Did Marie de Gournay change Michel de Montaigne? Before or after his death? And is she still changing him now?

Such questions have been much asked, on at least four interconnected levels. First, did Gournay the editor change the actual text of the *Essais*? Secondly, did the young Gournay, through her conversation or her writing, change any opinions held by Montaigne the historical person, notably on women? Her writing and sending of the manuscript of the *Proumenoir de Monsieur de Montaigne* to him in 1588, complete with feminist themes, has been persuasively interpreted as evidence of her desire to effect such a change in him. And it seems possible, though not certain, that she succeeded to some extent, judging from the evidence of the *Essais*.

But I will be asking such questions on the remaining two levels.

Thirdly, did Gournay change the *Essais* through *imitatio* in certain of her writings, thereby in a sense changing Montaigne

---

1 I am very grateful to Warren Boucher, Emily Butterworth, and Liz Guild for ideas and references and to Philippe Desan for sending me material. I thank the British Academy for a Research Readership, during the tenure of which this paper was written.

2 See the essay by Philippe Desan in the present volume.


4 On the negative side, the absence of evidence that Montaigne wrote back to Gournay about the *Proumenoir* can be interpreted as a sign of disapproval (Cholakian, *The Identity of the Reader*, 223). On the positive side, a new emphasis on *l’institution et l’usage* rather than on nature as accounting for differences between the sexes (III, 5, 897) could be attributable to Gournay’s influence in 1588 (C. Insdorf, *Montaigne and Feminism*, Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina, 1977, ch. 5). The controversial, much discussed eulogy of Gournay in II, 17, 661-662c, can be interpreted as evidence either of her success (if it is by Montaigne) or of her desire (if by her).

5 As opposed to the numerous texts by her which were far more distant from the *Essais*.
even after his death? Like countless Renaissance writers, Gournay herself seems to have seen such *imitatio* as a continuation of friendship, as a relationship between persons as well as between texts:6 in her view, whereas *amour* requires physical presence and sight, *amitié* can exist without them, whether before she meets Montaigne, merely having read his *Essais*,7 or else after his death.

Fourthly, does that process of change have a life beyond Gournay’s own death? Is it still going on now? Given Montaigne’s canonical status, most people will read him first and Gournay second. If they then re-read him, inevitably reading him *through* her, then what difference, if any, does she make? Has she changed him for the reader? This fourth level, while apparently more extraneous, is in fact a seamless extension of the third. And it has become all the more pertinent in recent years as Gournay has been read more and more.

I will examine Gournay’s capacity to change Montaigne by considering their treatment of one specific theme: *conférence*. However, like the other, related themes which these two writers most obviously share — such as friendship, *imitatio*, education,8 language, or the sexes — *conférence* is especially agonizing for her as a woman writer because it is not *just* a theme, not *just* a topic upon which opinions can be exchanged, but it is also worryingly reflexive: the nature of two parties’ opinions on *conférence*

---


7 ‘Pour engendrer l’amour, l’intelligence corporelle et spirituelle, la presance et la veue sont autant requise que le discours: mais la bien-veuillante ou amitié, comme estant une intelligence toute spirituelle, doit germer spirituellement, par le pur discours et la connaissance: bien qu’elle se puisse enrichir de presance’ (Gournay, 1635 preface to the *Essais*, in *Les Idées littéraires de Mlle de Gournay*, ed. A. Uildriks, Groningen: Rodop, 1962, 184-207; 196). The 1635 preface has also been edited by Desan in *Montaigne Studies*, 2:2, 1990, 58-98.

8 Recent editors of Gournay assert that ‘Sur les questions de pédagogie, Gournay puise son inspiration chez Montaigne’ (Gournay, *Les Advins, ou, les Presens*, ed. J.-Beaulieu and H. Fournier, Amsterdam and Atlanta, 1997- i, 16); but no detailed comparison between Montaigne and Gournay’s writings on education has yet been undertaken, to my knowledge.
determines whether they can have an exchange of opinions about conférence (or anything else) in the first place.

Thus, as Patricia Cholakian has shown in relation to the theme of friendship in Gournay’s Apologie pour celle qui escrit (1626), given Gournay’s desire to include women within that theme, her ‘imitation’ of Montaigne (and Cicero) is inevitably highly ‘conflictual’.9 The same goes for her treatment of conférence.

Although Gournay knew all of the Essais intimately – not least because she prepared eleven editions of them – some seem to have preoccupied her particularly, including ‘De l’art de conférer’ (III, 8). In versions of her preface to the Essais between 1599 and 1635, she privileges ‘l’art de conférer’ as one of the fourteen themes to have received ample treatment by Montaigne, another being friendship.10

Moreover, she practises imitatio of III, 8 – without mentioning that essai – in the extraordinary passage beginning ‘Bien heureux es tu, Lecteur ...’ which comes near the start of her 1595 preface.11 The passage begins by stating that the reader is blessed if not a woman, such are the moral, material, and discursive restrictions placed on women. It then focuses in particular on the ways in which men undermine women who seek to participate in public discussions with them. What has all this got to do with the Essais? The passage arises out of Gournay’s claim that she has the


10 Gournay, ‘Préface de 1599 publiée dans Le Proumenoir’, ed. A.L. Franchetti, Montaigne Studies, 8: 1-2, 1996: 179-92; 184. This 1599 preface was published separately from the Essais together with Gournay’s Proumenoir. See also the 1635 preface (Les Idées littéraires, 191). Another explicit reference to ‘De l’art de conférer’ was added to the preface in the 1617 version (‘Preface to the 1617 Edition of the Essais’, ed. M. McKinley, Montaigne Studies, 8: 1-2, 1996, 79-91; 212); it was still there in the 1635 version (Les Idées littéraires, 194).

credentials to judge the *Essais*. Implicitly, she has the right to *conférer* with her reader about the value of the *Essais* because she has previously *conféré* with Montaigne the man: later in the preface her claim to have enjoyed with Montaigne [what Olivier Millet has shown to be] a Stoic-style meeting of wise minds leads into the following description of any ‘sage’:

A qui veut-on après qu’il declare tant de belles conceptions? qu’il confère et discoure ... sinon à quelque suffisance semblable? (48)\(^\text{12}\)

As the ‘Bien heureux’ passage shows, Gournay has to claim these credentials in a defensive way, since a woman is normally credited with neither the capacity for proper action or speech nor with ‘le credit d’en estre creu, ou pour le moins escouté’ (27). Since this woman is defending the *Essais* against its detractors, her credibility thus becomes inseparable from the text’s reputation, as François Rigolot has observed.\(^\text{13}\) Whether Gournay is trying to establish female authority above all in order to promote the *Essais* or whether she is mainly using the *Essais* in order to legitimate female authority is an unanswerable question.

Indeed, this very uncertainty, and the *apparently* digressive status of this passage, are symptoms of the awkwardness of Gournay’s position as a young woman introducing the work of a great dead man. As Cathleen Bauschatz has shown, in the 1595 preface Gournay partly seeks to minimize that awkwardness through *imitatio* of Montaigne’s text and person, yet her own femaleness repeatedly disrupts the *imitatio*, which presupposes a male imitator.\(^\text{14}\) On the theme of *conférence*, the personal *imitatio* elsewhere takes the form of a very precise claim:


\(^{13}\) Rigolot, Introduction to Gournay 1595 ‘Préface’, 17.

\(^{14}\) Bauschatz, ‘Imitation’. Gournay’s most striking claim to *imitatio* of Montaigne’s person – ‘sauf le plus et le moings, j’estois toute semblable à mon Pere’ (1595 ‘Préface’, 45) – was cut, along with much other personal material, from the revised 1617 preface, as C. M. Bauschatz notes (‘‘L’œil et la main’: gender and revision in Marie de Gournay’s ‘Préface de 1595’’, *Montaigne Studies*, 7:1-2, 1995, 89-102; 99 n. 26).
Si je n’ai les vertus de mon second Père, j’ai quelques uns des vices qu’il avoue, surtout celui-ci, de m’impatienter vivement d’une conférence confuse.15

However, there is difference at the heart of this resemblance. The defective conversing which Montaigne describes himself in ‘De l’art de conférer’ as encountering is not specifically directed at him because of what he is – a male, for example – whereas that which Gournay describes herself in the 1595 preface as encountering is directed at her because of what she is, a woman. Unlike him, therefore, she has no hope of encountering anything but defective conversing. Moreover, in Montaigne’s essai almost all the participants in conférence are explicitly or implicitly male. Women figure only as uncritical, easily impressed audiences of a Master of Arts’s pretentious jargon or else as babbling fishwives who are deemed superior to logicians (in an ironic move which assumes, however, that they are normally at the bottom of the conversational pile).16 Thus, like countless authors on the art of conversation, Montaigne himself effects the very exclusion of which Gournay is complaining and which, paradoxically, now hampers her efforts to promote him.17 This may be why she does not here refer explicitly to ‘De l’art de conférer’: she tends to

15 Quoted in M. H. Isley, A Daughter of the Renaissance. Marie le Jars de Gournay: Her Life and Works, The Hague: Mouton, 1963, 27. (Isley gives no reference for this sentence, which I have been unable to locate in the 1595 preface or any other). This personal imitatio is also textual: see Montaigne’s admission of impatience with his subordinates when conversing with them (‘j’accuse mon impatience’, III, 8, 928b).


17 Cf. also Essais, I, 28, 186a: ‘à dire vray, la suffissance ordinaire des femmes n’est pas pour répondre à cette conference et communication, nourrisse de cette sainte couture [sec. amitié]’. Montaigne’s textual exclusions of women from conférence did not necessarily reflect his own social position in relation to some women: like other minor noblemen he was often known primarily through his association with noblewomen who were from much grander families. I am grateful to Warren Boucher for pointing this out.
avoid such direct reference to the *Essais* whenever she is contradicting them most flagrantly.  

So this ‘Bien heureux’ passage is an example of what Mary McKinley has shown to be one of the kinds of *imitatio* which Gournay practises in the various versions of her preface: ‘she loosely paraphrases the *Essais* without acknowledging her source and uses the borrowed material for a different purpose’. Indeed, Gournay describes Montaigne himself as using this kind of imitative reorientation, which she calls ‘application’ of ancient authors:

> les emprunts sont si dextrement adaptez, que le benefice de l’application, ou maintefois quelque enrichissement dont il les rehausse de son cru, contrepresent ordinairement le benefice de l’invention.

In the ‘Bien heureux’ passage Gournay ‘re-applies’ – that is, radically reorients – ‘De l’art de conferer’ in this way. Montaigne’s examples of defective conversing are transformed into ones of how men exclude women from conversation. Where Montaigne’s defective conversers use ‘grimaces’ to imply some profound meaning (III, 8, 930b), Gournay’s men merely have to use ‘un soubris, un hochet ou quelque plaisanterie’ to demolish her coherent arguments with the implication ‘C’est une femme qui parle’ (27). Just as Montaigne’s defective conversers rely on ‘la gravité, la robe et la fortune’ to compensate for the ineptness of their arguments (930b), one of Gournay’s adversaries relies on his beard, another on his ‘gravité’, which hides the fact that he has nothing to say (27). The way in which Gournay enumerates such examples (‘Tel ... Un autre ... Cetuy-là ... Cetuy-cy ... tel autre ... Cet autre ...’ [27-8]) echoes the equivalent anaphoric list in ‘De l’art de conferer’ (‘Qui ... Qui ... L’autre ... Celuy-là ... En voilà qui ... Et cetty-cy ... Cet autre ...’ [926b]). There are several other verbal echoes, including the key verb *escouter*. Whereas

---

21 Both writers emphasize the importance of ‘l’ordre et conduite de la dispute’ (1595 ‘Préface’, 27-8; ‘de l’ordre et de la conduite’, *Essais*, III, 8, 927b-c). Like Montaigne throughout III.8, Gournay describes bad and good
Montaigne urges that all opinions, even apparently superstitious ones, deserve to be listened to (‘meritent aumons qu’on les escoute’ [923b]), Gournay envies men their right to have their words not necessarily believed, but at least listened to (‘escouté’ [27]).

So the ‘Bien heureux’ passage is one of the most agonized – and so one of the most powerful – in this agonized 1595 preface: only by contradicting Montaigne can Gournay defend him. The preface’s awkward status, which depends on how it is read – as either essential for establishing Gournay’s right to write the preface or else irrelevant and so over-concerned with her – is perhaps what led to its being cut from all five subsequent versions of the preface, unlike many passages which were revised and reinstated in 1599 or, especially, in 1617, when Gournay reversed her traumatic decision to sever the long preface from the Essais. So the ‘Bien heureux’ passage is, as Bauschatz notes, a ‘special case’, especially because after an absence of 31 years it did reappear, revised and expanded, to form the first half of the Grief des dames, which appeared in her collected works, L’Ombre

debating in terms of ‘foiblesse’ (27) and ‘force’ (28). Her adoption of this potentially gendered terminology when describing poetic language too, in 1619, has been noted by C. M. Bauschatz (‘Marie de Gournay and the Crisis of Humanism’, in Humanism in Crisis: The Decline of the French Renaissance, ed. Desan, Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1991, 279-94; 281-2). The ‘Bien heureux’ passage in the 1595 preface does not echo only III.8: essais I, 25 and I, 26 are also ‘re-applied’ in the condemnation of some male interlocutors who simply spit out useless knowledge ‘comme s’il estoit question de rendre compte de sa leçon et non pas de répondre’ (28).

22 My answer to the question – ‘What does Gournay seem to want?’ – would be not only recognition (J.-Beaufieu and H. Fournier, ‘Pratiques dialogiques et réécriture dans l’œuvre de Marie de Gournay’, Neophilologus, 83: 3, 1998, 357-67; 362) or validation of her literary qualifications (Cholakian, ‘Reading the Daughter’s Desire’) but, more generally, to be properly listened to.


24 1598, 1599, 1617, 1625, 1635.

Thus the passage was first cut – just as feminist passages were cut in the 1599, printed Proumenoir – and it was then eventually integrated into an autonomous feminist work not attached to the Essais. This example therefore confirms McKinley’s thesis that Gournay tends from 1617 onwards to make editorial decisions about the preface with a view to her own, other, autonomous projects.

And yet, paradoxically, when the ‘Bien heureux’ passage does reappear in 1626 – reappropriated thus as part of Gournay’s own œuvre, separate from the Essais – in other ways its connections to ‘De l’art de conferer’ are now stronger and more explicit than in 1595. More phrases from that essai are now incorporated: he who resorts to insults instead of arguments starts ‘une querelle d’Allemaigne’ (Montaigne) or ‘une querelle d’Allemande’ (Gournay); he who seeks to intimidate with academic jargon uses ‘bastelage’ (Montaigne) or ‘bastelages logiques’ (Gournay). Most strikingly of all, the newly expanded passage now ends with a direct reference:

Ces trois mots soient dits sur la conferance, pour la part speciale et particuliere des Dames: car de l’art de conferer en general, et de ses


28 McKinley, ‘An Editorial Revival’, 200-1. Gournay’s earlier transferral of the long version of the Essais preface into the volume containing her own Proumenoir may itself have been an early manifestation of this tendency, since it served to detach the preface from Montaigne’s corpus and attach it to her own (Cholakian, ‘Reading the Daughter’s Desire’, 158).

29 See Essais, III, 8, 927b; Gournay in Schiff, La Fille d’alliance, 91, 93. Cf. also ‘heurter rudement ma teste’ (Essais, III, 8, 928b) and ‘heurter sa preicewe teste’ (Gournay in Schiff, La Fille d’alliance, 91).
perfections et defaux, les Essais en traitent jusques au faïste de l'excellence. (93-4)

This prompted Gournay's pioneering biographer Marjorie Henry Ilsley to comment in passing that 'this treatise is in part a sort of feminine appendage' to 'De l'art de conferer'. But what sort of appendage? Taken at face value, Gournay's reference presents her text as merely adding a particular detail to a general map that Montaigne has already established. But it is a detail that changes the whole map or a supplement that turns out to be essential. For if Gournay's reader then shuttles back to 'De l'art de conferer', that essai is likely to take on a different colour, revealing its own exclusion of women and its own occlusion of the ways in which conférence is gendered. Gournay refers to 'De l'art de conferer' because she wants her readers to read it, but to read it through the lens of her writing.

Furthermore, Gournay's use of a case that is 'speciale et particuliere' - that of women - to change Montaigne's map of 'l'art de conferer en general' may also be a gendered re-application, against Montaigne, of his own argument, in 'De l'art de conferer' and elsewhere, that 'jugemens en gros' are inadequate (III, 8, 943b). After all, the second half of the Grief des Dames attacks men who, 'condamnans le particulier par le general', refuse to read works by women. This argument that women are not all the same, that particulars are irreducible to the general, is a recurring theme in feminist writing by Gournay in the 1620s.31

But, like notions of equality and difference in modern feminism, the notion that the particular coincides with the general can be a burden or else an advantage strategically. Whereas that

31 Cf. the 1626 Apologie pour celle qui escrit, Gournay, Fragments d'un discours feminin, ed. E. Dezon-Jones, Paris: José Corti, 1988, 147-83; 158: 'Parmi notre Vulgaire, on fagotte à fantaisie l'image des femmes Lettrées: c'est-à-dire, on compose d'elles une fricassée d'extravagances et de chimères: et dit-on en général, sans s'amuser aux exceptions ou distinctions, qu'elles sont jetées sur ce moule'. In the 1622 Égalité des hommes et des femmes, in Schiff, La Fille d'alliance, 55-86; 66-7, Gournay claims that Montaigne is on her side in distinguishing between particular women and woman in general: 'Il luy semble, dit il, et si ne sait pourquoy, qu'il se trouve rarement des femmes dignes de commander aux hommes. N'est ce pas les mettre en particulier à l'egale contrebalance des hommes, et confesser, que s'il ne les y met en general il craint d'avoir tort: bien qu'il peust excuser sa restriction, sur la pauvre et disgraciée nourriture de ce sexe'.

notion is sometimes against Gournay’s interest, it can also be in her interest, helping her to appeal rhetorically to women readers as a group, as in the very title Grief des dames. Indeed, Gournay’s detailed rewriting of the ‘Bien heureux’ passage builds stronger bridges from her to women in general as the targets of men conversing badly. For example, ‘ne me r’embarre’ (27) becomes ‘ne les [sc. Dames] rembarre’ (90).32

***

So much for conférence as a theme of Gournay’s writing. Where does that leave it in a reflexive sense, as a practice of hers? On a biographical level, Gournay seems to have been an avid practitioner of the art of conversation; she was considered to excel in it by at least one witness, the abbé de Marolles, who went out of his way to praise her ‘agreeable entretien’.33 The importance which she must have attached to this art, even in relation to writing, can be inferred from her argument in the Apologie pour celle qui écrit that a dull mind can mask itself more easily through the composition of a book than through conversation.34 From 1605 to 1615 she frequented the court of Marguerite de Valois, at which the Queen often proposed subjects around which conversation should revolve.35 From 1615 to 1628 she seems to have frequented the salon of Madame des Loges.36 She also held her own assemblies and gatherings, especially, it seems, from about the 1620s onwards.37 The reality of these countless exchanges is lost to us, but we can perhaps presume that they furnished Gournay

---

32 And ‘notre robe’ is added (92). Cf. Bauschatz, ‘L’œil et la main’, 101-2: ‘The Grief also presents itself as a general essay on the problems of all women – ‘des Dames’ – rather than a series of her own personal grievances (even though in 1595 that was what it seemed to be).’
34 Gournay, Fragments d’un discours féminin, 153-4.
35 Ilsley, A Daughter of the Renaissance, 96-100.
36 Beaulieu and Fournier in Gournay, Les Adviz, i, 33.
37 Ilsley, A Daughter of the Renaissance, 143-4. Beaulieu and Fournier, in Gournay, Les Adviz, i, 33, claim that she hosted a ‘salon littéraire’ from 1627 till her death in 1645.
with ample evidence of the belittling techniques which she amplified in the 1626 *Grief*, just as her unhappy introduction to court circles in 1588\(^{38}\) – after adolescent years which she later described as being devoid of educational *conférence*\(^{39}\) – may have been one inspiration for the original ‘Bien heureux’ passage of 1595.

Yet for Gournay, as for Montaigne, *conférence* involved not only conversation but also reading and indeed writing. We have more evidence about it as a practice of hers in this sense than as verbal conversation. As I said at the start, she seems to have conceived of her *imitatio* of Montaigne – even at its most conflictual – as dialogic friendship. For she describes in strikingly similar terms the epistemological reasons why the *Essais* are incomplete and why a person needs a friend. On the one hand, in the 1599 version of her preface Gournay defends the incompleteness with which Montaigne and writers like Plato handle their themes:

> manier, à leur mode, un point tout entier, n’est autre chose que le laisser à manier tout entier encore, comme une source inépuisable, à cent autres escrivains qui viendront après.\(^{40}\)

This ‘manquement’ in the handling of themes, even the fourteen fullest ones – which include ‘l’art de conférer’ – is epistemologically inevitable:

> Puis qu’estans hommes, ne nous peut faire veoir une chose pleinement et parfaictement, que les auteurs s’efforcent à faire que nous les voyons au moins toutes, ou plusieurs, le moins imparfaictement qu’il se puisse. (185).

The importance which Gournay attached to the whole of this passage of hers is indicated by the fact that it was a rare addition

---

39 Following the death of her father in 1577, her mother took the family in 1580 ‘en Picardie, à Gournay, lieu reculé des commodités d’apprendre les sciences par enseignement ni par conférence’ (1616 *Copie de la vie de la damoisele de Gournay*, in *Fragments d’un discours féminin*, 137-9; 138).
40 ‘Préface de 1599’, 185.
to the 1599 version of the preface, which overall was about a third shorter than the 1595 original. 41

A few pages later, having turned to the apparently different theme of the need felt by the ‘sage’ for a kindred great mind, Gournay gives such elite friendship exactly the same epistemological ground:

La connaissance de ceste sienne chétive condition humaine, ne luy permettant pas au surplus de s’asseurer, ny qu’il face, ny qu’il juge bien de luy mesme par tout, l’oblige à désirer un autre sage pour reformateur de ses devoirs. (192) 42

For Gournay, correcting the ‘manquement’ of Montaigne’s treatment of the theme of conversation was a way of continuing her critical conversation with her dead friend.

But Gournay the writer seems to have seen herself as oscillating painfully between participation in, and withdrawal from, conférence. Following the plea in the 1595 preface for her judgement on the Essais to be listened to, the short 1598 retraction was a non-preface in that it announced the editor’s temporary, provisional withdrawal from her half of the dialogue with readers about the Essais (perhaps because the 1595 preface had been more denigrated than listened to). The 1598 version ends:

Si je me renforce à l’advenir, je t’en dirai, sinon ce qu’il faudroit, aumoins ce que je pense et ce que je scay: ou si je ne scay rien, encore prendray-je la plume pour te prier de m’apprendre ce que tu scauras. Pour ceste heure, dis-je, ne te donneray rien que mes oreilles afin d’ouyr quel sera ton avis sur ce livre. Que t’en semble donc Lecteur? 43

While self-denigration is particularly extreme here, it occurs elsewhere in the young Gournay’s writing, albeit always with a possible tinge of irony. For example, in the 1595 preface the ‘Bien heureux’ passage ends with an extraordinary switch in focus from men to Gournay herself as a frustratingly fallible interlocutor, with

42 A version of this passage was already present in the original 1595 preface (49). Gournay eventually grafted the passage into her essay Que par nécessité les grands esprits et les gens de bien cherchent leurs semblables (Gournay, L’Ombre, Paris, 1626, 371-84; 381).
43 Quoted in Rigolot, Introduction to Gournay, 1595 ‘Préface’, 12.
slow wit, poor memory, and a painfully blushing face, all of which deny her the hearing she deserves (28). These lines were among the few in the 1595 preface never to return in any other version or indeed in any other work by Gournay. It is as if she quickly learned – perhaps following the traumatic reception of the 1595 preface – that, because of her position as a woman, self-deprecation in dialogue with her readers was a luxury she could afford much less than could Montaigne (whose own confession of faults such as poor memory Gournay defended in her prefaces from 1599 onwards). Certainly, she continues in later years to state both that her writing is open to being corrected by the judgements of others and also that it corrects others through her own judgement. But, as Jean-Philippe Beaulieu and Hannah Fournier have shown, Gournay’s later writing is often dialogic mainly in the sense that it responds to detractors, which it does much more regularly than Montaigne’s; she practises ‘une forme défensive de dialogisme, qui sans être la plus ouverte à l’autre (et pour cause!), fait un usage systématique bien qu’indirect du discours d’autrui’. Montaigne can afford to be more open to the opinions of others, whether in conversation or writing, because he is speaking or writing from a social position of strength. So Gournay the writer is, to adapt Anna Lia Franchetti’s felicitous phrase, an ‘être de dialogue’, although she might at times seem univocal or else marginalized beyond all dialogue. Re-reading Montaigne’s kind of dialogic writing through the prism of her own

45 Franchetti, ‘Marie de Gournay apologiste’, 177. The distance travelled by 1626 can be measured by the new sentence in the Grief with which Gournay admits that she herself has suffered insolent treatment in conversation: ‘Et suis si peu, ou pour mieux dire si fort glorieuse, que je ne crains pas d’avoüer, que je le sçay de ma propre experience.’ (90). The phrase ‘si peu ... glorieuse’ contains a fleeting echo of the painful self-deprecation of the 1595 preface, as if being humiliated should be a source of shame. But the correctio ‘ou pour mieux dire si fort glorieuse’ shows that the link between humiliation and shame has been evoked only now to be dispelled.
46 See L’Ombre, sig. * ijy, 82; Les Advís, i, 54.
48 Franchetti uses the phrase to describe Gournay’s view of the human being; ‘Marie de Gournay apologiste’, 173.
49 The view of A. Uildriks, as Beaulieu and Fournier note (‘Pratiques dialogiques’, 364).
50 The view of E. Berriot-Salvadore, for whom Gournay is necessarily ‘une voix étrangère et singulière’; ‘L’héritage de Montaigne’, 159.
changes one's perception of his, revealing that his relative openness to the Other is made possible by a secure sense that he is not in danger of being socially destroyed by that Other.\textsuperscript{51}

Neil Kenny
\textit{Churchill College, Cambridge}

\textsuperscript{51} This danger of social destruction is thematized by Gourmay especially in terms of calumny, as is demonstrated by Emily Butterworth in her unpublished doctoral work, currently in progress.