an independent author and emancipate from what she had termed “Slavery to the Booksellers” was not an innovative choice. Before *The Lady's Museum* was published in 1760, other women writers had attempted the publications of periodicals, with reasonable success.⁵² Nevertheless, *The Lady's Museum* offered her a fully self-managed space

50 Charlotte Lennox to the Duchess of Newcastle, 6 October 1760, Add.Ms. 33067, f.230, Department of Manuscripts, British Library, reprinted in Schürer, *Charlotte Lennox*, 106–8. According to Duncan Isles, the Duke of Newcastle had helped Alexander Lennox to find an employment in the Customs Office. See Isles, “The Lennox Collection”, 59 n. 121, and Schürer, *Charlotte Lennox*, 120 n. 11.

51 Mary Stuart, Countess of Bute, to Charlotte Lennox, 14 November 1775, MS Eng 1269 (40), Houghton Library, Harvard University, reprinted in Schürer, *Charlotte Lennox*, 165–66.

52 Before Lennox, Delarivier Manley, for example, contributed to and edited *The Examiner* (1711), while Eliza Haywood had her own periodical, *The Female Spectator* (1744–1746). For an overview, see Alison Adburgham, *Women in Print: Writing Women and Women's Magazines from the Restoration to the Accession of Victoria*, London 1972, and Manushag N. Powell, *Performing Authorship in Eighteenth-Century English Periodicals*, Lewisburg 2012, esp. 131–92.

to continue both her mentoring activity, by employing a young and inexperienced collaborator such as Hugh Kelly (or Kelley),⁵³ and experiment with translation as a means to defy the “secondary literary value”⁵⁴ ascribed to it as well as a *locus* to practice the creative re-writing of source works.⁵⁵ *The Lady's Museum* is an interesting experiment in its genre. The periodical, which had only been published in nine issues before being interrupted, featured the serialisation of several translations that demonstrated the wide range of interests that Lennox cultivated at the time. *The History of the Count the Comminge*, for instance, which had been a failure when it had been published in *Berci*, was probably a concern for Lennox as it reappeared in *The Lady's Museum* with few changes. Lennox's “version” of Tencin's novel confirms at times her deliberate inclination towards adaptation, rather than literal translation, as was common to many other women writers and translators of her time.⁵⁶ The inclusion of her translation of selections from François de Salignac de la Mothe Fénelon's

53 Hugh Kelly (or Kelley) was an Irish dramatist and poet who arrived in London in 1760 in search for work. He was 21 at the time of his collaboration with Lennox. For the extent of his participation in Lennox's periodical and for biographical detail, see Robert R. Bataille, *The Writing Life of Hugh Kelly: Politics, Journalism, and Theater in Late Eighteenth-Century London*, Carbondale 2000, 5.

54 Agorni, “Marginal(ized)”, 819.

55 Lennox's opinion on translation as a “flexible” text, which did not necessarily have to passively transpose the original work, was in line with numerous other (women) translators of her time. As for French translators, such as Anne Dacier, Emilie Du Châtelet, Marie-Jeanne Riccoboni and Mme Thiroux D'Arconville, M. Pieretti posits that “writing and translating clearly constituted two facets of the same creative process” (Pieretti, “Women Writers”, 483). In Italy, for instance, the examples of Luisa Bergalli Gozzi, who “freely” translated Anne-Marie du Bocage's *Les Amazons* (1749), and Rosa California, whose *Breve Difesa dei Diritti delle Donne* (*Short Defence of the Rights of Woman*, 1794) can be considered as a pseudo-translation of Mary Wollstonecraft's *Vindication of the Rights of Woman* (which California had read in French) are representative of a similar trend. In a letter to David Garrick about the possibility of translating Racine's play *Bajazet* (1672), Lennox clearly shows that the practice of the time undoubtedly implied the “adaptation” of the source text to suit the target audience, as well as the “reshuffle” of the plot itself and even its ending: “Sir, I need not tell you, who are so good a critic in the french [sic] drama, that Racine's Bajazet is allowd [sic] by all good judges to be one of the best of his tragedies, my own humble opinion coinciding with this general one, I resolved to translate it, and hazarding a few alterations adapt it to the taste of an english [sic] audience. [...] I think it might be turn'd entirly [sic] new, and by one of those sudden revolutions common enough in the turkish [sic] government, Bajazet instead of being murdered, might be placed upon the throne, as for Roxana [...] she should die, her death might be rendered more affecting some circumstances of terror and pity, which are not found in the original”. Charlotte Lennox to David Garrick, 4 August 1774, Y.c. 1665, Folger Library, reprinted in Schürer, *Charlotte Lennox*, 143–46.

56 For detailed examples, see my edition of *Comminge*, 57–58.

Traité de l'Éducation des Filles (1684) shows Lennox's involvement in the issue of women's education, and her belief in the exercise of "proper studies" as tools to promote women's awareness of their role in society.⁵⁷ Here translation turns into a device to suit the purpose of the whole periodical, leaving aside Fénelon's religious teachings completely to concentrate instead on the pedagogical and reformist aspects of Fénelon's work. Finally, her "History of Bianca Capello", possibly a translation of the highly popular Italian tale⁵⁸ – or perhaps her adaptation of the novella dedicated to Bianca Capello (or Cappello) in Celio Malespini's *Ducento Novelle* (1609) – witnessed Lennox's familiarity with Italian, a language she possibly started learning from the controversial intellectual Giuseppe Baretti around 1752 (the year she also began working on *Shakespear Illustrated*).

Overall, the serialisation of these translations, as well as her novel *The History of Harriot and Sophia*, was an attempt to popularise literary genres, both "high" (as in the case of Fénelon's pedagogical *Treatise*) and "low" (as for "Bianca Capello" and *The History of the Count de Comminge*). Not only could Lennox display her abilities in translating, adapting and interpreting texts from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds, she also joined the custom of the time according to which the book market had to be "constantly fed with new commodities";⁵⁹ since the practice of reading had turned into a consumerist activity, and books themselves had become objects of consumption.⁶⁰ From this perspective, *The*

57 See Claire Boulard Jouslin, "Conservative or Reformer? The History and Fortune of Fénelon's *Traité de l'Éducation des filles* in Eighteenth-Century England", *The Journal for Early Modern Cultural Studies*, xii/4 (Fall 2012), 48–77.

58 According to Edward W. Pitcher, there seemed to be "no evidence of an English account of her [i.e. Bianca Capello's] life prior to the appearance of the story in Mrs. Lennox's *Lady's Museum*", E.W. Pitcher, "Charlotte Ramsay Lennox's 'History of Bianca Capello' (1760)", *American Notes & Queries* (May 1976), 130–31. The Italian *Storia della Vita, e tragica morte di Bianca Capello, Gentildonna di Venezia, e Gran Duchessa di Toscana* by Giulio Roberto Sanseverino di Sammartino was published in Berlin in 1776, therefore sixteen years after the first issue of the *Lady's Museum*. However, one may assume that Lennox had access to the story thanks to her relationships with German intellectuals around the time Sanseverino was teaching Italian there (1760–1770), as her connection with the Gottscheds shows. Duncan Isles reported that Charlotte Lennox sent Johann Christoph Gottsched's wife Luise, herself a translator and a writer, the three volumes of her *Shakespear Illustrated* from London (Isles, "The Lennox Collection", 423 n. 203), maybe hoping that she would translate it into German, thus contributing to its dissemination in Europe. On Sanseverino, see Wolfgang Adam, "La *Italianische Biographie* di Johann Georg Meusel", in *Traduzioni e Traduttori del Neoclassicismo* eds G. Cantarutti, S. Ferrari, and P.M. Filippi, Milan 2010, 23–34.

59 Portela, "Writing for Money", 3.

60 On the "commodification" of the practice of reading (and writing), see *The Consumption of Culture 1660–1800: Image, Object, Text* eds John Brewer and Ann Bermingham, London

Lady's Museum intentionally tried to satisfy the demands of its contemporary public, and most importantly, the needs of its female readership.⁶¹ It was also Lennox's own opportunity to voice her resentment towards the system of aristocratic patronage, which excluded her from pursuing an independent career. In the novel first serialised in her periodical as "The History of Harriot and Sophia", which then became *Sophia*, Lennox pilloried the attitude of patrons in the character of Sir Charles, who "took upon himself the care of rewarding her friends, [...] presented Mr. Lawson to a very considerable living [and] he procured Dolly's husband a genteel and lucrative employment".⁶² What had happened for *The Life of Harriot Stuart* (1750), where she had criticised her first patron Lady Finch through the character of Lady Cecilia, condemning her "peculiar talent, in procuring dependents, by her affected benevolence, whom she never designed to serve, and raising hopes she never intended to gratify", was now repeated and elevated to a more general target: Lennox's explicit censure of the *status quo* of patrons who flatter themselves in being surrounded by sycophants, but do not recognise true merit and more often tend to forget, and even silence, their expectations, had eventually found its official outburst in her own periodical, and not in a dedicated, patronised novel that had enslaved its author to the vicious circle of patrons, publishers, and booksellers.

Parallel to Lennox's pursuit of an independent authorship ran the "battle" in which she engaged with representatives of power in the book market: publishers. Before the so-called copyright decision by the House of Lords, on 22 February 1774, concerning the Hinton vs. Donaldson trial, authors had been subjected to the rule of "perpetual copyright", which *de facto* authorised printers and booksellers to possess the copyright of all the works they published. The decision ratified the reinstatement of the Statute of Anne (1710), also known as the Copyright Act, which sanctioned the limit for publishers to "own" copyright over a work to fourteen years.⁶³ In 1775, Lennox realised the implications of

1995. According to Janet Todd, Lennox's *The Lady's Museum* was "interesting mainly [and also] because it helped pioneer the serialising of novels before publication", Janet Todd, *The Sign of Angellica. Women, Writing and Fiction, 1660–1800*, New York 1989, 133.

61 See for example the sections entitled "Philosophy for the Ladies" and "The Lady's Geography", in which Lennox "popularized" topics and disciplines such as philosophy, geography, and history, for a middle-class reading target. On *The Lady's Museum*, see also María Jesús Lorenzo Modia, "Education for Women in the Eighteenth-Century Periodical: Charlotte Lennox's *The Lady's Museum*", in *Diferencia, (des)igualdad y justicia / Differences, (In)Equality and Justice* eds A. Antón-Pacheco, I. Durán Giménez-Rico, C. Méndez García, J. Neff van Aertselaer, and A.L. Rodríguez Redondo, Madrid 2010, 201–12.

62 Griffin, *Literary Patronage*, 218; Lennox, *Sophia*, 826.

63 See Yamada Shōji, "Pirate" Publishing. *The Battle over Perpetual Copyright in Eighteenth-Century Britain*, Kyoto 2012.

possessing the rights of her own writings, and that such property could be a definitive answer to her needs. Writing to William Hunter, an acquaintance of Dr Johnson's, Lennox acknowledged that "The late decision with regard to literary property [has] given me a right to reprint my original writings for the benefit of myself and my children".⁶⁴ Until that moment, ownership over her works was a frustrating issue. The copyright of all her works would not only be in the hands of booksellers, but also go automatically *to her husband*: hers was thus a liminal position, one that Gallagher has termed "doubly dispossessed authorship".⁶⁵ At a moment in life in which she had finally carved out a position for herself in the literary marketplace, and could eventually make money out of her published works by claiming her rights back from unscrupulous printers, she also decided to leave Alexander Lennox. The last straw was likely her husband's decision to deny their daughter Harriot Hollis entry into a school and to instead send her to a convent, against her mother's wishes. Lennox's letter to her husband clearly indicates the animosity between the two, and confirms the desolation of her financial situation:

I have talkd [sic] with M^r Johnson, and other persons of good sense and experience, upon the expediency of sending Harriet to Boulogne for her education – and they are all of opinion, which they supported with very good reasons, that a Boarding school here, will be equally advantageous, equally cheap, and is liable to fewer inconveniences than a Convent. Their reasons have convinced me, and that is the cause that they will never convince you – therefore I submit to your despotick will, with this condition only, that I go with her, and see her settled – this point I never will give up – the next thing to be considered, is what necessities must be provided – I will give you a list of what cloaths [sic] and Linnen are usually sent even to the cheapest schools – Half a dozen frocks.

she has two already
a dozen pr of stockings
she has four pr but they are old
half a dozen night caps
she has one
four under petticoats
of this article she has none but rags

64 Charlotte Lennox to Dr William Hunter, 18 February 1775, MS0014/2, Vol. 1B, f.56, Hunter-Baillie Papers, Royal College of Surgeons of England, reprinted in Schürer, *Charlotte Lennox*, 157–58.

65 Gallagher, *Nobody's Story*, 195–96.

Morning gowns
of these she has four which I think is enough
 Three quilted caps with lace border
of these she has none
 a dozen shifts
of these she has five new ones, three not made up – and the others are rags
 a handsome Skirt, to wear on Sundays
*All the skirts she has had, for more than two years past, have been made out of my gowns [...].*⁶⁶

Once again, Lennox was relying on Johnson's friendship and advice, not only for what concerned her daughter's future, as mentioned in this letter, but also for reasons linked to her regaining the copyright of her works. In a letter dated 29 May 1778, Lennox complained to her mentor about Dodsley's decision to print "another edition of Sully's Memoirs [...] without my consent [and] without consulting me": the tone of the letter is quite peremptory, as she fully realised the consequences of asserting her rights with the publishers, to make money out of such venture:

although by the late decision concerning literary property *the copy is mine* – I am advisd [sic] to publish it for myself in numbers, and if the partners expect to sell another edition, I have some reason to hope that I may have success by publishing it in this manner, as the purchase will be so much easier – but I must be speed [...].⁶⁷

Gallagher points out that Lennox's allegation that the copy of Sully's *Memoirs* in the hands of the publishers "is mine" is but further proof of her apprehension and even anxiety at having been dispossessed of her literary *property*, not to mention the dispossession she experienced as the "victim of a disinterestedness from which the most ungrateful of men has derived great advantages",⁶⁸ her husband Alexander Lennox. Indeed, the display of her deprived property aimed at skilfully portraying a public "representation of deserving,

66 Charlotte Lennox to Alexander Lennox, c. 1776–78, MS Eng 1269 (15), Houghton Library, Harvard University, reprinted in Schürer, *Charlotte Lennox*, 170–74.

67 Charlotte Lennox to Samuel Johnson, 29 May 1778, English MS.537, John Rylands University Library of Manchester, reprinted in Schürer, *Charlotte Lennox*, 192–94 [my italics, MDE].

68 Charlotte Lennox to James Dodsley, 30 January 1793, MS Hyde 10 (413), Houghton Library, Harvard University, reprinted in Schürer, *Charlotte Lennox*, 214–16.

dispossessed authorship", as both Gallagher and Schellenberg have underlined.⁶⁹ Among the reasons for Lennox's failure in terms of establishing a long-lasting, highly professionalised position as a labourer in the book market, and her consequent poverty, Schellenberg mentions Lennox's "inability to forge successful relationships with those beyond her immediate circle" of mentors, patrons, and publishers. This mainly occurred, however, because her ambition – unusual for a woman writer of her time – to be able to sustain her own activity by her commitment to writing could not be fulfilled. Samuel Johnson had magnificently raised his status from a Grub Street hack to that of an influential writer, a successful mentor, and a leading literary figure. In the case of Lennox, her personal attitude, constraints, and willingness to experiment with translation as a business transaction through which she could make money, often resulted in a mere "necessity to take up [her] pen", "be engaged in a War with [the] Booksellers",⁷⁰ and thus "[alter her] circumstances [...] for the better".⁷¹ However, the outcome could not be the same as Johnson's, since she refused to accept her submission to male-dominated spheres of public and private life, as well as admit the limitations imposed on her *own* agency. Interestingly, although she repeatedly mentioned numerous projects she was planning to develop independently, none of these projects came to fruition.⁷² The "dependant State" which, in 1751, she had acknowledged as "yet [...] necessary and unavoidable"⁷³ only slightly improved throughout her career, but never developed into a fully independent position, neither recognised by the patrons whom she had wanted to celebrate in her dedications, nor by the publishers,

69 Gallagher, *Nobody's Story*, 195, and Betty A. Schellenberg, *The Professionalization of Women Writers in Eighteenth-Century Britain*, Cambridge 2005, 94–119.

70 Charlotte Lennox to Lady Lydia Clerke, 16 June 1777, MS 444/19, Cely-Trevelian Bequest, Royal Society of Antiquaries, reprinted in Schürer, *Charlotte Lennox*, 183–88.

71 Charlotte Lennox to James Dodsley, 30 January 1793, MS Hyde 10 (413), Houghton Library, Harvard University, reprinted in Schürer, *Charlotte Lennox*, 214–16.

72 For example, Samuel Johnson proposed her to translate François-Joachim Duport du Tertre and Joseph-Louis-Ripault Desormeaux's *Histoire des conjurations, conspirations et révolutions célèbres, tant anciennes que modernes* (1754–1760): "Now you have ended Maintenon you may perhaps think on it", Samuel Johnson to Charlotte Lennox, 10 March 1757, MS Eng 1269 (9), Houghton Library, Harvard University, reprinted in Schürer, *Charlotte Lennox*, 80–81. She later decided to translate Guillaume Hyacinthe Bougeant's renown *Histoire des guerres et des négociations qui précèdent le traité de Westphale, sous le règne de Louis XIII et le ministère du cardinal Richilieu et du cardinal Mazarin* (1727), Jean Racine's *Bajazet* (1672), and possibly write a "history of the (first) Elizabethan age" (Schürer, *Charlotte Lennox*, 100 n. 4).

73 Charlotte Lennox to [Samuel Richardson], 21 November 1751, TS 934.5, III, 296 (TSM 394.39), Harvard Theatre Collection, Houghton Library, Harvard University, reprinted in Schürer, *Charlotte Lennox*, 8–10.

whose power over the copyright of her works had surely diminished, yet had not totally disappeared after the abolition of perpetual copyright. Lennox's last intercourse with James Dodsley may well serve as the proof of a relationship which by the time she had fallen out of the favour of patrons and sponsors, was once again literally reduced to one of charity, notwithstanding the success she had formerly achieved:

Sir

Having never settled accounts for the second edition of the *Sister*⁷⁴ which you publishd [sic], I calld [sic] upon you with a hope that something might be due to me from that quarter – being realy [sic] at present in distress [...] Under my present difficulties, I have recourse to your candor, and humanity, that however small my claims may be [...], you will assist me with a trifling sum in my present necessities. [...] Some time hence, my circumstances will in all probability be much altered for the better, but I am now in real distress.⁷⁵

To this letter, Dodsley hastily replied that Lennox “could nevertheless have had no claim on me” on account of “any legal claims” she might exert on him, and bluntly treats her in the same manner as any irksome scribbler asking for consideration:

[...] as you represent yourself in distress, difficulties, and necessities, these have always a claim upon humanity. I am sorry this should be your situation, and therefore have inclosed a Note, and shall be glad if it prove acceptable.⁷⁶

This transaction with Dodsley was probably the last Lennox entertained with the publishing world of London: her career had already started to eclipse during the 1770s and the 1780s, after the failure of her periodical, when she

74 Lennox is here referring to her comedy *The Sister*, which Dodsley had published in two distinct editions in 1769.

75 Charlotte Lennox to James Dodsley, 30 January 1793, MS Hyde 10 (413), Houghton Library, Harvard University, reprinted in Schürer, *Charlotte Lennox*, 214–16. Schürer also reminds us of how “poor Lennox really was”, since “[w]ith an income of £40 per annum, [she] made more than a beadle (£20 p.a.) or a housekeeper (£28 p.a.) and about the same as a cook (£40 p.a.), but less than most hairdressers (£40–80 p.a. in London in 1797) or mantuamakers (£60 p.a. in London in 1797)”, Schürer, *Charlotte Lennox*, 215 n. 5. See also Kirstin Olsen, *Daily Life in 18th-Century England*, Westport, CT, 1999, 140–45.

76 James Dodsley to Charlotte Lennox, 2 February 1793, MS Hyde 10 (191), Houghton Library, Harvard University, reprinted in Schürer, *Charlotte Lennox*, 217–18.

only published one translation for Dodsley (*Vallière*, 1774), a comedy for Thomas Becket (*Old City Manners*, 1775), and her last novel *Euphemia* for Thomas Cadell (1790). Furthermore, her daughter had died, she separated from her husband, and her son, George Luis, emigrated to North America. She then turned to James Boswell, Samuel Johnson's official biographer, as to someone who could take on Johnson's role and "employ [his] elegant Pen for half an hour, in drawing up [her] Proposals".⁷⁷ The proposal Boswell indeed wrote for a new subscription edition of Lennox's *Shakespear Illustrated* was intended to be dedicated to the Duchess of York, and according to Schürer, she also started selling subscriptions;⁷⁸ however, the edition was never published, and this additional disappointment may further account for Lennox's disastrous reliance on a network of exclusively professional authors and sponsors, rather than social circles of just friends and readers from the gentry who might have shared the costs of publication. In short, her commitment to endorse an innovative position as an intellectual woman writer busy with professional literary enterprises had a high cost. With the decrease and ultimate failure of her direct, personal agency over the book market, she was not able to maintain the social status of married woman, mother and friend, as required from the society in which she lived. Lennox's parable from literary success to abject poverty was testimony to the impossibility to combine her writing ambitions and leadership potentials, which she channelled into a feverish, extraordinary literary production, with prescribed gender roles – which, under the constraints of economic imperatives she defied, but eventually surrendered to. She had been an outsider since her arrival in London: first as an orphan having to rely on relatives' wealth and support, then as the wife of a "most unnatural" man, and finally as a conscious, somehow "masculine" professional who aimed at living on her own commitment to literature and translation. Her position as outsider was also ostensible in the literary circles she mindfully chose not to frequent, most strikingly that of the Bluestockings. In the end, she also disappeared as an outsider, not having been inclined to find a compromise between her pioneering activity as a translator, periodical editor, and leader of several literary projects, and her compliance with the protocol and expectations of an author writing at a time when the economic nature of literature seemed to be still inappropriate for a woman writer, although she undoubtedly suffered all of its consequences.

77 Charlotte Lennox to James Boswell, 5 February 1793, GEN MSS 89 (Boswell Collection), series 1, box 26, folder 614 (C1726), Beinecke Rare Books and Manuscript Library, Yale University, reprinted in Schürer, *Charlotte Lennox*, 219–20.

78 Schürer, *Charlotte Lennox*, 227 n. 18.

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