Letters and Letter Writing in Early Modern Culture: An Introduction

Gabriella Del Lungo Camiciotti
University of Florence (<gabriella.dellungo@alice.it>)

Abstract

The recently renewed scholarly interest in historical letters and letter writing has given rise to several studies which explore the culture of epistolarity from different perspectives. The article offers an introduction to recent scholarship on epistolary discourse and practices in early modern culture. Given the importance of letters as data for several types of diachronic investigation, the article focuses on three points that are crucial for an understanding of the relevance of epistolary discourse itself in early modern European culture. Firstly, letters are invaluable data for historical linguistics, to which they provide information for the history of languages, and sociohistorical and sociolinguistic research. A second recent field of investigation considers letters as documents and material items; the results of research in this area have contributed to the reconstruction of official relationships and information exchanges in past cultures and shed light on social interaction. A third, more traditional area of study, deals with the letter as a form that has given rise to many different genres across the centuries, both practical and literary.

Keywords: Critical Approaches, Letters, Letter Writing, Early Modern Culture

1. *Introduction*

The historical study of epistolary discourse is a fascinating topic in itself as, in addition to contributing to our knowledge of past linguistic stages of European languages, it opens a window on the practices of letter writing and reading of past ages and the socio-cultural reality they are embedded in. It provides an invaluable means of reconstructing ways of communicating both in the public and the personal spheres. From the linguistic diachronic point of view letter writing is a particularly rewarding object of study since epistolary discourse is perhaps the most ancient form of attested writing (Petrucci 2008) thus allowing the investigation of its features across time and cultures. Furthermore, epistolary discourse is a fully fledged textual genre in its own right, as it is distinguishable from other types of discourse by specific pronominal and linguistic features (Altman 1982), which render it a unique genre (Dossena and Del Lungo Camiciotti 2012); it is multifunctional and extremely varied in that the official and practical use of the letter has developed over the ages

and given rise to different textual subgenres ranging from the Pauline epistles incorporated in the Bible to the medieval letter as an administrative document or treatise of spiritual instruction, from scientific correspondence and newsletters in the seventeenth century to the epistolary novel of the eighteenth century, from personal to commercial correspondence which particularly developed in the late modern period. In brief, the investigation of correspondence may give insights into both particular aspects of communication in specific periods and the socio-cultural functions it serves.

Since the late twentieth century socio-linguists, social historians, and literary scholars have become increasingly interested in the letter as genre and letter writing as social and cultural practice. The renewed academic interest in letters has resulted not only in scholarly studies, but also in the publication of letter collections[1] and useful specialised bibliographies (just to mention three recent ones see Daybell 2005a, 2006a, Daybell and Gordon 2012) which have enlarged the amount of data and analytic tools available to scholars and helped define the relevance of letters to shed light on socio-cultural issues such as, for instance, the rate of literacy or women's education in past periods. The study of historical correspondence has also clarified orthographic variation and linguistic change in progress in past periods. Most scholarly contributions focus on the whole modern period as this was a great age of letters and letter writing all over Europe and beyond; and many studies tend to concentrate on the eighteenth century (see Postigliola *et al.* 1985) considering that it is in this century that the epistolary genre reached a perhaps unsurpassed sociocultural prominence as a form of communication and expression, and on the late modern period when correspondence reached an unsurpassed volume and social extension (Boureau and Chartier 1991). It is, however, in the early modern period that correspondence acquired the characteristics and uses that were to become typical of the genre in the whole modern period.

Given the importance of letters as data for several types of diachronic investigation, I will now make a few general points, which are all relevant to the present volume. Firstly, letters as data for historical linguistics. Within this field of study, they provide information for sociohistorical investigation, the history of languages, linguistic diachronic investigation, and historical sociolinguistics. Secondly, letters as documents and material items which can contribute to the reconstruction of official relationships and information exchanges in past cultures and shed light on social interaction. Thirdly, the letter as a form that has given rise to many different genres across the centuries, both practical and literary.

2. *Letters as Data for Historical Linguistics*

Let us start with the linguistic aspect. In the early modern period many socio-linguistic changes occurred throughout Europe. Among the external factors that most influenced the development and increased the use of vernacular

languages were literacy, urbanisation, and technological advances such as the introduction of the printing press. Printing often serves as a medium for language maintenance as shown by the preservation of the language of religion in the many religious texts that were printed in the early modern period. However it also had a positive effect on reading ability which increased significantly in this period. According to the social historian David Cressy (1980, 141-177) in early modern England full literacy amounted to ten percent of the male, and one per cent of the female population, though there were more people who could read than those who could write.

Yet, if we take into account correspondence as a source of data for investigating literacy, the figures proposed by historians turn out to be slightly inaccurate. Indeed figures indicated by historical sociolinguists who use correspondence as data are different, particularly as to women's ability to read and write their own letters. According to Nevalainen and Raumolin-Brunberg (2003, 202) modern sociolinguistic models can be fruitfully applied to earlier states of a language like English, provided that these models are fed with period-specific information. This raises the issue of the relevance of correspondence as a source of data in the early modern period both in general, since more and more people wrote their own letters, and specifically for women's overall growing literacy. Nevalainen (2006, 136) points out that, though it is only towards the end of the early modern period that women playwrights and poets begin to appear in print (among them Aphra Benn and Margaret Cavendish), yet there are private records such as personal letters and diaries that provide material for studying gender differences in early modern English. Studies by Nevalainen, Raumolin-Brunberg and other researchers of the Helsinki team in fact base their analyses on the *Corpus of Early English Correspondence* (CEEC), compiled at the University of Helsinki for the study of early modern English in its social context, where the proportion of female letter writers is about twenty per cent throughout the period (Nevalainen and Raumolin-Brunberg 2003, 46-47). Letter writing is thus particularly important for the study of women's language use and literacy; it is also important to analyse linguistic change led by female speakers/writers in this period (Nevalainen 2000, 2002). Nevalainen (2000, 38) argues in fact that the social variable of gender has an important role to play in the diffusion of supralocal features which in the course of time became part of the morphology of Standard English. The CEEC has also been exploited to shed light on the language of daily life in past ages (Nurmi *et al.* 2009). The language of personal letters has been shown to be close to spoken language in many ways (Biber and Finegan 1989, 1992). So the study of personal correspondence between identifiable individuals, male and female from different geographical locations, has not only provided a rich source of material for the study of language variation and change in the history of English since language change typically emerges from spoken language, but also enabled to reconstruct the interactional use of language in the social contexts

of everyday life (Nurmi *et al.* 2009, 1). Small corpora, such as those composed of the letters belonging to the network of a scientist or literary man, can also offer interesting insights into conventional as well as idiosyncratic expressions in epistolary discourse (Fitzmaurice 2003).

In addition to sociolinguistics, the pragmatic approach provides the tools for a deeper understanding of the process of letter writing and its related cultural practices. The seminal work by Fitzmaurice (2002a) on familiar correspondence addresses the familiar letter, both fictional and real, as a pragmatic act, an exchange between actors. In both this work and other contributions (Fitzmaurice 2002b, 2002c), the author sheds light on the code that marks the discourses of the eighteenth century through the analysis of linguistic interaction and politeness strategies that reveal the real bond between the correspondents. The focus is on the letter as an act designed to have some effect upon an addressee (Fitzmaurice 2002a, 11), but much attention is also paid to the ways in which writers construct the objects of their address and how this construction shapes their epistolary discourse. This approach overcomes the conception of the letter merely as a form of rhetorical self-presentation (on this point see Van Houdt *et al.* 2002) as in humanistic letters, which still tended to follow the rather formal tradition of the medieval *ars dictaminis* (on its waning in the early modern period see Camargo 2001). These letters were public as they tended to enhance literary fame and scientific reputation or deal with literary and scientific controversy, though they might also be used to stress patronage and friendship. By applying pragmatic analysis to correspondence, it is also possible to reconstruct epistolary historical meaning as dialogic: it is not just writing, but also reading, and their mutual relation that generates meaning. Letters are genuine interaction between correspondents in which their identities are linguistically and discursively produced. Moreover, the letter genre allows us to observe how authorial selves and participant relationships change from one letter to another and how such changes affect the linguistic style adopted by the writer (Palander-Collin 2009, 54). The individual's social rank hierarchical relationships are an important feature of early modern European society, and they are constituted by various discursive practices, for instance in English letters by patterns of self-mention (I) and addressee inclusion (You *vs* Your Lordship/Worship), because these overtly signal the degree of author presence in the texts and the author's wish to involve the addressee in the communicative situation according to the mutual relationship of the correspondents (Palander-Collin 2009, 54-55). In particular the analysis of address forms in salutations and closing formulae can reveal the variation characterising the interpersonal relationships between correspondents, like private/public, informal/formal, family/non-family, intimate/distant, as well as power hierarchies that are relevant in both family and non-family contexts (Palander-Collin 2010). In brief, historical socio-pragmatics sheds light on the ways in which texts are used to achieve particular goals in social interaction.

A field closely related to the linguistic one is that of the reconstruction of past cultures or sociohistorical contexts by using correspondence as data. Today novel attention has been paid to the reconstruction of past cultural practices related to the transmission of information through manuscript missives (Barton, Hall 1999; Schneider 2005; Bethencourt and Egmond 2007; Daybell 2012). Studies may be located at the intersection of historical pragmatics and the study of manuscript letters such as Williams (2013), who offers a multidimensional analysis of letters defined as a particular type of written communicative activity that can be best understood by viewing the original sources. By examining the epistolary manifestation of correspondents' attitudes towards each other through the use of speech acts, rhetorical strategies, and linguistic conventions of letter writing, it is possible not only to hear past epistolary 'voices' (Steen 1988), but also to shed light on familial and wider social contexts. Brant (2006), in her comprehensive study on the British world of the Enlightenment, focuses on eighteenth century personal letters to reveal how people used to live, think, feel, and react, and not last use language. She describes the many roles that can be played by letter writers – parent, lover, criminal, citizen, traveller, historian, Christian – thus illustrating the many uses of correspondence to express a polite discourse common to business and social life across Europe. The study of early modern epistolary discourse corroborates the picture of contemporary British society outlined by Bryson (1998) as a polite and hierarchical community where decency and deference emerged as rules of social interaction. 'Courtesy' and 'Civility' were among the values central to Tudor and Stuart assumptions and fears about the social and political order which caused a striking preoccupation with manners (Bryson 1998, 3). And this is reflected in epistolary discourse and its linguistic and pragmatic characteristics.

3. *Letters as Documents and Material Items*

As to the second point, letters as documents and material items which can contribute to the reconstruction of official relationships and information exchanges in past cultures, as is well known, have been traditionally exploited as a quarry of data by social historians. In the context of this approach, the letter is examined not just as a genre, but also as a thing, an object that generates meaning both social and personal through complex material signs and can be delivered to the addressee/s in a variety of ways, ranging from the individual carrier, often entrusted with an oral message in addition to the written one, to the emerging postal system under Charles I. Given the new phenomenon of the expansion in non-European territories and the growing number of migrants to the new world, transatlantic correspondence has also recently received scholarly attention (Earle 1999; Bannet 2005). The study of the letter as material object has contributed in no small measure not only to increas-

ing our knowledge of writing technology and postal conditions in the early modern period, but also to reconstructing past social practices by shedding light on the role played by letters in everyday life of men and women. These studies illustrate how letter writing was still a collaborative, layered process rather than a private two-way exchange. However, it is in this period that the letter emerged as an increasingly 'private' form used for a widening range of functions in the personal sphere. Studies of the letter as material object focus on how letters worked, who wrote them, the ways they circulated, the meanings they mediated, thus linking up with the socio-cultural history of letters.

Following this approach the works by James Daybell deal with these issues by employing archived manuscript material. His recent work on the materiality of manuscript letters, *The Material Letter in Early Modern England* (2012), highlights the importance of studying the material aspects of early modern texts to reconstruct their historical meaning: the physical characteristics of original letters shed no less light on epistolary culture and practices than the analysis of rhetorical and linguistic features of letters or their content. His work demonstrates the complexity of the epistolary form that was at once a genre, a text and an object, and at the same time a localised document influenced by factors such as status, gender, and generation. The technology of writing saw the emergence of the letter as an increasing private form – a technology of the self – utilised for an increasing range of personal purposes, emotive and affective, spiritual and imaginative, clandestine and covert (Daybell 2012, 233). The results of the investigation of letters agree with the findings of different historical approaches in that what emerges clearly is the changing notion of selfhood (see for instance Sawday 1997). Gary Schneider also deals with the culture of early modern epistolarity. He focuses on the content of real letters to delineate features of early modern letter writing culture including the meaning of the public and the private, the question of literacy, the significance of the scribe, the uses of epistolary rhetoric, and the nature of the bearer/post (2005, 19). Though he uses as primary texts real letters, not letter writing manuals, Schneider highlights the relevance of these texts as constituents of the culture of epistolarity (on English writing manuals see Austin 2007) in that they influenced the writing style of both official and family correspondence. Thomas Cromwell, principal secretary to Henry VIII, was primarily responsible for an epistolary revolution in beginning to administer the increasingly centralised state by employing the circular letter to organize and marshal the government. The transformation of the administrative machinery also included formal changes in the letter itself, which were not primarily the result of state centralization, but the effects of Renaissance humanistic letter writing practice and manuals. The reenergization of the familiar letter in the same period was also a consequence of humanism and its discovery of letters of classical writers (in the first place Cicero's *Ad Atticum* and *Ad familiares*) initiated the shift away from the rigid medieval forms of the *ars dictaminis*. Erasmus (on his

epistolography see Jardine 1994) in his influential *De Conscribendis Epistolis* (Basel 1552) added the fourth category of the familiar letter to the classical trio of persuasive, encomiastic, and judicial letters. Moreover pedagogical manuals contributed to the civilization process in that letter writing began to be recognized as social behaviour through which one's courtesy and civility were exhibited and measured: the letter could serve as an alternative mode of communication and expression in moments of embarrassment and anxiety (Schneider 2005, 40-41). By the sixteenth century, humanists had claimed the letter book and the letter writing manual as their own; these however proliferated in the age of courtliness, sociability and civility and were written and subsequently published by literary men and women. Early letter books and writing manuals had much in common with early conduct books. At heart, they were prescriptive, offering various epistolary templates for operating within a highly complex and codified society of orders that rewarded deference and obedience within the family and beyond (Eurich 2011).

Another area where Daybell's studies have been particularly relevant is the investigation of women's literacy and writing skills. As is well known, in the Middle Ages too women belonging to the aristocracy, gentry and mercantile strata used correspondence to exchange information and for other practical purposes particularly in the late medieval period (Cherewatuk and Wiethaus 1993; Couchman and Crabb 2005). They dictated their vernacular correspondence to scribes and had letters read in family circles. In the early modern period they began to write their own letters and widen the range of correspondents beyond family and kin by participating in friendly and patronage networks to the point that the epistolary genre became strongly associated with women. Thus the study of women's letters can elucidate ideas and practices of gender. It is in fact the case that language and gender interact to construct complex socio-cultural identities particularly in oral and dialogic exchanges; so the study of women's epistolary discourse may shed light on many socio-cultural aspects. The works by Daybell (2001, 2006b) demonstrate that a larger amount of correspondence by women than we imagined has survived from the Tudor to the late modern period. Though social status carried more weight than gender, thus rendering male and female letters similar and on the whole equally functional, in some areas gender could play a role in shaping the text, as in the letters of petition written by women or in letters to family and friends displaying greater informality of purpose. According to Daybell women's correspondence led to the emergence of more personal epistolary forms, and an increasing range of private, introspective, flexible purposes for which letters were employed (2001, 2; 2005b).

Letters as documents have medieval origins. In the late Middle Ages in particular, they had been used to circulate appeals to Parliament or opinions on specific policy issues. In the early modern period, they took the form of printed petitions which, together with handbills, mark the transition in politi-

cal communication from norms of secrecy to appeals to public opinion. For instance, the *Midwives Just Petition* is a political handbill though it seemingly indicates that the civil war was perceived as affecting midwives' practices. The petition reputedly submitted by the midwives of London to Parliament in 1643 in fact demands that the war be stopped because this business was suffering with so many husbands called away.[2] The political importance of letters as documents is also shown by the presence of unequal power relationships revealed by the attention paid to correct social salutations and greetings not only in official but also in personal letters in both the Middle Ages and later periods.

The importance of correspondence and communication to cultural exchanges and as a source for socio-historical studies in early modern Europe can never be sufficiently stressed. Leading historians examine the correspondence of scholars, scientists, spies, merchants, politicians, artists, collectors, noblemen, artisans and even illiterate peasants. Letter exchanges between people belonging to specific communities had a major effect on the expression and diffusion of ideas and emotions, linking the individual with the society in which he or she was acting. The existence of numerous networks of epistolary communication is in fact a specific feature of the early modern period in Europe. Wide-ranging networks (in terms of either geography or number of correspondents) and vast amounts of correspondence became rapidly a characteristic of the period, ranging from small circles of family members or famous humanists to scientific and artistic, political and professional circles (Bethencourt and Egmond 2007, 10). Migration in particular stimulated the spread of letter writing all over Europe and overseas, a phenomenon that was particularly important for the lower strata of society throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries in Spain and Portugal, but which also affected English migrants to the new territories, even though a bit later as well as migrants for religious reasons throughout Europe. See, for instance, the correspondence of John and Margaret Winthrop (Twichell 1894) residing in Massachusetts colony in the seventeenth century. In this context, letters helped to maintain family ties and establish competing, plural identities (Bethencourt and Egmond 2007, 21-22). Religious missionaries to the Americas or the East also corresponded with members of their order thus establishing an informative network parallel to that of travellers to new territories. For instance the Italian Jesuit priest Matteo Ricci wrote letters from India and China between 1580 and 1609. His letters from China in particular are rich in observations about the Chinese language and customs which contributed to the knowledge of that country in Europe. To sum up, a typical development of the early modern period is that correspondence began to be used in everyday life by members of virtually all social strata, most of them illiterate, who had letters written or read aloud on a regular basis for personal and professional reasons.

4. *The Letter as Genre*

The last point I would like to make is the adaptability of the epistolary form which gave rise to different written genres, both practical and literary. The letter has always been used for a variety of functions not necessarily related to the conveyance of news or the establishment of a relationship with an absent person and its very flexibility as mode of communication has historically allowed other genres to emerge from letter writing. Political institutions and businesses have communicated with people in the outside world through letters for a long period: medieval chanceries and the papal curia used correspondence to give publicity to their statutes through Letters Patent and Briefs, merchants used letters to exchange information about economic and political events, thus sometimes overlapping with diplomatic correspondence, and as financial instruments such as the letter of credit. Out of the many subgenres originating from the letter form we can also mention travel writing accounts linked to the historical expansion of the West, which developed into the late modern period in guidebook writing (Del Lungo Camiciotti 2013). Bazerman (1999) examines how a range of written business genres, such as bills of exchange and letters of credit, invoices and reports, have their roots in medieval letter writing. Also in the religious sphere the letter could be used to instruct a specific person or give spiritual counsel (see, for instance, in the late Middle Ages, William Flete's *Remedies Against Temptations*). These genres were all continued in the early modern period, when new genres and discourses also emerged such as the use of letters as a substitute for conversation and the development of epistolary discourse as narrative and literary text. In this period, letter writing led to the establishment of novel cultural and literary spaces made possible by the setting up of the national Post Office in the 1650s, which connected not only people, but also people with the capital city London and other places. How (2003) shows how the imaginations of letter writers were affected by the faster and more efficient postal services and how the opening up of mail routes created not just a geographical but also a mental space within which interactions of various kinds could take place.

Literary traditions concerning correspondence go back a long way. *Epistulae* by Cicero and Seneca set the model for humanistic epistles in Latin (for instance Poggio Bracciolini or Erasmus), which were followed by erudite vernacular letter collections. While the publication of letters as a literary genre was established in the sixteenth century, novels and essays in epistolary form emerged only in the seventeenth and especially the eighteenth century. In this period the interest in the role played by letters in society and people's lives rendered the letter, in some cases, an ego-document which developed into fictional literary letter collections and epistolary novels, which rose to artistic prominence in the middle of the eighteenth century in many European countries. Also the use by women of letters for more personal and introspec-

tive purposes, contributed to the rise of epistolary novels whose heroines were female letter writers. Thomas O. Beebee (1999) investigates the link between non-fictional texts and fictional forms no longer viewed as autonomous. According to this scholar letter manuals deserve close attention as fictional and historical letters continuously influence each other in producing ideologies of social order. In England the pioneering author was Samuel Richardson who wrote more than one epistolary novel: *Pamela or Virtue Rewarded* (1740) – which influenced the sentimental romantic novel, but also inspired the satirical *An Apology for the Life of Mrs. Shamela Andrews* (1741) by Fielding[3] – *Clarissa* (1748), *Sir Charles Grandison* (1753). Epistolary novels also appeared in other European countries. Just to mention some very famous ones I can cite in Germany Wolfgang Goethe's *Die Leiden des jungen Werther* (1774), followed in Italy by Foscolo's *Ultime lettere di Jacopo Ortis* (1802)*,* in Switzerland and France Jean-Jacques Rousseau's *La nouvelle Héloïse* (1661) and Pierre Choderlos de Laclos' *Les liaisons dangereuses* (1782). It is typical of these novels to focus on the relationships formed by the different letter writers revealing complex psychological states and commenting on moral and artistic issues. Another literary use of letters is the major role they play in drama. They survive in abundance in Shakespeare's plays (Montini 1993, Stewart 2008): 111 letters appear on stage in the course of Shakespeare's plays, and his characters allude to many more (Stewart 2008, 4). They are not just plot devices to further the narrative as they may be in novels but primarily illustrate the variety of uses they can be put to as material objects in the early modern culture of letters.

An intermediate stage between non-fictional and fictional letters is represented by the printing of personal correspondence: printed letter collections make private matters public, and so reveal how tenuous the divide personal/public is, and also shed light on the formation of ideas of community in England in the early modern period (Barnes 2013). In this period, there was a renewed attention to classical epistles dealing with personal cases such as Ovid's *Heroides,* whose influence caused the production of innumerable imitations in the second half of the eighteenth century in France (Aschieri 1997, 41). These display an inclination to love unhappiness that was not a new theme in European literature, but that now showed features announcing the attention this topic was to receive in romantic literature. The twelfth century true letters of Abélard and Héloïse, became a classic text describing unhappy love. In their letters, originally written in Latin, the correspondents are passionate both in the remembrance of lost love and the attempt to reconcile that love with their respective monastic duty. Though, years later, Abelard composed a letter of consolation to a friend (*Historia Calamitatum*) where he displays the typical medieval conception of love as disorder and a source of unhappiness. It is the tension between the two emotional poles of the letters that captured the imagination of early modern readers of the correspondence and rendered it a classic template for later love letters. In England Alexander

Pope published in 1717, *Eloisa to Abelard*, an Ovidian heroic epistle inspired by the story of Héloïse's illicit love and secret marriage to his teacher Pierre Abélard. The Ovidian epistle[4] linked with the early modern autobiographical instinct in producing a type of literature concerned with love stories which not infrequently took the form of the epistolary novel[5]. In France the publication of the love correspondence of Julie de Lespinasse continues the tradition of unhappy love stories expressed in letters by dealing with the literary topics of the *absentia amantis* and loneliness (Aschieri 1997). A similar body of English love letters that have come down to us is represented by *The Letters to Sir William Temple* (1987) written by Dorothy Osborne between 1652 and 1654. Ottway (1996) notes that Osborne's letters anticipate in some way Richardson's *Clarissa*. She argues that Osborne, like Clarissa, is involved in a dangerous affair, that, just like Clarissa, she is torn between her sense of duty towards her family and desire for her correspondent, and that her love letters are full of 'novelistic' glimmerings (1996, 149). Indeed, the border between fiction and non-fiction may be fuzzy in the early modern period: on the one hand the real letters by Julie de Lespinasse and Osborne show features similar to those of epistolary novels in that they express a sentimental autobiography where narration dissolves into psychological states, a conception of life as romance; on the other, novels use letters to confer reality and truth to their stories. The divide between fictional and non-fictional may be so tenuous that even real letters are today considered a literary genre. Anita and Frank Kermode in the *Oxford Book of Letters* (1995) draw attention to the pleasures and associated pains of making love by mail and how reading other people's letters offers thrilling and guilty pleasure.

In literary circles, real letters by writers might overlap with the writing of an epistolary novel; for instance during the period in which Richardson attended to the complex drafting of *Clarissa* and *Grandison*, he was also involved in epistolary exchanges with a large number of correspondents (Montini 2009, 22). In scientific circles the epistolary exchange between scholars and scientists also gave rise to a new genre: in England the correspondence of the scientific community which was to be called the Royal Society gave rise to the journal reporting findings of scientific research (Atkinson 1996, Valle 1999). Ideas, knowledge and academic disputations of the seventeenth century circulated in Europe across epistolary networks long before they appeared in scholarly publications (Gotti this volume).

As indicated by Bethencourt and Egmond (2007, 20-21) behind the double status of correspondence in early modern Europe – as a means of communication and literary genre – a multitude of functions and effects are hidden. To name some of its indirect but crucial effects: correspondence helped to create a community of learned persons inside and outside universities, who were interested in the advance of knowledge. It reinforced the ethos of the republic of letters. It revealed the public and private sides of those who

corresponded, in terms of both thought and emotions, and thereby helped to spread the cultural notion of private and public sides to personalities. It facilitated transfers from the culture of the notary or the secretary to the culture of the philologist, the literary writer, or the first 'journalists', who made a living from newsletters. Through the varying intensity of exchanges it helped to create centres and peripheries of intellectual life in Europe. Moreover, the correspondence of women had a major impact on the promotion of their status in different European countries, asserting new values and raising gender issues. It is not by chance that women participated actively in the emergence of the novel as a new literary genre, and that Madame de Lafayette used the letter in *La Princesse de Clèves* (1678) as a device to develop the narrative.

Hybrid sub-genres also emerged in the early modern period, such as the letter-journal and the newsletter, which gave rise in time to journalistic discourse. Letters might be printed with poetry, dialogues, and essays suggesting the acquisition of a narrative structure[6] on its own which differentiates them from the original manuscript letter motivated by some specific communicative goal. The transmission of news and intelligence refers to two opposite functions of correspondence, public and secret. On the one hand, print letters served a variety of practical public functions and encompassed a diversity of cultural meanings in early modern England. They engaged polemical debate, religious controversy, political propaganda, scholarly exposition, news reportage, among numerous other discourses (Schneider 2005, 183). In particular letters reporting periodical news have recently been given much attention (just to mention some very recent contributions: Raymond 2002, 2005; Brownlees 2011, 2012a; Fries 2012). News and information however could still also be transmitted through manuscript letters. Particularly the transmission of intelligence and diplomatic correspondence (Brownlees 2012b) relied on manuscript letters, secret post and even messages in cipher to keep information secret. In brief epistolarity had a crucial function in the context of early modern news transmission. The concept of "news" itself was a relatively novel one, and it modified early modern culture in significant ways. Professional manuscript newsletter writers began to flourish in the seventeenth century followed by print newsletter writing. The dissemination of news through print letters of news was a social mechanism in that individuals of all social ranks and positions exchanged a wide variety of information (Schneider 2005, 47-48).

5. *Concluding Observations*

I would like to conclude this general overview by summarising the contribution of recent methodologies to the study of letters and letter writing in the early modern period. As indicated by Nevalainen and Tanskanen (2007, 1) letter writing has always been a situated activity, so its material circumstances and discursive practices have naturally changed over time and may vary according

to context of use. The variety of ways in which epistolary communication can be contextualized derives from its diverse nature as social and discursive practice, and the analytical tools recently made available to scholars have opened up new ways of addressing these issues.

The most recent methodological approaches have offered novel insights in many areas as they range from the linguistic to the historical and literary. The use of corpus-linguistic tools to investigate digital collections has allowed the reconstruction of language variation and change in the early modern period and the combined approaches of discourse analysis, historical sociolinguistics and pragmatics have contributed to the conception of letter writing not just as individual but also as social and discursive practice and revealed how correspondents make use of politeness strategies to attain their communicative goals. The new attention to the letter as a material object has shed light on conventional epistolary aspects such as ways of transmitting messages and audience design within small and large correspondence networks. In brief, recent approaches to the study of real historical letters consider them primarily as context-sensitive social interaction rather than unique rhetorical pieces: the letter as activity rather than as product (Nevalainen and Tanskanen 2007, 9). Viewed from this perspective, writing letters becomes highly context-sensitive personal and social interaction and the shift of focus away from letters as product to letter writing as an activity shows the extent to which writers are the agents responsible for the outcome of the process (Navalainen and Tanskanen 2007, 9).

---

[1] Recent years have seen the flourishing of online resources, both catalogues and digital editions of letters, such as the *Early Modern Letters Online*, a catalogue and archive of learned letters covering the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries, the Warburg Institute's *Major European Sources for Early Modern Letters*, comprising inventories and editions, the WEMLO, *Women's Early Modern Letters Online*. Recent printed collections include Wall (1983), Steen (1994), and Moody (2003).

[2] Petitions could also be used for satire. For instance the *Poor Whores' Petition* (1668) was a satirical letter addressed from brothel owners and prostitutes to Lady Castlemain, lover of King Charles II of England, to request that she come to the aid of her 'sisters'. In the Bawdy House Riots of 1668, brothels were burned and looted by London apprentice boys and men, who could neither afford their prostitutes nor, due to their working contracts, legally marry.

[3] It may be interesting to note that the observations by Sarah Fielding in her *Remarks on Clarissa* (1749) are presented as a direct address to the Author (beginning and ending like a letter: *Sir,… Your very humble Servant*), where she reports some conversations among friends followed by two letters exchanged between Bellario and Miss Gibson, two participants in the fictional discussion about *Clarissa*. In the conclusion to the book, Sarah Fielding claims that the two letters complete the discussion in a sense by adding documentary evidence. She writes: 'These letters were shewn me by Miss *Gibson*, and thus, Sir, have I collected together all I have heard on your History of *Clarissa*, and if everything that Miss *Gibson* and *Bellario* has said, is fairly deducible from the story, then I am certain, by the candid and good-natured Reader, this will be deemed a fair and impartial Examination, tho' I avow myself the sincere

admirer of *Clarissa*, and *Your very humble Servant FINIS*'. To conclude, the divide between fictional/non-fictional letters is very fuzzy indeed. Sarah Fielding writes a real printed letter to Richardson containing an exchange of opinions in a form similar to the epistolary exchange (most opinions are directly quoted in inverted commas) and two presumably fictional letters. In brief she presents her observations on an epistolary novel by using an epistolary strategy.

⁴ The epistle genre of letter writing dates back to the Roman verse letters popularized by Horace and Ovid; these are epistolary poems that read as letters in that they are poems of direct address. In the Middle Ages letters as petitions and literary artefacts were often in verse as this was a mnemonic aid. It is a specific development of the Renaissance, as observed by Guillén, that following Petrarch's *Epistolae metricae*, the neo-Latin verse epistle became quite fashionable: Janus Secundus, Petrus Lotichius, Kaspar Ursinus Vellius, and many others in numerous European countries, from Scotland to Croatia and Hungary wrote them. 'The verse letter is closely allied and at times confused with the elegy, satire, and other poetic genres. This *contaminatio* is essential to the career of the genre during the Renaissance... Horace is of course the principal model for the subgenre of the "moral epistle," which is central and exemplary. But the paradigmatic role of the neo-Latin poems will also be significant until the seventeenth century; for example in Germany for Opitz… The verse epistle in the vernacular tongues… will have an intermittent history'. Guillén alludes 'mostly to the crucial wave in the 1530s: Luigi Alamanni (*Opere toscane*, 1532), Clément Marot (*Suite de l'adolescence Clémentine*, 1533), Garcilaso de la Vega ('Epistola a Boscán', 1534), and Sir Thomas Wyatt too – if we admit the *contaminatio* in some of the satires, to John Poins, or to Francis Bryan – and a little later Sá de Miranda in Portugal. England will have a second wave, from Lodge in 1595 to Donne (*Letters to Several Personages* 1633 and 1635) and Jonson (*The Forest*, 1616). In France,… the next great poet writing epistles in French will be… La Fontaine' (1986, 72).

⁵ On the autobiographical instinct in a variety of sixteenth and seventeenth century modes of writing in English, from letters and memoirs to pastoral, polemic and street ballads see Dragstra, Ottway and Wilcox 2000. See also Skura 2008.

⁶ On the development of the narrative quality of letters see Fludernik (2007), who examines a corpus of early correspondence (1400-1650) from a pragmatic perspective. It seems that the epistolary novel's narrative quality stems from the fictionalizing tendencies in the letter collections which were used as models for writing in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and from the *Lettres Portugaises*. These presumed love letters of a Portuguese nun were first published anonymously in Paris in 1669 and later attributed, as a fictional work, to Gabriel-Joseph de la Vergne comte de Guilleragues (1628-1685). They were translated into several European languages and according to Würzbach (1969) set a precedent for sentimental and epistolary novels such as the *Lettres Persanes* by Montesquieu (1721) and *Julie, ou la Nouvelle Héloïse* by Jean Jacques Rousseau (1761). In fact, early letters in Fludernik's corpus are extremely formulaic in structure and form, and peculiarly resistant to expressive and narrative elaboration. The expression of subjectivity became a key feature of non-fictional letter writing only during the Restoration period (Fludernik 2007, 242). According to the results of Fludernik's research, letters between the fifteenth and mid-seventeenth century are not predominantly narrative and it is only in intelligence reports that the most satisfying narratives are found in the form of first- person accounts of adventures and experiences (Fludernik 2007, 259).

Works Cited

Altman J. G. (1982), *Epistolarity. Approaches to a Form*, Columbus (OH), Ohio State University Press.

Aschieri Elena (1997), 'Un epistolario amoroso dei tardi lumi', in J. de Lespinasse, *Lettere d'amore*, ed. by E. Aschieri, Palermo, Sellerio, 11-49.

Atkinson Dwight (1996), 'The Philosophical Transactions of the *Royal Society* of London, 1675-1975: A Socio-Historical Discourse Analysis', *Language and Society* 25, 333-371.

Austin Frances (2007), 'A Thousand Years of Model Letter-Writers', *Filologia e Linguistica* 25, 2-20.

Bannet E.T. (2005), *Empire of Letters: Letter Manuals and Transatlantic Correspondence, 1680-1820,* Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

Barton David and Nigel Hall, eds (1999), *Letter Writing as a Social Practice*, Philadelphia (PA), John Benjamins.

Barnes Diana (2013), *Epistolary Community in Print, 1580-1664,* Aldershot, Ashgate.

Bazerman Charles (1999), 'Letters and the Social Grounding of Differentiated Genres', in D. Barton and N. Hall, eds, *Letter Writing as Social Practice*, Amsterdam (NL)-Philadelphia (PA), John Benjamins, 15-29.

Beebee T.O. (1999), *Epistolary Fiction in Europe, 1500-1850*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

Bethencourt Francisco and Florike Egmond, eds (2007), *Correspondence and Cultural Exchange in Europe, 1400-1700,* Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

Biber Douglas and Edward Finegan (1989), 'Drift and the evolution of English Style: A History of three Genres', *Language* 65, 3, 487-517.

Biber Douglas and Edward Finegan (1992), 'The Linguistic Evolution of Five Written and Speech-Based English Genres From the 17th to the 20th Century', in M. Rissanen, O. Ihalainen, T. Nevalainen and I. Taavitsainen, eds, *History of Englishes. New Methods and Interpretations in Historical Linguistics*, Berlin (D)-New York (NY), Mouton De Gruyter, 688-704.

Boureau Alain and Roger Chartier (1991), *La correspondence: les usages de la letter au 19e Siècle*, Paris, Fayard.

Brant Claire (2006), *Eighteenth-Century Letters and British Culture*, Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan.

Brownlees Nicholas (2011), *The Language of Periodical News in Seventeenth-Century England*, Newcastle upon Tyne, Cambridge Scholars Publishing.

Brownlees Nicholas (2012a), 'The Beginning of Periodical News', in R.Facchinetti, N. Brownlees, B. Bös and U. Fries, eds, *News as Changing Texts*, Newcastle upon Tyne, Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 5-48.

Brownlees Nicholas (2012b), 'Reporting the News in English and Italian Diplomatic Correspondence', in M. Dossena and G. Del Lungo Camiciotti, eds (2012), *Letter Writing in Late Modern Europe*, Amsterdam (NL)-Philadelphia (PA), John Benjamins, 121-138.

Brownlees Nicholas, Gabriella Del Lungo and John Denton, eds (2010), *The Language of Public and Private Communication in a Historical Perspective*, Newcastle upon Tyne, Cambridge Scholars Publishing.

Bryson Anna (1998), *From Courtesy to Civility. Changing Codes of Conduct in Early Modern England*, Oxford, Clarendon Press.

Camargo Martin (2001), 'The Waning of Medieval *Ars Dictaminis*', *Rhetorica* 19, 2, 135-140.

Cherewatuk Karen and Ulrike Wiethaus, eds (1993), *Dear Sister. Medieval Women and the Epistolary Genre*, Philadelphia (PA), University of Pennsylvania Press.

Cottone Margherita and Eleonora Chiavetta, eds (2010), *Letter Writing in Europe From the Middle Ages to Today: Genres, Models, and Transformations*, Acireale-Roma, Bonanno Editore.

Couchman Jane and Ann Crabb, eds (2005), *Women's Letters Across Europe, 1400-1700: Form and Persuasion*, Aldershot, Ashgate.

Cressy David (1980), *Literacy and Social Order: Reading and Writing in Tudor and Stuart England*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

Daybell James, ed (2001), *Early Modern Women's Letter Writing, 1450-1700*, Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan.

Daybell James (2005a), 'Recent Studies in Sixteenth-Century Letters', *English Literary Renaissance* 35, 2, 331-362.

Daybell James (2005b), ' "I wold wyshe my doings might be…secret": Privacy and the Social Practices of Reading Women's Letters in Sixteenth-Century England', in J. Couchman and A. Crabb, eds (2005), *Women's Letters Across Europe, 1400-1700. Form and Persuasion*, Aldershot, Ashgate, 143-161.

Daybell James (2006a), 'Recent Studies in Seventeenth-Century Letters', *English Literary Renaissance* 36, 1, 135-170.

Daybell James (2006b), *Women Letter-Writers in Tudor England,* Oxford, Oxford University Press.

Daybell James (2012), *The Material Letter in Early Modern England: Manuscript Letters and the Culture and Practices of Letter-Writing, 1512-1635*, Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan.

Daybell James and Andrew Gordon (2012), 'Select Bibliography: The Manuscript Letter in Early Modern England', *Lives and Letters* 4, 1, 8-35.

Del Lungo Camiciotti Gabriella (2010), ' "Sir, I wryte to you of aull thyngys, as well of japys as sad mattars": Letter Writing and News Spreading in Late Medieval England', in M. Cottone and E. Chiavetta, eds, *Letter Writing in Europe From the Middle Ages to Today: Genres, Models, and Transformations*, Acireale-Roma, Bonanno Editore, 281-291.

Del Lungo Camiciotti Gabriella (2012), 'An Atypical Commercial Correspondence: Negotiating Artefacts and Status', in M. Dossena and G. Del Lungo Camiciotti, eds, *Letter Writing in Late Modern Europe*, Amsterdam (NL)-Philadelphia (PA), John Benjamins, 184-213.

Del Lungo Camiciotti Gabriella (2013), 'From Letters to Guidebooks: Ruskin's *Mornings in Florence*', in J. Bamford, S. Cavalieri and G. Diani, eds, *Variation and Change in Spoken and Written Discourse*, Amsterdam (NL)-Philadelphia (PA), John Benjamins, 173-183.

Del Lungo Camiciotti Gabriella (2014), 'The Construction of Epistolary Identity in a Gentry Network: The Case of Jane Lady Cornwallis Bacon', in this volume.

Doglio Maria Luisa (1993), *Lettera e Donna. Scrittura epistolare al femminile tra Quattro e Cinquecento*, Roma, Bulzoni.

Dossena Marina and S.M. Fitzmaurice, eds (2006), *Business and Official Correspondence: Historical Investigations*, Bern, Peter Lang.

Dossena Marina and Gabriella Del Lungo Camiciotti, eds (2012), *Letter Writing in Late Modern Europe*, Amsterdam (NL)-Philadelphia (PA), John Benjamins.

Dossena Marina and Ingrid Tieken-Boon van Ostade, eds (2008), *Studies in Late Modern English Correspondence*, Bern, Peter Lang.

Dossena Marina (2012), 'The Study of Correspondence: Theoretical and Methodological Issues', in M. Dossena and G. Del Lungo Camiciotti, eds, *Letter Writing in Late Modern Europe*, Amsterdam (NL)-Philadelphia (PA), John Benjamins, 13-29.

Dragstra Henk, Sheila Ottway and Helen Wilcox, eds (2000), *Betraying Ourselves: Forms of Self Representation in Early Modern English Texts*, Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan.

Earle Rebecca, ed. (1999), *Epistolary Selves: Letters and Letter-Writers, 1600-1945.* Aldershot, Ashgate.

Eurich Amand (2011), 'Prescribing Gender: The Letter Book in Early Modern France', *Proceedings of the Western Society for French History*, 39, <http://hdl.handle.net/2027/spo.0642292.0039.002>, accessed 29 January 2014.

Fielding Sarah (1749), *Remarks on Clarissa, Occasioned by Some Critical Conversations on the Character and Conduct of that Work*, E-Book released January 8, 2009, <http://www.Gutenberg.org/files/27744/27744-h/27744-h.htm>, accessed 10 February 2014.

Fitzmaurice S.M. (2002a), *The Familiar Letter in Early Modern English. A Pragmatic Approach*, Amsterdam (NL)-Philadelphia (PA), John Benjamins.

Fitzmaurice S.M. (2002b), 'Servant or Patron? Jacob Tonson and the Language of Deference and Respect', *Language Sciences* 24, 247-260.

Fitzmaurice S.M. (2002c), 'Politeness and Modal Meaning in the Construction of Humiliative Discourse in an Early Eighteenth-Century Network of Patron-Client Relationships', *English Language and Linguistics* 6, 2, 239-265.

Fitzmaurice S.M. (2003), 'The Grammar of Stance in Early Eighteenth-Century English Epistolary Language', in P. Leystina and C.F. Meyer, eds, *Corpus Analysis: Language Structure and Language Use*, Amsterdam (NL)-New York (NY), Rodopi, 107-131.

Fludernik Monica (2007), ' Letters as Narrative: Narrative Pattern and Episode Structure in Early Letters, 1400 to 1650', in S.M. Fitzmaurice and I. Taavitsainen, eds, *Methods in Historical Pragmatics*, Berlin, Mouton De Gruyter, 241-266.

Fries Udo (2012), 'Newspapers From 1665 to 1765', in R. Facchinetti, N. Brownlees, B. Bös and U. Fries, eds, *News as Changing Texts*, Newcastle upon Tyne, Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 49-89.

Gotti Maurizio (2014), 'The Multifunctional Interaction Within Henry Oldenburg's Letter Network', in this volume.

Guillén Claudio (1986), 'Notes Towards the Study of the Renaissance Letter', in B. K. Lewalski, ed., *Renaissance Genres: Essays on Theory, History, and Interpretation*, Cambridge (MA)-London (UK), Harvard University Press, 70-101.

How J.S. (2003), *Epistolary Spaces: English Letter-Writing From the Foundation of the Post Office to Richardson's* Clarissa, Aldershot, Ashgate.

Jardine Lisa (1994), *Erasmus, Man of Letters*, Princeton, Princeton University Press.

Kermode Frank and Anita Kermode (1995), *The Oxford Book of Letters*, Oxford, Oxford University Press.

Lespinasse de Julie (1997), *Lettere d'amore*, ed. by E. Aschieri, Palermo, Sellerio.

Montini Donatella (1993), *Le lettere di Shakespeare. Saggio sulle funzioni della lettera nei testi shakespeariani*, Roma, Bulzoni.

Montini Donatella (2009), *Lettere su Clarissa. Scrittura privata e romanzo nell'Epistolario di Samuel Richardson*, Viterbo, Sette Città.

Montini Donatella (2014), 'Language and Letters in Samuel Richardson's Networks', in this volume.

Moody Joanna, ed. (2003), *The Private Correspondence of Jane Lady Cornwallis Bacon, 1613-1644*, Madison (NJ), Fairleigh Dickinson University Press.

Nevalainen Terttu (2000), 'Gender Differences in the Evolution of Standard English. Evidence From the Corpus of Early English Correspondence', *Journal of English Linguistics* 28, 1, 38-59.

Nevalainen Terttu (2002), 'Women's Writing as Evidence for Linguistic Continuity and Change in Early Modern English', in R. Watts and P. Trudgill, eds, *Alternative Histories of English*, London (UK)-New York (NY), Routledge, 191-209.

Nevalainen Terttu (2006), *An Introduction to Early Modern English*, Edinburgh, Edinburgh University Press.

Nevalainen Terttu and Helena Raumolin-Brunberg, eds (2003), *Historical Sociolinguistics*, Harlow, Essex, Longman.

Nevalainen Terttu and Sanna-Kaisa Tanskanen, eds (2007), *Letter Writing,* Amsterdam/Philadelphia, John Benjamins.

Nurmi Arja, Minna Nevala and Minna Palander-Collin, eds (2009), *The Language of Daily Life in England (1400-1800)*, Amsterdam (NL)-Philadelphia (PA), John Benjamins.

Osborne Dorothy (1987), *Letters to Sir William Temple,* ed. by K. Parker, London, Penguin.

Ottway Sheila (1996), 'Dorothy Osborne's Love Letters: Novelistic Glimmerings and the Ovidian Self', *Prose Studies: History, Theory, Criticism* 19, 2, 149-159.

Palander-Collin Minna (2009), 'Patterns of Interaction: Self-Mention and Addressee Inclusion in the Letters of Nathaniel Bacon and his Correspondents', in A. Nurmi, M. Nevala and M. Palander-Collin, eds, *The Language of Daily Life in England (1400-1800)*, Amsterdam (NL)-Philadelphia (PA), John Benjamins, 53-74.

Palander-Collin Minna (2010), 'Correspondence', in A.H. Jucker and I. Taavitsainen, eds, *Historical Pragmatics*, Berlin (D)-New York (NY), De Guyter Mouton, 651-677.

Petrucci Armando (2008), *Scrivere lettere. Una storia plurimillenaria*, Roma-Bari, Laterza.

Postigliola Alberto, Gennaro Barbarisi and Nadia Boccara, eds (1985), *Epistolari e carteggi del Settecento: edizioni e ricerche in corso*, Roma, Società Italiana di Studi sul Secolo XVIII.

Raymond Joad, ed. (2002 [1999]), *News, Newspapers, and Society in Early Modern Britain*, London (UK)-Portland (OR), Frank Cass.

Raymond Joad (2005 [1996]), *Invention of the Newspaper: English Newsbooks, 1641-1649*, Oxford, Oxford University Press.

Sawday Jonathan (1997), 'Self and Selfhood in the Seventeenth Century', in R. Porter, ed., *Rewriting the Self. Histories From the Renaissance to the Present*, London (UK)-New York (NY), Routledge, 29-48.

Schneider Gary (2005), *The Culture of Epistolarity. Vernacular Letters and Letter Writing in Early Modern England, 1500-1700*, Newark (DE), University of Delaware Press.

Skura M.A. (2008), *Tudor Autobiography: Listening for Inwardness*, Chicago (IL), The University of Chicago Press.

Steen S.J. (1988), 'Fashioning an Acceptable Self: Arabella Stuart', *English Literary Renaissance* 18, 1, 78-95.

Steen S.J., ed. (1994), *The Letters of Lady Arabella Stuart*, Oxford, Oxford University Press.

Stewart Alan (2008), *Shakespeare's Letters*, Oxford, Oxford University Press.

Twichell J.H., ed. (1894), *Some Old Puritan Love-Letters: John Winthrop and Margaret Winthrop Tyndal, 1618-1638*, New York (NY), Dodd, Mead and Company.

Valle Ellen (1999), *A Collective Intelligence: The Life Sciences in the Royal Society as a Scientific Discourse Community, 1665-1965*, Turku, University of Turku Press.

Valle Ellen (2007), ' "The pleasure of receiving your favour": The Colonial Exchange in Eighteenth-Century Natural History', in T. Nevalainen and S.K. Tanskanen, eds, *Letter Writing,* Amsterdam (NL)-Philadelphia (PA), John Benjamins, 131-153.

Van Houdt Toon, Jan Papy, Gilbert Tournoy and Constant Matheeussen, eds (2002), *Self Presentation and Social Identification. The Rhetoric and Pragmatics of Letter-Writing in Early Modern Times*, Leuven, Leuven University Press.

Wall A.D., ed. (1983), *Two Elizabethan Women: Correspondence of Joan and Maria Thynne, 1575-1611*, Devizes, Wiltshire Record Society, vol. 38.

Watt Diane (2004), *The Paston Women: Selected Letters,* Cambridge, D.S. Brewer.

Williams G.T. (2013), *Women's Epistolary Utterance. The Study of the Letters by Joan and Maria Thynne, 1575-1611*, Amsterdam (NL)-Philadelphia (PA), John Benjamins.

Würzbach Natascha, ed. (1969), *The Novel in Letters: Epistolary Fiction in the Early English Novel 1678-1740*, London, Routledge & Kegan Paul.