Practices of Unmasking:

Polyhistors, Correspondence, and the Birth of Dictionaries of Pseudonymity in 17th Century Germany

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In the 1580s, when Henry III, King of France, heard about a pamphlet written by a certain Stephanus Junius Brutus, with the title "Vindiciae contra Tyrannos", he sent a special envoy to the Netherlands in order to determine the author's identity.[1] Evidently it seemed very important to identify a particular pseudonym and to reveal the writer's true self. Generations of erudites, for example, tried to discover the author of the legendary book "De tribus impostoribus". In terms of the contemporary "historia literaria" the so called "notitia auctorum," for which the envoy was pressured to find information, was at stake. During the seventeenth century, the "notitia auctorum" increasingly became a problem, since in an age of simulation and dissimulation it became a frequent practice to publish polemical, heterodox, or somewhat explosive material anonymously or pseudonymously. In this respect, the learned world encountered a two-fold problem: a simultaneous information overload and information deficiency. There was an information overload, because of the sheer number of publications and the amount of information on these publications and their possible authors in circulation. At the same time a deficiency

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of the information existed, because it remained often unclear who the authentic authors of works such as the "Vindiciae contra tyrannos" were.

This situation triggered the creation of dictionaries of anonymous and pseudonymous works in the seventeenth century, culminating in the monumental "Theatrum anonymorum et pseudonymorum" of Vincentius Placcius, which was published in 1708. [2] Dictionaries such as the one by Placcius are symptomatic to find solutions to this dilemma by reducing both information overload and information deficiency: through the investigation of rumors and the examination of sources they generated order, which in turn could help to discover the identity of unknown authors.

The use of the metaphor "unmasking" indicates that the problem has to do with authority. The false names on the title pages often "shrewdly referred to an authoritative figure" in the field. [3] For whoever used it, the mask could mean an increase in authority; unmasking then automatically undermined this presumptuous authority. Apart from that, the act of taking away one's cover equally means loss of authority. The impostor's foul play had arrived at a dead end.

The following essay focuses on the ambiguities, which appear in the process of unmasking and undermining authority that the dictionaries set out to do. This focus touches upon a delicate issue in the early modern enthusiasm for the classification of knowledge and the mapping of the world of learning. [4] The enthusiasm could be found all over Europe, but it especially occurred in Protestant Germany and the Netherlands, where countless major and minor "Polyhistors" were at work. The effort to master a rapidly growing and extensive field of diverse knowledge included the desire to make the Respublica Literaria transparent and to determine the authorship of published works of all

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[2] Vincentius Placcius: Theatrum anonymorum et pseudonymorum, ed. Matthias Dreyer, with a preface by Johann Albert Fabricius, Hamburg 1708. On this work see the valuable study by Johannes Lemcke: Vincentius Placcius, Hamburg 1925 (Mitteilungen aus der Hamburger Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek vol. 1).

[3] „Es sind solche scripta, welche mit fingirten monstreusen Namens Larven mundiret, coloriret und vorgestellet worden / und die listiglich einem Auctoritaetischen Scriptori angedichtet sind." Mylius (see below footnote 54), Praefatio, p. 21, citing from the book by Peter Dahlmann: Schauplatz der masquierten und demasquierten Gelehrten bei ihren verdeckten und nunmehro entdeckten Schrifften, Leipzig 1710, a compilation made from Placcius.

[4] See e.g. Françoise Waquet (ed.): Mapping the World of Learning. The "Polyhistor" of Daniel Georg Morhof, Wiesbaden 2000.

kinds. [5] Scholars engaging in the compilation of Dictionaries of Anonymity and Pseudonymity thus nolens volens became a sort of "policing force of knowledge". But how could anybody, fulfilling this function, be at the same time part of the Respublica literaria with its premise of tolerance? To what extent did the supposedly so tolerant works of the "historia literaria" contain an underlying potential of symbolic and classifying violence? [6]

This topic needs to be approached from various perspectives. I will touch upon the theological (I) and legal (II) justifications, metaphors and contexts; apart from that, I will look at the scholarly contacts and practices, since unmasking involved above all learned correspondence (III), making excerpts and indexing (IV) – all similar to the painstaking work of a detective. In this process, I will stress the contradictions and ambiguities of unmasking (V). This will enable me to show how this particular type of lexicography led, in the course of the early eighteenth century, to the erroneous impression of a homogeneous literary underground and, moreover, even to a proliferation of clandestine works.

I. Theological Contexts

Withholding a person's pseudonym and thus stripping him of his authority had already been a well-established practice among Church historians and philologians. Especially with the arrival of the critical philology of the generation of Joseph Scaliger and Isaac

[5] Adrien Baillet, Placcius' correspondent and author of a dictionary of peudonymity himself, oracels: „We have reason to fear the multitude of books which grows every day in a prodigious fashion will make the following centuries fall into a state as barbarous as that of the centuries that followed the fall of the Roman Empire. Unless we try to prevent this danger by separating those books which we must throw or leave in oblivion from those which one should save and, within the latter, between the parts that are useful and those which are not." Adrien Baillet: Jugements des savants sur les principaux ouvrages des auteurs, Amsterdam 1725, p. XI ; cited according to Ann Blair : Annotating and indexing natural philosophy, in : Marina Frasca-Spada und Nick Jardine (Hg.): Books and Sciences in History, Cambridge 2000, pp. 69-89, here p. 70.
[6] On non-admitted potentials of aggression and limits of tolerance inside the Respublica literaria see Herbert Jaumann's preface to the volume he edited, Die europäische Gelehrtenrepublik im Zeitalter des Konfessionalismus, Wiesbaden 2001, as well as Anne Goldgar: Impolite Learning. Conduct and Community in the Republic of Letters 1680-1750, New Haven 1995, and Martin Mulsow: Unanständigkeit. Zur Mißachtung und Verteidigung des Decorum in der Gelehrtenrepublik der frühen Neuzeit, in: Historische Anthropologie 8 (2000), S. 98-118.

Casaubon, which engaged in a search for forgeries in the works of Antiquity, there emerged a massive process of restratification of authority.[7] The writings of figures such as Orpheus, Zoroaster, Hermes Trismegistus or the Sibyls, which during the Renaissance had been prominent figures of the "prisca theologia", were identified as late antique forgeries or pseudepigraphic. This had unexpected consequences for the reconstitution of the philosophical and theological canons.[8] Although this search was executed philologically, its roots were deeply entrenched in theology. Under attack were especially those texts, which contained alleged references to Christian truths and had therefore been so tremendously successful in the early and medieval Church. This type of pseudoepigraphical literature was now viewed as a fraud, because the supposed revelations of figures such as Hermes Trismegistus or the Sibyls would, according to Protestant theologians, undermine the uniqueness of Jewish-Christian revelation.[9]

In Germany, scholars like Hermann Conring in Helmstedt took over the task of Scaliger and Casaubon and applied it to German discourses. Conring used the tools of humanist criticism against the Paracelsians' belief in the „prisca theologia", or in his attacks against forged medieval documents of the Holy Roman Empire.[10] Philologists from Hamburg, Leipzig, and other places soon took up this type of scholarship.

At the same time, this purely philological and historical undermining of authority was complemented in the course of the seventeenth century by a deliberate theological and philosophical selection from the traditional canon of knowledge. Within Lutheran orthodoxy it became obvious that, in order to counter the danger of enthusiastic sectarianism, there was a need to establish a canon of philosophical schools, which would

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[7] See for example Martin Mulsow (ed.): Das Ende des Hermetismus. Historische Kritik und neue Naturphilosophie in der Spätrenaissance. Dokumentation und Analyse der Debatte um die Datierung der hermetischen Schriften 1567-1614, Tübingen 2002.

[8] The canon was reconstituted eventually in the early eighteenth century in works such as Jakob Brucker's Historia critica philosophiae, Leipzig 1742-44, which in a sense determines the philosophical canon until today. For this process see in general Giovanni Santinello (ed.): Storia delle storie generali della filosofia, vol. 2, Brescia 1979; Helmut Zedelmaier: Der Anfang der Geschichte. Der Wandel der Schichtsauffassung im 18. Jahrhundert in Deutschland im Blick auf das Problem der Frühgeschichte des Menschen, Habilitationschrift München 1996. On the problems of pseudoepigraphical literature see Wolfgang Speyer: Die literarische Fälschung im christlichen und heidnischen Altertum, München 1971.

[9] See Anthony Grafton: Protestant versus Prophet. Isaac Casaubon on Hermes Trismegistus, in: Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes 66 (1983), pp. 78-93.

[10] See Hermann Conring: De hermetica Aegyptiorum vetere et Paracelsicorum nova medicina, Helmstedt 1641; idem.: De origine juris germanici, Helmstedt 1643. On historical criticism in general, see Carlo Borghero : La certezza e la storia, Milano 1983; Markus Völkel: Pyrrhonismus historicus und Fides historica, Frankfurt 1987.

be immune to this lurking danger. It was meant to be resistant to any sort of enthusiasm or pantheism, espoused by Jakob Böhme and later by Spinoza. During the 1660s, under the leadership of Jakob Thomasius, philosophical and theological criteria were developed, which would become very influential in the following decades. According to Thomasius' "Schediasma historicum" of 1665, from a theological point of view, philosophy needed to guarantee a clear separation of Creator from Creation, of God from Nature.[11] It should thus only spring from Christian Aristotelianism, not from Stoicism or Neoplatonism. Accordingly, the history of heresies of early Christianity and of the Middle Ages provided vast evidences for this thesis. There the deviations of the problematic philosophical traditions became manifest, particularly among the followers of pseudepigraphical authors such as Dionysius Areopagita.[12]

For Thomasius, this fundamental restratification of the canon becomes the main business of the historian of philosophy. He was charged with the demanding task of uncovering and sorting out "pagan" elements in contemporary discourse of learning. During the early eighteenth century, a moral component was added as a criteria, which had its roots in theological debates as well: the Church Fathers, for instance, were seen as fallible human beings with interests and aspirations rather than sacrosanct authorities.[13]

The "Historia literaria", which flourished in Germany from approximately 1660 to 1740, drew heavily from these criteria. Although, in accordance with a quasi-juridical model, it initially collects and discusses information before it judges them, its verdict

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[11] Jakob Thomasius: Schediasma historicum, Leipzig 1665. Thomasius has the general intention to teach how to avoid "pagan" traps in philosophical and theological thinking. These traps embody materialism on the one hand and polytheism on the other. Thomasius views them as the major currents of Ancient Greek thought. According to Thomasius, both currents tend to lead eventually to idolatry: to the deification of matter or to the worship of false gods. On the problem of reading pagan books in a Christian world, see also Thomas Bartholin: De libris legendis, Kopenhagen 1672.

[12] See Ralph Häfner: Jacob Thomasius und die Geschichte der Häresien, in: Friedrich Vollhardt (ed.): Christian Thomasius, Tübingen 1997, pp. 141-164; Martin Mulsow: Moderne aus dem Untergrund. Radikale Frühaufklärung in Deutschland 1680-1720, pp. 291ff.

[13] See in particular texts that have been influenced by Jean Daillé's De usu patrum, like Jean Barbeyrac: Traité de la morale des pères d' Eglise, Amsterdam 1728, or Johann Lorenz Mosheim: De turbata per recentiores platonicos ecclesia, Helmstedt 1725. See Martin Mulsow: Eine Rettung Servets und der Ophiten? Der junge Mosheim und die heterodoxe Tradition, in: idem, Ralph Häfner, Helmut Zedelmaier and Florian Neumann (eds.): Johann Lorenz Mosheim, Wiesbaden 1997, pp. 45-92; Wilhelm Schmidt-Biggemann: Die philologische Zersetzung des Platonismus am Beispiel der Trinitätstheologie, in: Ralph Häfner (ed.): Philologie und Erkenntnis, Tübingen 2001, pp. 265-301.

appears either implicitly in the footnotes or explicitly in the text. [14] *Loci communes* or the names of sects help to structure the information; the association of traditions with certain heresies leads automatically to an increase or decrease of their respective authority.

This, of course, throws up the question whether or to what extent this undermining of authority, as it appeared in historical and philological criticism, influenced the creation of dictionaries of anonymity and pseudonymity. I would like to argue that this has been the case - at least to a certain extent - as one can see when looking at and identifying the similarities of those persons who participated in uncovering pseudoepigraphical literature and those who contributed essentially to our understanding of plagiarism and cryptonymity. No one less than Johann Albert Fabricius in this Preface to Placcius' „Theatrum" notes ancient pseudopepigraphy as the origin of pseudonymous writing. [15]

But let us first take a look at the metaphors of unmasking. Dictionaries of cryptonymity of the mid-seventeenth century carry eloquent titles such as "Larva detracta", "Auteurs déguisez", and "Visiera alzata". [16] These titles seem to target the strategies of simulation and dissimulation, which were widely diffused and discussed during the seventeenth century. [17] Yet the contexts, in which these strategies had to be interpreted, were very different. They originated from different areas such as criminal

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[14] On the Historia literaria see Waquet (footnote 4); Helmut Zedelmaier: Historia literaria. Über den epistemologischen Ort gelehrten Wissens in der ersten Hälfte des 18. Jahrhunderts, in: Das 18. Jahrhundert 22 (1998), pp. 11-21. Martin Mulsow and Helmut Zedelmaier (eds.): Skepsis, Providenz und Polyhistorie. Jakob Friedrich Reimmann, Tübingen 1998.

[15] See Fabricius: Ad lectorem, in Placcius (footnote 2), fol. (a)1r: "Antiquissimum videtur fuisse genus eorum, qui nomen suum latere voluerunt ideo, quod lectorum interesse arbitrati sunt auctorem monumenti alicujus, vel plane ignorari vel diviniorem atque augustiorem credi, quo major videlicet esset traditorum auctoritas, & utilia praecepta atque inventa praeclara tanto facilius imbiberentur animis, latiusque ac lubentius admitterentur, verterenturque in usum, atque in posteros usque propagarentur." Fabricius cites passages from Galenus, Diodorus Siculus and Anebon (in the Mysteria Aegyptiorum) concerning Hermes Trismegistus, and he discusses at length the problem of legislators, who pretended to have enjoyed divine help in receiving the laws, like Numa Pompilius with the nymph Egera. Fabricius especially refers to the problem, if such a suspicion could apply as well to Moses (idem suspiciari de Moses") – which he rejects. Thus he uses his foreword to Placcius for an apologetic discouse against the charges discussed under the topic of "De tribus impostoribus". This illustrates once again how intensly this topic was discussed in Hamburg around 1700.

[16] Larva detracta, h.e. brevis expositio nominum, sub quibus scriptores aliquot pseudonymi recentiores imprimis latere voluerunt, Veriburgi 1670 (a pirated reprint of Geisler's dissertation [see below footnote 25]); Adrien Baillet: Auteurs déguisez sous de noms étrangers, emprunez, supposez, feints à plaisir, chiffrez, renversez, retournez, ou changez d'une langue en une autre, Paris 1690; [Angelo Aprosio:] La visiera alzata. Hecatoste di Scrittori, che vaghi d'andare in Maschera fuor del tempo di Carnouale sono scoperti da Gio. Pietro Giacomo Villani, Parma 1689.

[17] See especially Jean-Pierre Cavaillé : Dis/Simulations. Jules-César Vanini, Francois La Mothe Le Vayer, Gabriel Naudé, Louis Machon et Torquato Accetto. Religion, morale et politique au XVIIe siècle, Paris 2002. In this book, the older literature is listed.

law, heresy, and carnival. Criminal law identifies authors who use a pseudonym as potential impostors. In a similar way this holds true for the heretic who presents himself under the mask of orthodoxy. However, this metaphor of a mask inevitably leads us into the world of theater. This is generally the location where people put on masks in order to play roles. Even the Latin term "persona" provides us with a clue: it originates from "personare", which means, "sound through".

Radical authors themselves who stand on the side of the victims of the policing force of knowledge and whose voices we therefore need to hear have used these metaphors in order to justify the concealment of their true identity and the dual nature of their persona. [18] In return, frontispieces such as the one of Placcius' "Theatrum" illustrate how these authors are deprived of their masks. [19] Evidently processes of masking and unmasking have to be viewed as complementary phenomena, which depending on the chosen perspective, were interpreted in entirely different ways. [20]

Yet these types of metaphors could go well beyond the realm of theater, namely the carnival. In Italy, particularly in Venice, it had become common practice to extend the customs of carnival to larger periods of the year. [21] In allusion to this context Angelo Aprosio, a learned monk of Genoa and Venice, chose for his dictionary of pseudonymity, which was published in 1689, the subtitle "Hecatoste di Scrittori, che vaghi d'andare in maschera fuor di tempo di Carnevale". [22] For Aprosio, pseudonymity leads the carnivalesque, playful and subversive to transcend its own legitimate limits. The detective scholar deprives the carnivalesque writers of their larvae and is thereby affected by their playfulness, which is illustrated by the fact that Aprosio published his own works under the pseudonym, "Giacomo Villani". This Italian connoisseur, who is mainly concerned with polemical works of the Italian literary baroque and who himself was a member of the libertine Venetian "Accademia degli Incogniti", lacks in a pleasant way of

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[18] See Martin Mulsow: Die zwei Körper des Libertins, forthcoming in: Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung.

[19] See my: Jedem Autor seine Maske, in: Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung vom 30.1.2002, S. N 3.

[20] I cannot follow here the question, whether the undermining of authority simply converts the strategies of authorizing or whether it follows its own rules.

[21] This custom is mentioned – for the 18th century - in Casanova. For earlier times, see in general Peter Burke: The Historical Anthropology of Early Modern Italy. Essays on Perception and Communication, Cambridge 1987.

[22] Aprosio: La visiera alzata (footnote 16).

the severity with which matters like these were commonly treated.[23] Thus, in Venice, the libertine culture of carrying an incognito results into efforts to look at what lies beneath the incognito.

II. Juridical Contexts

So let us take a look at how processes of unmasking have been judicially legitimized.[24] Jacob Thomasius' writings were not only influential for the historiography of philosophy and theology in Germany, but also for juridical matters of the Republic of Letters.

The jurist Friedrich Geisler, a former student[25] and later colleague of Thomasius, published one of the first treatises on the problem of pseudonymity in 1669, which included also an exemplary catalogue of already identified pseudonyms. He titles it "De mutatione nominum" and approaches the problem from the perspective of criminal law. Geisler tackles the question, when the change of a personal name becomes a criminal offense and when it does not. He comes to the conclusion that a change of name, which involves any form of fraud ("dolus") with the intention to privately or publicly improve one's position, should be persecuted. Not to be persecuted are only those changes of name, which occur under the exceptional circumstances of fear of violence or disparagement.[26]

But these definitions were not helpful to solve problems such as authorship in the Republic of Letters. A decisive step forward in facing these problems was Jakob

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[23] On Aprosio and the „Accademia degli Incogniti", see Giorgio Spini: Ricerca die libertini. La teoria dell' impostura delle religioni nel seicento italiano, 2nd. ed., Firenze 1983, pp. 145ff.

[24] See Herbert Jaumann: Öffentlichkeit und Verlegenheit. Frühe Spuren eines Konzepts öffentlicher Kritik in der Theorie des „plagium extrajudiciale" von Jakob Thomasius (1673), in: Scientia Poetica. Jahrbuch für Geschichte der Literatur und der Wissenschaften 4 (2000), pp. 62-82. At p. 70, Jaumann emphasizes the importance of the juridical terminology: „Zwischen dem 16. und dem 18. Jahrhundert wird es zunehmend üblich, die komplexer werdenden Sachverhalte und Konflikte innerhalb der Gelehrtenkultur mit Metaphern aus dem juristisch-politischen Bereich zu benennen [...]."

[25] See Friedrich Geisler: De mutatione nominum, Leipzig 1669. I cite this text after ist reprint in Placcius' Theatrum (footnote 2). There it appears as an appendix with proper page count. p. 84 (No. 8, footnote 8).

[26] Ibd. p. 73 (§ 48ff.): „Licita adeoque a dolo remota est mutatio nominis 1. si fit ob metum violentiae, ut ita nobis nostrisque vim defendamus et pericula effugiamus, 2. si fit ob metum Infamiae aut Perjurii, 3. si fit spe Hereditatis aut legati, 4. si fit amore Modestiae, Honestatis odioque Turpidinis, 5. si fit ob novum vitae statum vel in Oeconomicis vel in Scholasticis vel in Ecclesiasticis vel denique in Politicis." p. 75 (§ 58): „Illicita adeoque cum dolo conjuncta mutatio nominis est, quae commodo Privato vel Publico iniquiorem conditionem inferre intendit."

Thomasius' discussion of the problem of plagiarism, which appeared in 1673.[27] In the same way as the question of pseudonymity reflects contemporary practices of simulation and dissimulation, the question of plagiarism reflects a new, contemporary sensibility for intellectual property, for definite attribution of authorship, and for a form of public scholarship and science.[28] Until then, plagiarism too, had been approached in terms of fraud and theft. Thomasius, however, pointed into a different direction. He suggested conceiving plagiarism not as fraud but as lie, the exact opposite of a sophisticated exchange between human beings.[29] The "art of lying" was widespread indeed in intellectual circles and Thomasius intended to emphasize that it undermined the foundation of intellectual life, namely the exchange.[30]

Plagiarism as a sort of mendacious appropriation transcended often-generational boundaries and it was generally not possible to persecute it; this is why Thomasius called it "extrajudicial". Therefore this was not a matter of stately jurisdiction, but rather a matter of the community of scholars, which should be considered as a kind of court of justice.[31] Thomasius' work included a "catalogus plagiariorum" - like Geisler's included a "catalogus pseudonymorum" in which he listed over a hundred plagiators in order to expose them to public shame.

Thomasius was a good friend of Vincentius Placcius, the colleague of his from Hamburg, who like him worked in the fields of moral philosophy and Historia literaria.

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[27] Jakob Thomasius (praes.) / Johann Michael Reinel (resp.): De plagio literario, Leipzig 1673. I cite from the later edition, Schwabach 1692. See on this edition Jaumann (footnote 24).

[28] See Pamela O. Long: Openness, secrecy, authorship: technical arts and the culture of knowledge from antiquity to the Renaissance, Baltimore 2001. Long argues that during the 17th century, especially through Francis Bacon and in the context of the Royal Society, there emerged a new ideal of a public science. Placcius was in contact with these circles, insofar as his teacher Joachim Jungius was committed to Bacon's ideals, and as his other teacher Peter Lambeck was one of the first men, who tried to accomplish the desideratum, articulated by Bacon, of a Historia literaria. See also William Eamon: Science and the Secrets of Nature. Books of Secrets in Medieval and Early Modern Culture, Princeton 1994, pp. 319ff., and Adrian Johns: The Nature of the Book : Print and Knowledge in the Making, Chicago 1998.

[29] Thomasius (footnote 27), fol. 22v.: "Plagium literarium est mendacium justitiae commutativae quo quis debitam alteri opinionem eruditionis, cogitata ejus peculiaria quomodocunque ad se delata maligne proferendo pro suis, mentionemque alterius, ubi ea fieri debeat, intermittendo, quaerit."

[30] See Perez Zagorin: Ways of lying: dissimulation, persecution, and conformity in Early Modern Europe, Cambridge, Mass. 1990. In his preface to the "Theatrum" (footnote 2), Mathias Dreyer, who had managed to publish Placcius' work, emphasizes strongly the problems of simulation, dissimulation and lying, and uses a theologically loaded language for his attack against cryptonymous publishing. See e.g. fol.)(1v: "Larvatum ex orco Daemonem ipsa mentiendi libido tantopere denigravit, ut odiosum Diaboli nomen fere omnes exhorresceant."

[31] De plagio literario (footnote 27), p. 62r. See Jaumann (footnote 24), p. 72.

During the 1670s, both men entertained a vivid exchange of letters. They mutually seem to have supported each other by exchanging information. On September 25, 1675, Placcius wrote in a letter to Thomasius: "If you expect my additions ("accessiones") to your list of plagiators once I write back, then I will rush to […] revise and complete them and make them ready to send, as long as I am not bound by public or private, theoretical or practical obligations. But under the premise, that you will not use them in any way different than yours, and I will not be able to elaborate on what I provide, so that I could publish it separately. I will only provide certain references for you, where you can check those information, which I have noted as missing in your work." [32] What is it that Placcius refers to? Did he exchange cases of plagiarism for cases of pseudonymity? It almost appears to be like that. Possibly Placcius' additions go even far beyond that. As evidence I can point to a work from 1679 with the title "Ad dispuationem M. Jacobi Thomasii De plagio literario accessiones", which explicitly refers to "additions". [33] In it we find the same argument from "De plagio literario" in a more developed form, and the catalogue of names has grown. This suggests, that Placcius' additions, possibly in combination with additions from other scholars, have been published anonymously by Thomasius, just as Placcius had recommended it.

We do not know, whether Placcius made contributions only to the catalogue, or if he was also involved in the development of the text itself. As Herbert Jaumann has pointed out, the "Accessiones" supplemented the argumentation in a direction, which demands the institution of critics as watchmen for cases of plagiarism. It even postulates a sort of "public" criticism: "Every scholar or scholarly society, from which we know many today,

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[32] Placcius to Thomasius, 25.9.1675, StuB Hamburg, Sup. Ep. 71, 32; cited after Lemcke (footnote 2), p. 26: „Ad plagiarios tuos Accessiones, quando expetas ubi rescivero, videbo, ut quantum per occupationes alias publico-privatas theoretico-practicas licuerit, eas in mundum [?] redigere maturem atque mittam: sed ea lege ne aliter quam pro tuis utare, nec enim otium erit mihi sic elaborandi, quae dabo, ut seorsim edi queant. Imo loca sola indicabo, unde petere queas, quae tuis adhuc deesse notavi."

[33] Ad Disputationem M. Jacobi Thomasii De plagio literario accessiones, quam I. Supplementum Catalogi plagiariorum; II. Locum Joannis Bonae Cardinalis de hoc argumento; III. Praefationem de vitiis scribentium libros, ipso Disputationis Actui praemissam; IV. Nucleum Disputationis maxime theoreticum, thesibus paucis & brevibus comprehensam; V. Summaria Dissertationis juxta seriem paragraphorum; VI. Indicem plagiariorum, vel quasi, alphabeticum exhibet, Leipzig 1679; a reprint of these texts, together with a reprint of the original dissertation, was published in Schwabach 1692. Jaumann (footnote 24), pp. 71f., claims that the publication of 1692 might be due to Thomasius' „respondent" Reinel, but this, I would like to emphasize, does by no means mean that the "accessiones" are written by Reinel.

is most effective by his own multi-sided reading."[34] A new form of institutional authority had been proposed.

III. Collective Hunt: Placcius' Information Network

Both Thomasius and Placcius designed the theoretical concept of a learned "Public" and practiced it at the same time. They form the connecting points of the axis Leipzig-Hamburg, which not by accident links two cities, which were major centers of commerce and publishing and were unique in Germany regarding their well developed structures of communication. These circumstances made them ready for the attempt of a critical public, which as we know, became reality a little later with the emergence of learned periodicals around 1700.[35]

Looking at Placcius' efforts to stimulate the accumulation of critical knowledge about pseudonymous and anonymous writings, we will see that it shared striking similarities with Jakob Thomasius' strivings to collect additions to his work "De plagio literario". Both projects represent parts of the larger attempt to establish a critical public, which settles matters of quasi-judicial nature such as pseudoepigraphics, plagiarism, and name changes. Before the 1670s, erudites and polyhistors had reacted against these trends by compiling long lists of names and cases; now a major ingredient was added with the invocation of the community of scholars to function as watchmen.[36] The above quoted passage in the "Accessiones" (by Placcius?) refers to a "multi-sided reading". What he means by the term "multi-sided reading" ("lectio multijuga"), we will see later on, when we will discuss in greater detail Placcius' scholarly practices. The learned community, as the "Accessiones" suggest, is charged with the task of exposing every single case of plagiarism (and one can add here: cryptonymity) and to take over the quasi-juridical roles of prosecutor, witness, and judge. To what Kant referred as "Court of Reason" about one

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[34] Accessiones, in: De plagio literario (footnote 27), p. 47 : « Itaque ut eruditus quisque, vel Eruditorum aliqua Societas, qualem hodie non unam novimus, maxime pollebit lectione multijuga."

[35] Jaumann (footnote 24), p. 82.

[36] See Jaumann (footnote 24), p. 81.

hundred years later, appears here in an embryonic form - in *historicis* and as a collective enterprise.

In 1674, a year after the appearance of Thomasius' work, Placcius published a treatise under the title "De scripis et scriptoribus anonymis atque pseudonymis syntagma". It is a compilation, which consists of prints of two dictionaries of anonymous works (by Rode and Skaven) and two of his own long lists, in which he reveals "scriptores occultae".[37] This book is regarded as the actual beginning of research in cryptonymous works.[38] Already in the composition of this book Placcius had been able to rely on the support from friends in the scholarly community such as Gerhard von Mastricht, Gottfried Melm, and Martin Fogel. The publication of "Syntagma", however, unleashed a wave of activities, through which, partly by means of letters, partly by means of shorter tracts, the number of discovered cryptonyms was increased tremendously. This illustrates that the time was ripe for this kind endeavor, and that the Respublica literaria worked beautifully as institution of exchange.

In 1692, Placcius took up and explicitly increased this momentum by printing an "Invitatio amica", which stated – like in a contest – that the goal was to reach the magic mark of four thousand identified cryptonyms.[39] It worked. The goal was accomplished. The "Theatrum anonymorum et pseudonymorum", which was published finally in 1708, nine years after Placcius' death, lists 2777 identified anonymous works, 2930 identified pseudonyms, and in addition to that, 519 identified cryptonymous works in Hebrew. This publication marks one of the triumphs of German and European polyhistorical scholarship.

The lively participation of different scholars, which renders the "Theatrum" into a true collective enterprise, can still be documented meticulously today. The State- and University Library of Hamburg holds numerous materials which Placcius, the center of

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[37] Vincentius Placcius: De scriptis et scriptoribus anonymis atque pseudonymis syntagma, Hamburg 1674. Placcius' own contribution reveals the authors of 617 anonymous and 909 pseudonymous works: « De scriptoribus occultis detectis tractatus duo, quorum prior anonymos detectos in capita, pro argumentorum varietate distinctos, posterior pseudonymos detectos catalogo alphabetico exhibet. »

[38] See Lemcke (footnote 2).

[39] Invitatio amica ad Antonium Magliabecchi aliosque Illustres et Clarissimos Reip. Litterariae atque ibrariae Proceres, Fautores, Peritos, super Symbolis promissis partim et destinatis ad Anonymos et Pseudonymos Detectos et Detegendos Vincentii Placcii Hamburgensis. Accedit Delineatio praesentis status et consilium atque votum, absolvendi D.V. ac edendi Operis Totius, ultra 4000 Autores detectos exhibituri. Cum indicibus adjunctis necessariis, Hamburg 1689.

this information network, harbored and worked on: there are letters and lists, that were sent to him by his correspondents, and annotated print copies of dictionaries of crypotonymy. The main bundle of papers has the call number Ms. Hist. Litt. Quart 23. Apart from that, there are a number of other relevant documents there. [40] This treasure enables us to watch Placcius work on his "Theatrum", to observe his practices and to reconstruct his scholarly exchange as well as his points of view.

With regards to his correspondence, one can count at least forty, but there were possibly even more co-workers and correspondents. This undertaking became a collective hunt for hidden authors. The countries of origin of the correspondents ranged from Sweden to Italy, from France to Hungary. Leibniz was one of them, and so were Baillet and Magliabecchi. But one has to note a definite concentration of scholars from Northern Germany and Denmark: approximately three quarters of them came from cities such as Hamburg, Lüneburg, Verden, Glückstadt, Flensburg, Hannover, Wolfenbüttel, Greifswald, Lübeck, and Copenhagen. [41]

IV. Practices of Unmasking

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[40] Thanks to the kindness of Ms. Elke Matthes of the State and University Library of Hamburg, I am able to cite here from her first draft of an entry for the manuscript catalogue, which she is currently preparing: „Ungebundenes Konvolut von Beiträgen mehrerer Mitarbeiter, die häufig wörtlich im "Theatrum" abgedruckt und deren Namen Vincent Placcius (s. hist. litt. 2° 28A, S.203) größtenteils auch in seiner Einladung zur Mitarbeit, der "Invitatio amica", gedr. Hamburg 1689, genannt hat. Insgesamt 446 Blätter und Blattausschnitte unterschiedlichsten Formats, häufig von Placcius mit Nummern, Namen der Absender mit Datum sowie inhaltlichen Notizen versehen und nach Bearbeitung durchstrichen, zum Teil in Umschlägen aus Druckmakulatur oder als Schedae majores und Schedae minores zusammengefaßt. Neben einzelnen Druckfragmenten (s.u.) und vielen kleinen, bisher noch nicht identifizierten Mitteilungen verschiedenster Hände finden sich - soweit von Placcius selbst angegeben - Beiträge aus den Jahren 1684 bis 1698" von den [im folgenden aufgeführten] Gelehrten." In addition to that papers, one has to compare the correspondence of Placcius, in the Supellex epistolica Uffenbachi et Wolfiorum, 2° 71 (178 letters and papers from Placcius), 2° 101 (66 letters to Placcius), also in the StuUB Hamburg. Before world war II, there existed also Placcius' interleaved personal copy of the Syntagma, Cod hist. Litt. 4° 19a. Also lacking since the war is Cod. Hist. Litt. 2° 38, a bundle of papers with Placcius' and his friends' materials from the composition of the Theatrum. Unlike the papers in Cod. Hist. Litt. 4° 23, these papers were not yet cut with scissors.

[41] I can mention only the most important names: Theodor Anckelmann, Georg Christian Bürcklin, Nikolaus Crusius, Johann Diecmann, Christian Martin Dorn, Johann Albert Fabricius, Hermann Krochmann, Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz, Daniel Wilhelm Moller, Johann Moller, Lars Normann, Benjamin Potzern, Johann Christopherus Rauscher, Johannes Reiske, David Schellhammer, Christoph von Schrader, Georg Schrötteringk, Otto Sperling, Nikolaus Stampeel, Johannes Tecklenburg, Wilhelm Ernst Tentzel, Caspar Thurmann, Gottfried Wegner, Jacob Thomasius, Friedrich Geisler, Antonio Magiabecchi, Adrien Baillet.

What now was the "lectio multijuga" of the "Accessiones"? Was it just a coordinated reading enterprise of different scholars? Or is its diversity already a characteristic of the way of reading by each single scholar, a reading, which afterwards was compared with the readings of other scholars? A glimpse at the then prevailing techniques of reading may provide the answer. Placcius himself published a treatise on reading techniques, his "Ars excerpendi" of 1689. [42] Building on the methods developed by Michael Kirsten, he describes in it how scholars by means of multiple entry bookkeeping can effectively store the information that they derive from their readings.

Here we arrive at the question how then Placcius proceeded whenever he uncovered pseudonyms. The multipurpose utilities of cross references made possible by certain techniques of note taking point to a specific meaning of "lectio multijuga". I can touch upon this only briefly, because a clarification of this problem requires a more careful work on the material. Three components seem to have been important to Placcius: (1) Coordinating and arranging information gained from his correspondence. (2) Taking notes from learned literature, in particular with respect to a possible identification of authorship. (3) Connecting the information gained from his notes with the information from his correspondence, the combination of which enables him to find clues about the author.

A closer look at Placcius' entries in his „Theatrum" can be quite insightful. A large part of them are references to and citations of printed letters or scholarly literature. In their correspondence, certain authors credit themselves with the authorship of a work, or friends or acquaintances attribute a work to an author in letters. In the second case, Placcius of course needed to check his findings with other findings, which supported or refuted them. Otherwise one would quickly be taken in by rumors. Connections like these, however, required different organizing principles. Anonymous works had to be classified according to their title, which in turn had to be categorized in accordance with traditional divisions of knowledge: Theologica, Juridica, Historica etc. Pseudonymous

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[42] Placcius: Ars excerpendi, Hamburg 1689. On the techniques of note taking, see the contributions by Florian Neumann and Helmut Zedelmaier in: Helmut Zedelmaier and Martin Mulsow (eds.): Die Praktiken der Gelehrsamkeit in der frühen Neuzeit, Tübingen 2001. **O**n the role of private libraries as tools for scholarly working, see the contributions of Paul Nelles in: Mapping the World of Learning (footnote 4) and: Die Praktiken der Gelehrsamkeit (this footnote). See in general also Peter Becker (ed.): Little tools of knowledge: historical essays on academic and bureaucratic practices, Ann Arbor 2001.

works had to be classified according to their pseudonyms, but at the same time according to the names of their possible authors. Thus, there could not be one single type of filing, but rather several different types needed to be coordinated.

Placcius supplemented his own entries with additions from his correspondents, which appear in his dictionary as "Symbola Diecmanni", "Symbola Mayeri" and so on. This procedure is in full accordance with Placcius' sharp sense for intellectual property as well as for the cumulative nature of his work.

In the bundles of papers, which Placcius drew on during the composition of his "Theatrum", there appear several volumes of dictionaries of cryptonimity as well as earlier works of his own such as the "Syntagma", which were interleaved for the purpose of note taking. [43] Furthermore, there appear loose leaves of paper cut out by Placcius with scissors. How did he arrange his bits and pieces of paper?

One can only speculate, whether Placcius in his work made use of the filing cabinet his teacher Joachim Jungius had invented and which Placcius describes in his "Ars excerpendi". [44] Nothing is known so far about filing cabinets in Placcius' estate, but it is not unlikely that those loose pieces of paper we still have today were part of a larger filing system. The paper slips with the notes on it should, according to the description in the "Ars excerpendi", be shaped in octavo and placed in the filing cabinet under the respective "tituli", which were separated from each other by labeled plates made of tinblade. They were kept together either by a metal clip or by a needle, which was attached to the tinblade, so that the paper slips could be resorted deliberately at any time. That was the case whenever the detective-author of the dictionary realized that one of his hypotheses about the potential authorship of a particular work was incorrect and had to be rethought, so that a new hypothesis and determination of authorship could be attempted. When the filing cabinet was open, one had a complete look at all "loci" and "tituli". It was then possible to find quickly the alternative labeled plates, under which one could place the collected material, including the notes from correspondence. Had the scholar,

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[43] See e.g. Angelo Aprosio: La visiera alzata (footnote 14), in Cod. hist. litt. 4° 23, fol. 428-446, and in Cod. Hist. litt. 2° 38.

[44] Placcius: Ars excerpendi (footnote 42). See Christoph Meinel: Enzyklopädie der Welt und Verzettelung des Wissens: Aporien der Empirie bei Joachim Jungius, in: Franz M. Eybl et al. (eds.): Enzyklopädien in der Frühen Neuzeit, Tübingen 1995, pp. 162-187; see also Helmut Zedelmaier: Buch, Exzerpt, Zettelschrank, Zettelkasten, in: H. Pompe and L. Scholz (eds.): Archivprozesse. Die Kommunikation der Aufbewahrung, Köln 2002, pp. 38-53.

just to give an example, for instance shifted his attribution of the "Vindiciae contra tyrannos" from Beza to Duplessis Mornay or Languet, a resorting of this kind would have occurred. At the end of his life, Placcius had finally finished his long, thirteen folio page article on "De tribus impostoribus"; he had come to the conclusion, that most likely it was Pietro Aretino, who had written this text. But just in that moment he heard from Holland that Pierre Bayle's "Dictionaire" had appeared, and in this work the attribution to Aretino was denied. Placcius confessed he was no longer able to rewrite everything and start the search anew. In a very personal passage, he speaks of his "dark melancholy" and the limitations his condition placed on him.[45]

But despite these psychological invasions: Placcius' strategy seems to have been rather technical. His method of unmasking resulted almost automatically from the combination of information. Only with the appearance of Christoph August Heumann's "Schediasma" one reads more about philological criticism than combination of information. Heumann bases his textually immanent criteria on Jean Le Clerc's "Ars critica", according to which, style, choice of words, or the chosen approach helps to identify the author. [46]

Nevertheless, unmasking was of course always a combination of both philological scholarship and arrangement of information. Scholarship was so essentially intertwined with practices of coordinating and comparing information, and in return, coordination depended to such a high extent on scholarly knowledge, that both can hardly be separated.

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[45] Theatrum (footnote 2), tom. I, pp. 184-197, esp. p. 190: "Interim Aretinum adhuc omnium maxime gravatum omnino puto. [...] Finivisse me hic credebam huius articuli, imo totius libri summam; quando allatum celeberissimum opus accuratissimi Bayle [...]."
[46] Christoph August Heumann: De libris anonymis ac pseudonymis schediasma, Jena 1711, Praefatio. The text was reprinted in Mylius (see below footnote 54). I cite from this reprint, p. 25ff. See Jean Le Clerc: Ars critica, Amsterdam 1697.

V. Ambiguities: Unmasking, Undermining Authority,
and Symbolic Violence

Placcius' "Theatrum" is a stage, on which false authorities are rejected and true authorship is attributed. The frontispiece of the book confirms this impression. As we have seen, the stage is conceived as a venue of a learned public, which collectively unmasks, accuses and judges by exposing the dissimulating authors to shame. The terminology is taken from law – despite the metaphors from carnival and theater - but we have, following Jaumann, labeled it quasi-juridical, because this project ventures into spheres, which did not yet have institutions or a language of their own. Their main subjects were "extrajudicial" offenses, which could not or no longer be brought to a court.

But did Placcius' and his collaborators' activities remain truly extrajudicial? Geisler already had emphasized "nowadays, nothing has become more common than publishing without your name on it". Yet this was precisely the condition, why the Republic of Letters responded positively to the project and was so eager to participate in the detective work. If cryptonymous publishing had become common practice, how could then scholarly unmasking still remain extrajudicial?

There was, of course, censorship in the German territories, which prohibited the publication and circulation of certain books. Once the anonymous or pseudonymous authors of these books were revealed, they faced severe punishment. Unmasking then was partially conducted by scholars, but very often it was pursued directly by the police. Whenever a book, which was charged with heresy, atheism or political radicalism by the local clergy appeared – a good example would be Theodor Ludwig Lau's „Meditationes", published in Frankfurt in 1717 - the publisher, when he was determined, faced massive pressure to reveal the author's name. This way a good number of authors were discovered and put into jail. [47]

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[47] See the introduction and the documents in: Theodor Ludwig Lau: Meditationes philosophicae de Deo, Mundi, Homine (1717); Meditationes, Theses, Dubia philosophico-theologica (1719); Dokumente. Mit einer Einleitung hg. von Martin Pott, Stuttgart 1992. For other cases of uncovered authors, see Agatha Kobuch: Zensur und Aufklärung in Kursachen. Ideologische Strömungen und politische Meinungen zur Zeit der sächsisch-polnischen Union, Weimar 1988.

One should certainly not underestimate the explosive nature of unmasking procedures, which resulted from the tension between the scholarly desire for detailed and total knowledge and possible responsibility in denouncement and persecution. Later scholars like Christoph August Heumann in his supplement to Placcius thus were very careful to distinguish between the right of people to work under certain circumstances cryptonymously and the wish of an educated society to enjoy transparency with regards to the authorship of books. [48] The age of the internet has made us aware of the necessity of a liberal society to protect the citizen's private sphere against state and corporate interest. [49] Pseudonymity is one way to accomplish that. A similar awareness existed during the early Enlightenment, fostered by secular theories of natural law. This explains to a certain extent, why Heumann was much more sensitive towards the ambiguities immanent in the subject. He outlined possible motivations of authors to publish cryptonymously. The reasons he provides go far beyond those of Geisler, who only accepts the prevention of injuries or defamations as legitimate reasons to do so.

Being socially stigmatized should not be taken easily. From the point of view of radical authors, the classifying polyhistors became dangerous persecutors. For them, they often belonged to the category of police informers and snoopers. Johann Georg Wachter, for example, said about the polyhistor Reimmann, who included him in his history of atheism, thus ruining his career: "Who has not yet been the victim of the shots of poison of this spider?" [50] The above-mentioned Theodor Ludwig Lau called it "literary tyranny" and vehemently promoted that the distribution of heterodox and anonymous books be legalized. [51]

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[48] Heumann (footnote 46): De iure libros suppresso nomine edendi.

[49] There is an intense discussion on anonymity, pseudonymity, and the protections of consumers going on in the internet and in economical literature. See e.g. D.L. Hoffman, T.P. Novak and M.A. Peralta: Information Privacy in the Marketspace: Implications for the Commercial Uses of Anonymity on the Web, in: The Information Society 15 (1999), pp. 129-139; D. Lyon and E. Zureik (eds.): Computers, Surveillance, and Privacy, Minneapolis 1996; G.T. Marx: What's in a Name? Some Reflections on the Sociology of Anonymity, in: The Information Society 15 (1999), pp 99-112; M.J. Culnan and P.K. Armstrong: Information Privacy Concerns, Procedural Fairness, and Impersonal Trust: An Empirical Investigation, in: Organization Science 10 (1999), 104-115; K.P. Corfman and G.J. Lynch (eds.): Advancs in Consumer Research 23 (1996); R. Keat, N. Whitely and N. Abercrombie (eds.): The Authority of the Consumer, London 1994. On the necessity of privacy for a liberal society, see Beate Rössler: Der Wert des Privaten, Frankfurt 2001.

[50] Cited after Winfried Schröder: Spinoza in der deutschen Frühaufklärung, Würzburg 1987.

[51] See in particular Lau's Meditationes, Theses, Dubia (1719) (footnote 44), § 1ff: „Confiscatio et combustio librorum: ex ratione status pernecessaria saepe est et utilis. Ast ubi solo ex odio theologico,

Can one describe the identifications and classifications practiced by polyhistors such as Placcius, as acts of "symbolic violence"? One possibly can. One does not have to push it as far as Adorno did, when he called any kind of identification and classification "violence," to recognize the potential of violence in scientific and scholarly classification. Even the seemingly simple act of associating one entry in a dictionary with another one – say, one on Wachter with one on Spinoza – can be sufficient to trigger mockery, public shame and persecution. In this respect, a certain contradiction appears between the acts of classification and the claims of "historiographical tolerance", that was part of the Historia literaria's self-fashioning, since her aim was simply to provide the necessary tools to facilitate scholarly work.[52]

VI. Consequences: Connoisseurship and the Transmission of Clandestine Knowledge

With the publication of the "Theatrum" in 1708, the enthusiasm for discoveries on cyptonymous works did not stop.[53] On the contrary: In the years following Placcius' collective unmasking project the creation of catalogues of pseudonymous and anonymous works became even fashionable among scholars in Northern Germany and beyond. The

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politico, philosophico, profecta; Tyrannidem sapit literariam. Ignorantiam promovet et errores. Solidam impedit eruditionem. Rationi adversatur et veritati. Autoribus interim : tales qui patiuntur quasi-Poenas : nullum ignominiae vel infamiae inurunt Notam. Libri : gloriosum sustinent martyrium. Autores: illustres pro veritate et ratione, martyres fiunt. » Und Lau verteidigt die Aufspaltung von Autor und Privatperson : « Verborum et cogitationum unicus, optimus et infallibilis interpres: non auditor vel lector, sed orator et scriptor. Summa ergo impietas: innoxiis ex principiis, praemissis et intentionibus; falsas, erroneas et fictitias, pro lubitu elicere conclusiones. Compositionis et divisionis committere fallicias. Diversos respectus et personas morales : consequenter meditationes earundem : philosophicas, cum theologicis confundere notionibus : et ethnicum, cum christianuo : philosophm, cum theologo : philosophum eclecticum, cum philosopho sectario : theologum naturalem cum theologo revelato : pro uno eodemque habere subjecto. ».

[52] For the notion of historiographical tolerance, see Hanspeter Marti: Jacob Friedrich Reimannns historiographische Toleranz, in: Martin Mulsow and Helmut Zedelmaier (eds.): Skepsis, Providenz, Polyhistorie (footnote 14). On this problem, cf. also Martin Mulsow: Unanständigkeit (footnote 6). For further analysis, the works of Pierre Bourdieu might be helpful, whose notion of „symbolic violence" I have used. See, for instance, Bourdieu's analysis of the academic field in his Homo academicus, Cambridge 1988.

[53] I give the names of some of these authors: Caspar Heinrich Starck, Johann Friedrich Mayer, Johann Diecmann, Georg Serpel, Christoph August Heumann, Polycarp Lyser, Theodor Crusius, Johann Christoph Nemeitz, Gottfried Ludwig, Johann Christoph Wolf, usw. For the titles see Lemcke (footnote 2), pp. 71ff.

tip of the iceberg was a considerable number of publications, which proclaimed new discoveries, often in special and limited areas of scholarship. This ongoing process culminated in Johann Christoph Mylius's dictionary, which appeared in 1740 under the title "Bibliotheca anonymorum et pseudonymorum". [54] The main body of these kinds of works, however, remained hidden beneath the surface. It consisted of a tremendous mass of private handwritten catalogues and lists, the extension of which still needs to be determined. One could call this phenomenon even a culture or a fashion of scholarly unmasking.

It is a type of fashion, which needs to be viewed in connection with two other trends: firstly, collecting books and manuscripts, mainly rare and forbidden ones, and secondly coins and antiques. Ownership of rare items not only satisfied the curiosity of scholars, but it increased their social prestige within the Respublica literaria, and it became a precondition for learned correspondence and exchange of texts. [55] Numismatics and antiquarianism, on the other hand, provided material for learned conversation, which centered on topics such as the item's origin and meaning. These disciplines had become the focal point of interest in the course of the intellectual crisis of historical pyrrhonism, because they helped to produce physical evidence to counter disbelief in the historical reliability of texts. [56]

The collections of manuscripts and coins linked the world of the polyhistors to the world of the connoisseurs, which emerged during the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. [57] The connoisseurs, strictly speaking, were not professional scholars. They were amateurs. But it was them, who contributed essentially to what was

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[54] Johann Christoph Mylius: Bibliotheca anonymorum et pseudonymorum detectorum, ultra 4000 scriptores, quorum nomina vera latebant antea, omnium facultatum scientiarum et linguarum complectens, ad supplendum et continuandum Vincentii Placii Theatrum anonymorum et pseudonymorum et Christoph August Heumanni Schediasma de anonymis et pseudonymis, Hamburg 1740.

[55] On the pursuit of social prestige see Anne Goldgar: Impolite Learning (footnote 6).

[56] See the classical article by Arnaldo Momigliano: Ancient History and the Antiquarian, in: Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes 13 (1950), pp. 285-315.

[57] On the polyhistors, see Anthony Grafton: The World of the Polyhistors: Humanism and Encyclopedism, in idem: Bring out your Dead. The Past as Revelation, Cambridge, Mass. 2001, pp. 166-180. On the connoisseurs, see Jonathan Brown: Kings and Connoisseurs: Collecting Art in 17th Century Europe, New Haven 1995; Brian Cowan: Arenas of Connoisseurship: Auctioning Art in Later Stuart England, in: Michael North und David Ormrod (eds.): Art Markets in Europe, 1400-1800, Aldershot 1998, pp. 153-166; John Brewer: English Culture in the Eighteenth Century, Chicago 2000, esp. Chapter 6: "Connoisseurs and Artists", pp. 252-287.

called the "refinement of taste" and what we view today as major factor in the emergence of national cultures of consumption. [58]

Unlike many polyhistors, who were socially rooted at best in town patriciate, the connoisseurs owned a considerable amount of money. They were often aristocrats, who worked in politics and diplomacy. [59] As ambassadors and envoys, apart from their financial power, they traveled throughout Europe, and their journeys often became true campaigns and hunts for precious books, manuscripts and antiques. No matter whether they were in Rome, Paris, or Madrid, they always found ways to fill their cabinets. [60] On top of that, this world of the ambassador-connoisseurs intersects with the world of secret service and espionage. Numerous examples illustrate this connection: Count von Hohendorf conducted secret negotiations for Prince Eugene and at the same time bought precious books for him; Count von Stosch, patron of Winckelmann, was art collector and at the same time worked as a spy for the English government against the Jacobites in Rome. [61]

I would like to argue, that precisely in this area, where the worlds of the polyhistors, of diplomacy and of connoisseurship intersected, three interrelated constituents converge: (1) a sensitivity on issues of secrecy and name change, (2) the adoption of pseudonymous, anonymous and clandestine texts, and (3) practices of identification and classification. In this area, the discovery of concealed names was no longer scholarly obligation or an act of putting the blame on somebody, but went hand in hand with curiosity and collecting mania. It had entirely separated itself from the theological

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[58] Brewer (footnote 57); in general, see John Brewer (ed.): Consumption and the World of Goods, London 1993. See also Martin Mulsow: Kulturkonsum, Selbstkonstitution und intellektuelle Zivilität. Die Frühe Neuzeit im Mittelpunkt des kulturgeschichtlichen Interesses, in: Zeitschrift für historische Forschung 25 (1998), pp. 529-547.

[59] Lesley Lewis: Connoisseurs and Secret Agents in Eighteenth Century Rome, London 1961, p. 21: „Only men with considerable influence as well as wealth could at first indulge these tastes since there were few facilities for acquiring antiques except through consular, diplomatic and service channels, and it was therefore inevitable that connoisseurship should be intimately connected with the politics of the period."

[60] Lucien Bély : Espions et ambassadeurs au temps de Louis XIV, Paris 1990, p. 339: „Les ambassadeurs profitaient de leurs séjours à l'étranger pour se constituer des collections. […] De longs séjours mettaient les diplomates au centre de la circulation des objets précieux et des œuvres d'art."

[61] On Hohendorf, see Max Braubach: Geschichte und Abenteuer, München 1950; Margaret C. Jacob: Radical Enlightenment, London 1981; on Stosch, see Lewis (footnote 59), as well as the contribution of Pina Totaro in Eugenio Canone (ed.): Bibliothecae selectae, Roma 1993; in Philipp von Stosch's library there were numerous rare and clandestine materials, among them Spinoza's personal annotated copy of his „Tractatus theologico-politicus".

indignation, which often surrounded unmasking procedures by the former polyhistors; since one depended on dissimulation oneself, one was able to develop a certain level of sympathy for the subject.

The connoisseurs, my argument goes, in combination with the classifying polyhistors, enabled the transmission of clandestine works of the literary underground of the early Enlightenment, they even rendered this underground into a coherent object of perception. They effected this transmission, because the dissemination of clandestine works occurred often by means of learned collectors, through which these texts sometimes came back into the hands of radical authors. Freethinker Johann Christian Edelmann, for example, in a provocative way expressed his gratitude to these collectors, who, despite the fact that they were mostly orthodox, had spent large sums of money on forbidden works, thus contributing to their preservation.[62] At occasions, the curiosity and collecting mania of orthodox polyhistors could even trigger the production of clandestine works. In the Hamburg neighborhood of Placcius, there lived a man called Johann Joachim Müller, son of an orthodox minister, who was critical himself on issues of religion. In order to mock the curiosity of his friend, the ultra-orthodox pastor and "Placcius-collaborator" Johann Friedrich Mayer, about the legendary but never detected heretical book "De tribus impostoribus", he set out in 1688 to compose a work under this title himself. He had the finished manuscript delivered anonymously and secretly to Mayer, which then eventually brought the text into clandestine circulation.[63] Not surprisingly, it was the above-mentioned Count von Hohendorf, who purchased the manuscript after Mayer's death for a huge sum of money for Prince Eugene.[64]

Had clandestine texts not been preserved in these large private libraries, their transmission in many cases would not have been possible. One reason for that is that in

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[62]See already the observations of Ira O. Wade: The Clandestine Organization and Diffusion of Philosophic Ideas in France from 1700 to 1750, Princeton 1938; see also Martin Mulsow: Moderne aus dem Untergrund (footnote 12). Edelmann's statement is in his: Moses mit aufgedecktem Angesicht, s.l. 1740, pp. 33f., on those books with „vermeyntem Saamen des höllischen Unkrauts", which God „durch seine unerforschliche Weißheit von ihren eigenen Feinden von Zeit zu Zeit vor theuer Geld aufkauffen und [...] aufs sorfältigste von ihnen hat bewahren lassen."

[63] See Mulsow: Moderne aus dem Untergrund (footnote 12), chapter IV. The edition is: Anonymus (Johann Joachim Müller): De imposturis religionum (De tribus impostoribus), ed. with translation and introduction Winfried Schröder, Stuttgart 1999.

[64] See Margot Faak: Die Verbreitung der Handschriften des Buches „De imposturis religionum" im 18. Jahrhundert unter Beteiligung von G. W. Leibniz, in: Deutsche Zeitschrift für Philosophie 18 (1970), pp. 212-228.

Germany the literary underground existed only as a fragmentary and not as a coherent milieu. [65] Although many radical authors knew each other's writings, as a consequence of anonymity they generally did not know the other writers' identities. Also, in the course of transmission from one generation to the next, the existence of direct disciples was virtually unheard of – the consequence of marginalization and low public impact. This explains, why the literary underground did not exist as a dense network of personal relationships, in which an immediate reproduction of intellectual radicalism would have been possible. Rather, the underground became an object of perception mainly through the activities of classification and identification practiced by Placcius and his successors. Their exposure of anonymous texts, theologians like Löscher's and Baumgarten's description of heterodox writings, Reimmann's composition of a "Historia atheismi", and last but not least Trinius's "Dictionary of Freethinkers" – all of that contributed to the false impression of a coherent clandestine underground. [66]

Let us take an example of the intersection of name change, collecting activities and cataloguing of cryptonymous works, which illustrates my argument about the transmission of clandestine knowledge. From 1700 to 1705, Gustav Schrödter of Hamburg served as a chaplain to the Danish embassy in Paris. [67] Due to the close relations between Denmark and France, the Danish embassy provided a go-between to traveling scholars even from Northern Germany. His duties as a chaplain were, however, only the visible part of his activities, just like the political duties were only the visible part of the embassy's work. In reality there was much more to it. Schrödter's chapel in the embassy served as a secret meeting point for persecuted Huguenots and discontented Catholics, where is was discussed, how escapes from France could be organized. The head of the embassy, Henning Meyercrone, had gathered around him a number of highly learned men, who shared an obsession for books, coins, and manuscripts. [68] Scholars from

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[65] See Moderne aus dem Untergrund (footnote 12).

[66] Valentin Ernst Löscher (ed.): Unschuldige Nachrichten von alten und neuen theologischen Sachen, Wittenberg 1701ff.; Siegmund Jakob Baumgarten (ed.): Nachrichten von einer Hallischen Bibliothek, Halle 1748ff., just to name two of many; Jakob Friedrich Reimmann: Historia universalis atheismi, Hildesheim 1725; Johann Anton Trinius: Freydencker-Lexikon, Leipzig 1765.

[67] On this milieu, see Martin Mulsow: Die drei Ringe. Toleranz und clandestine Gelehrsamkeit bei Mathurin Veyssière La Croze (1661-1739), Tübingen 2001, pp. 19-28.

[68] On Meyercrone a biography is lacking. But see Dansk biografisk Leksikon vol. 9, Kopenhagen 1981, pp. 561f.

Northern Germany and Denmark such as Gabriel Groddeck, who participated in Placcius'
"Theatrum" project, or Frederik Rostgaard, who was interested in the problems of
organizing libraries, went in and out. [69]

Meyercrone had numerous reasons to proceed with care and secrecy. Letters to him
containing dangerous information, such as those by his agent Wonstocken, had to be sent
to a cover address, and only paid collaborators in the post office knew, to which address
they had to deliver them. [70] Meyercrone's wife Christine, who took care of persecuted
people, frequently instructed her correspondents to deliver messages only in person. [71]
The fact that Meyercrone was assassinated on instigation of the French government is
certainly not unrelated to these activities.

Schrödter, Meyercrone's chaplain, was always busy cataloguing books. He compiled an
inventory of Meyercrone's library, which consists of no less than 858 folio pages, and he
meticulously recorded even his own book treasures, which numbered between ten
thousand and twenty thousand volumes. [72] At the same time, he negotiated with book and
coin traders from Paris, consulted with them, on how to get a hold of certain rare books
and manuscripts, or speculated with them on who may possibly have authored a certain
work. [73] This exchange served him to add to his own catalogue of anonymous and
pseudonymous works, which one can still find in the British Library under the call
number Ms. Sloane 2889.

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[69] On the milieu, see e.g.: Drei ungedruckte Briefe von L. A. Muratori an Gabriel Groddeck: erläutert durch
ebensolche von Bernard de Montfaucon, Friderik Rostgaard und anderen aus den Jahren 1697 – 1702,
mitgeteilt und eingeleitet von Karl Wenck, in: Raccolta dei scritti storici in onore del prof. Giacinto
Romano nel suo XXV anno d'insegnamento, Pavia 1907; Knud Larsen: Frederik Rostgaard og bgerne: with
a summary, Kbenhavn 1970; Chr. Bruun (ed.): Aktstykker og breve til oplysning om Frederik Rostgaard og
hans samtid, Kopenagen 1871; Chr. Bruun: Frederik Rostgaard og hans samtid, Kopenhagen 1871. On the
erudite circles in early 18th century Paris, see Lionel Gossman: Medievalism and the Ideologies of the
Enlightenment. The World and Work of La Cure de Sainte-Palaye, Baltimore 1968.
[70] See Bely (footnote 60), p. 158.
[71] See the regests of letters from Christina von Meyercrone to Bentinck, which are located in the University
of Nottingham Library, Manuscripts and Special Collections, Catalogue of the papers of (Hans) William
Bentinck, 1st, Earl of Portland, Part 4: Philippe de Lorraine-Armangnac, Chevalier de Lorraine - Thomas
Osborne, 1st Duke of Leeds. The regests can be found in:
http://mss.library.nottingham.ac.uk/cats/port_1stearl4cat.html.
[72] Sloane Ms. 2847, British Library: Bibliotheca Meyercroniana; Catalogus bibliothecae Gustavi
Schroedteri, Hamburg 1724.
[73] See e.g. Schrödter's materials in Ms. Sloane 2878, fol. 45, or Boudelots letter to Schrödter, in ibd., fol. 1.
See my Die drei Ringe (footnote 67), pp. 24f.

No wonder that a number of extremely rare heterodox manuscripts found their way into Schrödter's collection. [74] One of them is a unique specimen. It carried no title and appears in the printed catalogue of Schrödter's library as "Tractatus Gallicus de religionibus auctore Gallo Naturalista". [75] Scholarship on clandestine literature today knows it as "Pseudo-Vallée" – a skeptical and atheist document of considerable significance. [76] One can only speculate how Schrödter got hold of this document, written around 1700. The author may have been one of the potential refugees, who frequented the secret meetings in the embassy chapel. He may have entrusted Schrödter with the manuscript with the goal to have it smuggled out of the country. Whatever may have been the case, this work eventually found its way into clandestine circulation during the enlightenment through Schrödter's library.

This remains, however, only one among many examples, which illustrates the deep ambiguous, possibly escalating nature of a project, which Thomasius, Geisler, and Placcius had inaugurated in the name of transparency and moral sanction. This undertaking had already suffered from inner tensions at its beginnings in the milieu of the polyhistors. Now, in the milieu of the connoisseurs, it turned into a double-edged sword.

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[74] E.g. the writing „Les Tables sacrées ou Analyse de la foy » (Theol. 2224).
[75] Catalogus bibliothecae Gustavi Schroedteri (footnote 72), p. 835.
[76] See Alain Mothu: La beatitude des Chrétiens et son double clandestin, in: Anthony McKenna and idem (eds.): La Philosophie clandestine à'l Age classique, Oxford 1997, pp. 79-117.