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THE LIBRARY OF PIERRE BAYLE

In the middle of 1681 dark clouds began to gather over the Protestant academy of Sedan, where Pierre Bayle had occupied a chair of philosophy since 1675. With the academy threatened with closure, Bayle was forced to explore the possibilities of work elsewhere. While not prepared to accept just any post, he explains to his brother Jacob, he would gladly accept a post as librarian:

Une des choses qui me plairoit [. . .] ce seroit la charge de Bibliothécaire, ou de quelque Bibliothèque publique, ou de la Bibliothèque de quelque Grand; car vous avez le tems d'étudier et, sans être riche, dont je ne me soucie pas, vous avez des livres à suffisance¹.

He proves that this was not simply a fleeting whim in a letter to Jacob of 12 April 1683, by which time he had duly been installed as a professor in Rotterdam: it was a matter of great regret to him that he had not had the chance to concentrate on collecting bibliographical knowledge during the period in which his memory was capable of its best achievements. Now it was too late, and there was no future left for him in librarianship².

One can imagine how jealous Bayle was of his correspondents who had succeeded where he had failed, who could dip into the collections of their employers to their heart's content: Simon de Valhebert, librarian of Bignon; Francastel and Lancelot, sub-librarians of the bibliothèque Mazarine; Baillet, librarian of Lamoignon; Magliabechi, librarian to the Florentine court; Veysièrre de la Croze, librarian of the Elector at Berlin. Their research was not impeded by lack of books, something that was a continual source of vexation and bitterness to Bayle.

We may be justified in assuming that the activities that Bayle started to

¹ To Jacob Bayle, 29 May 1681, as quoted by E. LABROUSSE, *Pierre Bayle*. Tome I: *Du pays de Foix à la cité d'Erasmus*, The Hague, Martinus Nijhoff, 1963, p. 34, note 33.

² To the same, 12 April 1683, P. BAYLE, *Œuvres Diverses (OD)*, La Haye/Rotterdam, P. Husson et al., 1727-1731/Hildesheim, Georg Olms, 1965-1968 (reprint), vols I-IV; Trévoux 1737², vols. I A,I B,II-IV; this quotation I B, pp. 136-137.

undertake side by side with his professorship shortly after his wistful letter to Jacob gave him ample compensation for the chances he had hitherto missed as a bibliographer. As editor of the monthly «Nouvelles de la République des Lettres», which the Amsterdam publisher Henri Desbordes started printing in May 1684, he was the proud incumbent of the post of librarian to the whole world of learning, except that the library thus unlocked contained little old material, the periodical being mainly concerned with «Nouvelles». The number of books he was in a position to study by virtue of his position was definitely not small: when Jacques Bernard, who had been the editor of the «Bibliothèque Universelle et Historique» until 1694, gave a new lease of life to the «Nouvelles» in 1699, one of his reasons for doing so was that he had been keenly aware of the lack of «cette abondance de Livres que j'avois euë auparavant»³. In February 1687, when Bayle relinquished his editorship of the «Nouvelles» for reasons of health, he must have found himself in a similar position. Once cured, however, he struck a new and ultimately much richer source which now also brought large numbers of old volumes within his reach. Since the end of 1689 he had been making preparations under the patronage of the Rotterdam publisher Reinier Leers for a bibliographical contribution of his own. To further this project, Leers allowed him to draw on his ample financial and commercial resources to gain access to the books regarded as essential. This resulted in the famous *Dictionnaire Historique et Critique*. In the «Avis du Libraire» to the precursor of 1692, the *Projet et Fragmens d'un Dictionnaire Critique*, Leers did not hesitate to call upon the public as witnesses to his plans for helping his author: «J'espère de ne manquer pas de bons livres»⁴. Bayle's complaint in the *Projet* about «la disette de livres où je suis réduit»⁵ may be considered premature in the light of such a promise. What is far more serious is that, when the *Dictionnaire* was on the point of being published, he felt it necessary to address the public once again in similar terms. In his preface the «disette» had grown into a «disette prodigieuse» – a huge shortage that had silenced his pen many times a day. «Il faudroit pour un Ouvrage comme celui-ci la plus nombreuse Bibliotheque qui ait jamais été dressée», he complained; «au lieu de cela, j'ai très-peu de Livres»⁶. Borrowing books evidently gave him little consolation; in a note to this passage he calculated the number of books thus consulted to be no more than «quelques-uns».

³ «Nouvelles de la République des Lettres», Amsterdam, January 1699, preface.

⁴ *Projet et Fragmens d'un Dictionnaire Critique*, Rotterdam, Reinier Leers, 1692, *Avis*.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. *4.

⁶ *Dictionnaire Historique et Critique (DHC)*, Amsterdam, Leide, La Haye, Utrecht, P. Brunel et al., 1740⁵, p. iv.

Admissions such as these naturally make us wonder exactly what Bayle's library looked like. Unfortunately, we are not in a position to consult an auction catalogue, the most frequently used key to the contents of 17th and 18th century libraries. Bayle's collection was not sold after his death; in his will he had stipulated that Jacques Basnage, an old friend of his, should receive his books on theology and ecclesiastical history, and that Adriaan Paets, the son of his benefactor Adriaan Paets Sr, should be given all his other books. In a recent article I have listed the traces that remain of this gift in the auction catalogue of Basnage's library (Paets' legacy would seem to have disappeared without a trace). When Basnage died in 1723, the legacy was no longer intact: the catalogue mentions no more than approximately 130 Bayliana in quarto, spread over 42 catalogue numbers listed separately under the title «Collectanea varia, ab illustriss. P. Baelio collecta, & plurimum notitiis ab ejusd. manu insignita», and a number of smaller Bayliana bound together in 34 volumes and very sparingly described («Huit volumes ou Recueils de pièces curieuses sur diverses matières de Theologie, de Critique, de Politique &c», «Recueil de pièces sur les affaires de Religion & du Clergé, les Droits du Roy, la Regale, & autres affaires du tems», «Collectio var. tractat. de rebus Historicis, Criticis, Politicis &c», «Tractatus varii diversorum Auctorum de rebus Sacris &c»)⁷.

At this point it may be of interest to quote Bayle's own testimony. After moving to another boarding-house in 1692 he wrote to his cousin Jean de Naudis that although he had a great many books, they were «de petite taille & qui ne coutent gueres d'argent»⁸. In the same letter, however, he mentioned that although three weeks had elapsed since the move, he still had not managed to get his library into any semblance of order – evidently the hands that had put them on the shelves were more willing than competent⁹. Moves in 1684 and 1688 had entailed similar problems¹⁰. After his last move in 1701 he had not even been able to find his own *Lettre à M. le D.E.M.S.*, in spite of searching for it for several hours¹¹. It is therefore highly unlikely that Bayle's library was really small. In view of the fact that the famous library of the Rotterdam Quaker Benjamin Furly was auctioned in

⁷ *Traces of the collection of Pierre Bayle in the auction catalogue of the library of Jacques Basnage*, «Lias. Sources and documents relating to the early modern history of ideas», XV (1988), 2, pp. 287-299 (list of the «Collectanea» pp. 297-299).

⁸ To Jean de Naudis, 22 May 1692, *OD I B*, p. 162.

⁹ The move had taken place on 1 May; cf. the letter to Theodorus Jansson van Almeloveen, 4 July 1692, Utrecht University Library (UUL), ms. 996 (iii).

¹⁰ To Joseph Bayle, 8 May 1684, *OD I B*, p. 149; to Jean de Naudis, 20 May 1688, *OD I B*, p. 157.

¹¹ To Pierre Desmaizeaux, 7 March 1702, *OD IV*, p. 813.

4,176 lots¹², Jacques Basnage's well-stocked historical and theological library numbered 2,843 lots, that of Jean Leclerc (a periodical editor for many years) came to 2,754¹³ and the particularly theologically-orientated library of Bayle's arch-enemy Pierre Jurieu 2,027¹⁴, it would seem likely that Bayle's own collection contained at least some 2,000 volumes, not counting his collection of pamphlets and other minor writings. We may assume that shortage of space was not an important factor, even if Bayle's room was of modest proportions: a quick calculation shows that a spacious room of normal height is more than large enough to accommodate two thousand books.

Before accepting this estimate, we must consider the possibility that, because of lack of funds, Bayle actually had fewer *maiора* than men of his position might have been expected to possess. One argument for this – at least for the first few years of his stay in the Republic – is the fact that at her death in 1682 the wife of Adriaan Paets Sr left Bayle 2,000 guilders for the purchase of books. A year later, however, Bayle told his brother Jacob that he had not rushed into spending the legacy. He graphically described how inadequate the generous lady's gift was in view of his real needs: what was 2,000 guilders for a library in a country where the prices of all decent books (classical history, the church fathers, philology) were astronomical, in a country where a library was not worth looking at unless it had cost four or five times as much¹⁵? It may be doubted whether Bayle really was in such financial straits. While he was still obviously intending to spend the legacy in the letter quoted above, after his death it appeared that the original sum, intact, had been converted into a debenture. In all probability he had only used the interest from this investment in the way his benefactress had intended¹⁶. In addition to this, the resources required to expand his library simply – without having to draw on his professorial salary – soon presented themselves. When he entered on his editorship of the «Nouvelles» on 4 April 1684 his library was enriched overnight; not just because review-hungry authors were only too pleased to send him complimentary copies, but also because his publisher, Desbordes, paid him for the pieces he wrote – at least in part – in books¹⁷. It also seems likely that he frequently asked to be (part-)paid in books for his own publications in book form and the services he rendered various publish-

¹² *Bibliotheca Furliana, sive Catalogus Librorum Honoratiss. & Doctiss. Viri Benjamin Furdy* [...], Roterodami, Fritsch & Bohm, Nicolaus Bos, 1714.

¹³ *Traces* [...] cit., pp. 290, 291.

¹⁴ *Catalogus Variorum & insignium in omni facultate & Lingua Librorum*, [...] Dni. Petri Jurieu [...], Roterodami, Abraham Acher, 1713.

¹⁵ To Jacob Bayle, 12 April 1683, *OD I B*, p. 137.

¹⁶ E. LABROUSSE, *op. cit.*, p. 185, note 61.

¹⁷ To Jacob Bayle, 2 October 1684, *OD I B*, p. 153.

ers. Moreover, as his reputation as a writer increased, the number of books sent to him *ex dono auctoris* increased as well.

The negative financial effects of Bayle's dismissal as professor in 1693 were more than adequately compensated for by a periodical allowance from Reinier Leers¹⁸. In December 1693 he was already able to write to his friend Jacques Du Rondel that from now on he could earn a living with his pen¹⁹. Bayle was so proficient at this that, at his death, his executor, Jacques Basnage, estimated his assets at 10,000 guilders²⁰.

Should we assume that this sum was the result of a niggardliness that drastically restricted the purchase of books? Apparently not, for throughout his correspondence Bayle refers to books he has already acquired or those he expected to acquire shortly. Moreover, Bayle must have been an expert and enthusiastic bidder at auctions. In 1699, for example, he arranged a number of purchases for the Earl of Shaftesbury²¹. In 1701 he had an intermediary make an offer for a number of books from the library of Johan de Witt of Dort, probably both for himself and for another person²². Quite aside from these considerations, it would be inconceivable that Bayle yielded to any such niggardly tendencies even if he had been tempted to: the murderous speed and pressure under which he was forced to work on his *Dictionnaire* by his taskmasters, the compositors, would not have been possible if he had not been able to rely on a collection of sufficient size.

Another factor that deserves mention in this connection is the size of the library as described by Bayle himself. Again, it is his correspondence that offers us a whole stream of clues, all with the same negative tone: he complained of a lack of the most elementary bibliographical aids, his room was miserably furnished with books, he could not find what he was looking for. In his letters to the no less bookhungry Theodorus Jansson van Almeloveen, Bayle continually referred to his library as «tenuissima»; that of Van Almeloveen, by contrast, was described as «instructissima» and «egregia» – an extremely desirable collection, in short. However, here too, appearances can be deceptive, since Van Almeloveen's letters contain similar references to Bayle's collection. Both scholars knew what they were talking about, as they had

¹⁸ To Jean de Naudis, 18 March 1697, E. LABROUSSE, *op. cit.*, p. 230 and note 87. Cf. the letter to Vincent Minutoli, 24 February 1702, E. HAASE, *Quelques pages inédites de la correspondance de Bayle*, «Bulletin de la Société de l'Histoire du Protestantisme Français», CIII (1957), p. 278.

¹⁹ To Jacques Du Rondel, 4 December 1693, *OD* IV, p. 701.

²⁰ E. LABROUSSE, *op. cit.*, p. 184, note 60.

²¹ To Anthony Cooper, Earl of Shaftesbury, 19 May 1699, 5 June 1699, 28 July 1699, Leiden University Library (LUL), Marchand 4.

²² From Charles Comperat, 18 October 1701, Royal Library, Copenhagen (RLC), Thott 1208 4o.

inspected each other's bookshelves more than once. This does not, of course, mean that no credence should be given to the many comments they exchanged about books that the one had wanted to consult and the other had not been able to supply. Nor does it mean that Bayle was not frequently stumped in his search for promising references to intriguing titles. What it does mean is that he tended to emphasize what he did not have rather than what he did. There was no library in existence, however large, that would have been able to furnish answers that would have satisfied the capriciousness of his keen nose and his insatiable thirst for knowledge.

Not even Reinier Leers was able to satisfy this hunger for books, although he certainly did his best. In a letter to Naudis, Bayle remarked scornfully that Leers refused to spend money on books needed for the *Dictionnaire* which had to come from elsewhere²³. The truth of the matter is revealed, however, when Bayle wrote commending Leers to his correspondent Pinsson des Riolles, adding in the same breath that Pinsson was to draw Leers' attention to all the books that might expedite work on the *Dictionnaire*, «afin qu'il s'en pourvoie»²⁴. He wrote to Van Almeloveen that he would make sure that Leers bought Leickher's *Vitae Jurisconsultorum* for him, as he needed it for his writing²⁵. When Van Almeloveen asked to borrow Sanderus' *De Gandavensibus eruditionis fama claris libri tres*, Bayle reports that Leers would do his best to get hold of it through an intermediary at an auction²⁶. Shortly afterwards, however, he reveals that through Leers' absentmindedness his list of desiderata for the auction had not materialized²⁷. Sometimes, the interests of publisher and author did not run parallel: in a letter to Shaftesbury Bayle told the delightful story of an auction in Rotterdam where, in quest of a *Thesaurus linguae graecae* for Shaftesbury's library, he had had to bid against Leers, who was armed with similar instructions from the Earl of Albemarle. Leers did not know that it was not Bayle he had against him, but Shaftesbury. Bayle secured the book for 67 guilders²⁸. On the whole, however, it may be assumed that, within certain financial limits, Leers was a loyal contributor to the cause of acquiring the books required for the *Dictionnaire*. His bookshop was a model of its kind, his commercial contacts were excellent, and his financial position left nothing to be desired. He can hardly be blamed for the fact that he may have contributed less to Bayle's library than the latter would have liked. Here again,

²³ To Jean de Naudis, 27 January 1695, quoted by E. LABROUSSE, *op. cit.*, p. 243, note 41.

²⁴ To (François?) Pinsson des Riolles, 6 July 1694, Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris (BNP), F.Fr. 12771, f. 299^o.

²⁵ To Theodorus Jansson van Almeloveen, 30 July 1692, UUL, ms. 996 (iii).

²⁶ To the same, 2 October 1696, *ibid.*

²⁷ To the same, 26 October 1696, *ibid.*

²⁸ To Anthony Cooper, Earl of Shaftesbury, 19 May 1699, LUL, Marchand 4.

Bayle would only have been satisfied with assistance of unlimited proportions.

What, then, did the library – described by a reliable intimate of Bayle's as «considerable»²⁹ – really consist of? Despite the absence of a catalogue, this question can be answered, at least to a certain extent. It is, after all, possible to reconstruct most of the total number of books that might have been used by Bayle, because his books are exemplary repositories of the sources from which he derived his wisdom. The *Dictionnaire Historique et Critique* in particular is richly and meticulously furnished with bibliographical references, containing as it does many thousands of often very exhaustively described titles of books consulted in constructing his arguments.

For some years now the present author has been working on a catalogue of the sources used for the *Dictionnaire* in an attempt to reconstruct Bayle's «virtual» library – the books Bayle must have had at his disposal, whether he owned them or not – a library which was ipso facto opened up to others when the *Dictionnaire* was published, thus making a hoard of books accessible to all the learned men in Europe. It was no accident that William Trumbull described the *Dictionnaire* as «Bibliothecam potius quam Librum»³⁰ and Henri Basnage wrote to Leibniz that «c'est le precis d'une bibliotheque entiere»³¹. Contemporaries, too, treated the *Dictionnaire* as a catalogue.

It must be emphasized that this reconstruction cannot result in an exhaustive inventory of a library such as we might once have been able to visit at one of Bayle's Rotterdam addresses. The library behind the *Dictionnaire* will always remain «virtual», since the *Dictionnaire* draws far more on a cumulative total of knowledge gathered in the course of a life of learning than on a concrete reservoir of knowledge stored on the shelves of a bookcase. When Bayle quotes from a volume, that volume need not actually be present on his desk: there will have been so many occasions long ago when he had had temporary loan of the book and had made notes from it for future use.

What we have here are «recueils», collections of notes scholars commonly made in the course of their reading. In a letter dated 6 October 1692, Bayle remarked that the «excellens Recueils» of his old student friend Vincent Minutoli had over the years expanded to a total of 3500 pages³². John Locke found the principles he followed in the compilation of «recueils» sufficiently practical to treat the readers of the «Bibliothèque Universelle et Historique» to

²⁹ Jean-Joseph Destournelles to Jean-Baptiste Dubos, 27 January 1707, P. DENIS, *Lettres inédites de Pierre Bayle*, «Revue d'histoire littéraire de la France», XX (1913), p. 447.

³⁰ From William Trumbull, 5 January 1697, RLC, Thott 1208 4o.

³¹ H. Basnage to G. W. Leibniz, 14 January 1697, *Die philosophischen Schriften von Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz*, ed. C. I. Gerhardt, III, Berlin 1887/Hildesheim, Georg Olms, 1960, p. 131.

³² To Vincent Minutoli, 6 October 1692, OD IV, p. 677.

a lengthy illustrated open letter on the subject³³. Among the «recueils» mentioned in the *Dictionnaire* are those of Costar, Garasse, Boccaccio and Wesselus, while Barthius is singled out as an exception: «Il ne faisoit point de Recueils [...]»³⁴. Bayle also made use of such «recueils». Bayle's biographer, Pierre Desmaizeaux, sums up the contents of two of them, one clearly classified according to subject, the other presumably according to title:

«Indice historique». C'est un Recueil de tout ce que Mr. Bayle lisoit de curieux & de remarquable touchant l'Histoire. Il est commencé dès l'an 1672. Les matieres y sont distinguées par Chapitre, & rangées par ordre alphabetique. Par exemple sous la lettre *A*, il traite de l'Antiquité que les Egyptiens & d'autres peuples se vantent d'avoir: on y trouve aussi des remarques sur l'Empire d'Allemagne. Sous la lettre *B*, il décrit quelques Batailles memorables; & les honneurs rendus aux Bêtes. Sous la lettre *C*, il décrit les Ceremonies singulieres qui s'observoient en differentes rencontres, & particulierement celles qui regardent les Clefs des Villes. Il rapporte de quelle maniere de grands hommes ont rendu compte des affaires dont ils étoient chargez & c. Il y a aussi dans ce Volume quelques Recueils séparez qui roulent sur la Chronologie & sur l'Histoire.

«Jugemens, ou Journal de Litterature». Ce Recueil contient des reflexions critiques sur les Livres qu'il avoit lus, & celles qu'on lui avoit communiquées par lettres, ou de vive voix³⁵.

According to Desmaizeaux, these notes date from Bayle's youth. The latter, Desmaizeaux argues, was to put them to good use in later life while working on his publications, but did not continue them, preferring to rely on his memory³⁶. During his French years, Bayle did indeed make diligent use of the opportunities offered him by obliging owners of books. In Sedan, for example, he was able to benefit from the well-stocked library of the physician Brazy³⁷; in Paris he was allowed to inspect the minor works from the library of Henri Justel³⁸. The use of these and other «recueils», especially for the *Dictionnaire*, is borne out by Henri Basnage who, in a letter to François Janiçon bluntly describes the first and at that time only volume of the *Dictionnaire* as a series of «recueils»: «Ce sont ses recueils redigez sous cette forme»³⁹. There can be no doubt that the «recueils» meant here also date from Bayle's later

³³ «Bibliothèque Universelle et Historique», II, July 1686, pp. 315-340, *Methode nouvelle De dresser des Recueils*.

³⁴ *DHC*, Barthius, in corpore.

³⁵ P. DESMAIZEAUX, *La vie de Mr. Bayle*, *DHC*, p. CX.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. CLX.

³⁷ To Joseph Bayle, 6 February 1680, *OD I B*, p. 123.

³⁸ To his father, 28 October 1680, *OD I B*, p. 124.

³⁹ H. Basnage to F. Janiçon, 22 December 1695, H. BOTS and L. VAN LIESHOUT, *Contribution à la connaissance des réseaux d'information au début du XVIII^e siècle. Henri Basnage de Beauval et sa correspondance à propos de l'«Histoire des Ouvrages des Savans» (1687-1709)*. *Lettres & index*, Amsterdam & Maarssen, Holland University Press, 1984, p. 107.

years. The apparent absence of more recent collections misled Desmaizeaux at this point. Work on the *Dictionnaire* did, after all, require the «recueils» to be continued with equal diligence. In the preface to the first edition, for example, Bayle speaks of a deluge of «recueils» on heathen gods and heroes and ancient Rome specially compiled as part of his plans to expose the mistakes in the dictionary of Moréri in a «dictionnaire critique». As the public proved to have no use for excessive interest in antiquity, these notes became redundant. The other «recueils» found a place in the *Dictionnaire*, frequently with full references⁴⁰, after which they were destroyed along with the rest of the copy⁴¹. «Recueils» that on closer inspection proved unsuitable for the *Dictionnaire* where included in the series *Réponse aux questions d'un provincial*, at least until this series became the rallying point for attacks against all those who had objected to the controversial views that Bayle had aired in his writings. As Bayle had increasingly curtailed his activities on behalf of the *Dictionnaire* in order to be able to ward off his beleaguers, it may be assumed that the notes he collected subsequently were restricted to additional material for articles that had already been written and schematic plans for articles for the supplement. These manuscripts were edited by Prosper Marchand in the 1720 edition of the *Dictionnaire*. The collections described by Desmaizeaux disappeared to Bayle's heirs in France⁴². Although their present whereabouts are unknown, traces of them are to be found in the *Dictionnaire* whenever books that Bayle had already read in the 1670's are concerned⁴³, notably in «remarque» c of the Heraclius article, where he quotes from the *Histoire de la Conquête du Roiaume de Jerusalem par Saladin* (Paris 1679) and warns: «Je rapporte ceci selon la Copie que j'en fis il y a longtems. Je crains de n'avoir pas toujours observé l'Orthographe du Livre imprimé, & je ne l'ai plus pour m'y conformer entierement».

Bayle was not left completely to his own devices in his search for books. His virtual library brilliantly bears witness to the assistance he had received when writing the *Dictionnaire* from all those who had lent him keys to a huge number of «bibliothèques mortes», libraries in the strict sense of the word, or those who as «bibliothèques vivantes» had given him access to the knowledge

⁴⁰ Cf. *DHC*, *Ermite*, *in corpore*: «On verra donc ci-dessous quelques Recueils & quelques Notes qui ont du rapport aux vues qu'il a bien voulu me communiquer»; *Jupiter*, h: «Voiez dans l'Article de PERICLES plusieurs Recueils touchant les idées que les Paiens se formoient de la bonté de Jupiter, & des autres Dieux»; *Ovide*, *in corpore*: «J'ai quantité de Recueils pour son Article».

⁴¹ Cf. E. LABROUSSE, *op. cit.*, p. 48, note 97.

⁴² Cf. Mathieu Marais to Madame de Mérogniac, 6 March 1709 and September 1709, and to le président Bouhier, 21 November 1724, M. DE LESCURE, *Journal et Mémoires de Mathieu Marais*, I, Paris, Firmin Didot, 1863, pp. 106, 114, 30-31.

⁴³ Cf. *DHC*, *Ovide*, g; *Spinoza*, aa.

they had acquired themselves⁴⁴. Invited and uninvited, these scholars combed libraries, importuned experts, if necessary translated texts in languages Bayle did not know and sent the results of their researches to Rotterdam.

While dealing with a Vitruvius edition of Sulpitius, for example, Bayle was able to make good use of the meticulous detail supplied to him by Francastel, the «Garde de la Bibliothèque Mazarine». In the same «remarque» to the Sulpitius entry, Francastel is allowed to speak directly to the public, being quoted from a letter he wrote to Bayle concerning this edition on 11 December 1699. The first few words of the quotation make it perfectly clear that Bayle's correspondents left no stone unturned in their attempts to help him, since – as Francastel wrote: «pour approfondir davantage ce point j'ai lu toutes les prefaces, les Epitres Dédicatoires, & autres prolegomenes, qui sont à la teste de tous les Vitruves de la Bibliothèque Mazarine, tant des textuaires que des commentez, en Latin, en Italien, & en François». He had also studied the preliminaries of Sulpitius' other works in the Mazarine Library⁴⁵. Another example of the help offered Bayle in his bibliographical research is to be found in the Wechel and Cornellius articles. In the first version of the Wechel article, Bayle had expressed some criticism about a claim by Garasse that Wechel had fallen on hard times because of divine judgement on a «Livre impie» which had been printed on his presses. In the second edition he was able to report that Bourdelot had sent him the book from Paris and that it in no way deserved the name that had been given it. In his supplement he included an addition to the article on Cornellius, quoting from an analysis of the book sent to him by Lancelot (identified elsewhere as «l'un des Sous-Bibliothécaires de la Bibliothèque Mazarine à Paris»⁴⁶, on the basis of the copy in the Mazarine; in the same «remarque», thanks to another correspondent (Francastel?), he was able to give the catalogue number, and details of the binding of this copy⁴⁷. Throughout the *Dictionnaire* and in the correspondence there is evidence of such kindnesses from abroad – France, England, Germany, Italy. One who went to great lengths in his help was Bernard de La Monnoye, who was a friend of Nicaise and through the latter had come in contact with Bayle: after he had greeted the articles from *Projet et Fragmens d'un Dictionnaire Critique* with warm interest⁴⁸, and following a few notes on the *Dictionnaire* proper, he sent Bayle a notebook containing remarks covering the whole of the letter

⁴⁴ Cf. *DHC*, *Preface*, p. III.

⁴⁵ *DHC*, *Sulpitius*, a.

⁴⁶ *DHC*, *Amboise* (F), f; cf. *Sanson*, a.

⁴⁷ *DHC*, *Wechel*, in *corpore* and b; *Cornellius*, in *corpore* and b.

⁴⁸ To Claude Nicaise, 27 April 1693 and 17 September 1693, *OD* IV, pp. 686-687 and 693-694.

A⁴⁹. His expositions provided material for additions to 33 entries under the letter A, to which his name was appended. Further on, Bayle was delighted to acknowledge his indebtedness to La Monnoye for his help with the entries *Balbus* (J), *Epicure*, *Erasmus*, *Gonzague* (L), *Hadrien VI*, *Jules II*, *Molsa* (F) and *Sixte IV*. In the Lando entry it is clear from the context that he had received help from La Monnoye.

On more than one occasion Bayle created the impression that the help he received from abroad had to compensate for the lack of help from the Dutch Republic. On 17 June 1704 he wrote to Desmaizeaux complaining about the small number of private libraries in Rotterdam («ici où nous avons peu de gens qui fassent des Bibliothèques») and the complete indifference to fine editions⁵⁰. On 28 July 1699, however, he had claimed quite the opposite in a letter to the Earl of Shaftesbury after a series of unsuccessful visits to auctions: «Tous les jours le nombre des gens qui font des Bibliothèques en ce Pays s'augmente, & ils font encherir les bons Livres, & les bonnes Editions de jour en jour»⁵¹. In a letter to Nicaise in 1693 the emphasis was slightly different, but just as uncomplimentary, towards the Republic: «les Bibliothèques sont ici choses récluses. Les gens n'aiment point à prêter leurs Livres; je ne trouve presque jamais à emprunter ce qui me donneroit le plus de lumieres»⁵². In 1697 his attitude to the same correspondent was no less negative when he compared his own situation with the deplorable circumstances in which La Monnoye was forced to work in Dijon: «Je suis encore plus à plaindre que lui, car à Dijon il a mille fois plus de livres, et plus d'autres aides que je n'en ai à Rotterdam»⁵³. Such sallies were undoubtedly cases of Bayle allowing himself to be swept along by his mood of the moment. In reality, he was constantly able to count on a considerable body of potential helpers. In Rotterdam he had free access to the wellstocked bookshop of Reinier Leers and the libraries of Benjamin Furly, Jacques Basnage, Joseph Hill, Jacobus Henricius, Herman Lufneu and Petrus Deinoot. In the *Dictionnaire*, Henricius' library is even hailed as «excellente»⁵⁴. By post or through the good offices of friends he could call upon Henri Basnage in The Hague, Gisbert Cuper in Deventer, Johan de Witt in Dordrecht, Theodorus Jansson van Almeloveen in Gouda, Johannes Georgius Graevius in Utrecht, Jacobus Perizonius, Charles Drelin-court and Thomas Crusius in Leiden, Anthonie van Dale in Haarlem, and

⁴⁹ To Bernard de La Monnoye, 20 January 1698, 10 March 1698, 18 August 1698, *OD IV*, pp. 759, 760, 766.

⁵⁰ To Pierre Desmaizeaux, 17 June 1704, *OD IV*, p. 846.

⁵¹ To Anthony Cooper, Earl of Shaftesbury, 28 July 1699, LUL, Marchand 4.

⁵² To Claude Nicaise, 27 April 1693, *OD IV*, p. 687.

⁵³ To Claude Nicaise, 19 August 1697, BNP, F. Fr. 9359.

⁵⁴ *DHC*, *Archilochus*, i.

Etienne Morin in Amsterdam. In the correspondences with Van Almeloveen and Graevius there are lists of books asked for with very little ceremony⁵⁵. Contacts frequently entailed requests for and offers of help, sometimes even involving third parties as lenders, correspondence addresses or forwarding agents. Most of the participants in these intersecting circles suffered from bibliomania. When Henri Basnage lent his copy of André Chevillier's 1694 Paris edition of *L'Origine de l'imprimerie de Paris* to Van Almeloveen via Bayle as intermediary, the latter wanted to claim the book for himself for a while⁵⁶. Subsequently the book spent at least two years being sent to and fro between Rotterdam, where Bayle lived, and Van Almeloveen's residence in Gouda. Throughout this period, the rightful owner would appear to have had to do without his property. Such delays were by no means exceptional: in his *Réponse aux questions d'un provincial*, Bayle says of N. Antonio's *Bibliotheca Hispana, sive Hispanorum Scriptorum notitia ab anno 1500. usque ad praesentem diem*: «je l'ai eue d'emprunt trois ou quatre ans, après quoi je l'ai rendue comme de raison à celui qui avoit eu la bonté de me la prêter»⁵⁷. This book probably came from the library of Johan de Witt⁵⁸.

All too often, however, the time the books were available was too short. The articles in the *Dictionnaire* were written in alphabetical order, with the result that many books were either needed again and again or had to be combed through with a feverish eye on the letters still to come; when requesting more books from a particular owner, Bayle had to make sure he returned previous consignments, so as not to frighten him off⁵⁹. Considering all these attempts to enrich the *Dictionnaire*, it is perhaps fortunate that Bayle had no ambitions as a collector; all that concerned him was to have as many books to hand as he could and for as long as possible⁶⁰. He therefore thought nothing of sending Shaftesbury two rare editions belonging to his own collection, since, as he himself put it, it was all a matter of the text and not the book⁶¹. He recorded his creed in this respect in the «Nouvelles»: «C'est déjà beaucoup que d'avoir une bonne Bibliothèque, mais le principal est de s'en bien servir, soit par l'assiduité au travail, soit par les talens que l'on a reçus de la Nature»⁶².

⁵⁵ Cf. to Johannes Georgius Graevius, 18 March 1698, RLC, Thott 1258 4o; to Theodorus Jansson van Almeloveen, 24 December 1691, UUL, ms. 996 (iii).

⁵⁶ To Theodorus Jansson van Almeloveen, 13 July 1695, UUL, ms. 996 (iii).

⁵⁷ *OD* III, p. 555.

⁵⁸ Cf. to Claude Nicaise, 29 September 1692, BNP, F. Fr. 9359.

⁵⁹ Cf. to Theodorus Jansson van Almeloveen, 14 August 1693, UUL, ms. 996 (iii).

⁶⁰ Cf. E. LABROUSSE, *op. cit.*, p. 35, note 33.

⁶¹ To Anthony Coöper, Earl of Shaftesbury, 19 March 1699 and 5 June 1699, LUL, Marchand 4.

⁶² «Nouvelles de la République des Lettres», November 1686, *OD* I, p. 678.

At this stage in the present research project, the reconstruction envisaged is in too early a phase to allow us to describe Bayle's library or the way in which he went about collecting his material. For the time being I shall restrict myself to examining two articles, *Erasme* and *Rotterdam*, by way of a pilot study designed to support the above. In his *Projet* Bayle had already sketched an outline of the lengthy article he intended to devote to Erasmus. The final version contained no less than 29 notes or «remarques». His place of residence, Rotterdam, whose praises had only been sung in the Erasmus article in the *Projet*, was accorded an entry of its own in the first edition of the *Dictionnaire* – mainly to give full prominence to the city's claims to Erasmus. To this end an important part of the Erasmus entry in the *Projet* was transferred to the new article.

The dates mentioned in the Erasmus article indicate that Bayle revised it in 1695 («remarque» x) and in 1699 (*in corpore* and p). He worked on the Rotterdam entry in July 1699 («remarque» b). They were not updated after that; there is, for example, no further information about the rumour, recorded under *Erasme* in a note dated 1699, concerning a Leiden *Opera Omnia* to be edited by Jean Leclerc.

As one might expect, Bayle began by drawing on Erasmus' writings themselves, particularly the letters. To assist him in this he had at his disposal the London edition of 1642 (a,d,f-h,l-n,q-r,t,x-y,aa,dd-ff and *Rotterdam*, a)⁶³. He also referred to the Basle *Opera omnia* of 1540 (*in corpore*, e,n,bb and *Rotterdam*, c), *Adagia* in the Basle edition of 1546 (q,r,u,cc), *Vita* in the Leiden edition of 1642 (*in corpore*, a-e,l-m,p,s,aa-bb), *Colloquia* in the Paris edition by Mercier (p), *Purgatorio adversus epistolam non sobriam Lutheri*, in all probability in a special edition (q), *Encomium moriae* in Listrius' edition (q) and in the 1676 Basle edition by Patin Jr (r,s,bb) and *Catalogus lucubrationum* (r,bb). In other articles, he turns to *De conscribendis epistolis liber* (Ailli, *in corpore*, Berauld, b), *Apophthegmata* (*passim*), *Dialogus ciceronianus* (*passim*), *Ecclesiastes*, probably in a special edition (*Athenagoras*, e), *Supputatio errorum in censuris Bedae* in an edition of 1527 (*Beda*, *in corpore*, a,c), *Spongia adversus aspergines Hutteni* (*Hutten*, *in corpore* and i), the version of Galen's *De optimo docendi genere liber* in an edition of 1562 (*Carneade*, c) and *Suetonius* (*Suetone*, e, *Wida*, d). In the article on Bersala, «remarque» d there are references, unfortunately not specified, to a number of editions of *Enchiridion militis christiani*.

The first-hand material is supplemented by data Bayle derived from lexicons and other reference works that could be put to similar uses: the *Bibliothèque Française* of La Croix du Maine (l), Draudius' *Bibliotheca Classica* (l, with the additional information that this is an edition of 1625), König's *Bibliotheca vetus*

⁶³ Cf. also *Andrelinus*, *Farel*, *Hochstrat*, *Lascaris* (J) for the place and year of publication.

et nova (a), *Bibliotheca Belgica* by Andreas Valerius (b,c,d,e,aa and Rotterdam, a), *Bibliotheca scriptorum Societatis Jesu* by Alegambe and Sotuel (e), Swert's *Athenae Batavae* (a), Freher's *Theatrum virorum eruditorum* (a), *Dialogus de patriis illustrium virorum* by Quenstedt (Rotterdam, b,c), Hofmann's *Lexicon universale* (a,q,aa, specification: 1677), Du Verdier's *Prosopographie* (a,s and Rotterdam, c), Adam's biographical lexicons (a,e,aa,bb), *Censura celebriorum Auctorum* by Pope-Blount (k, dated Londen 1690, in folio), Baillet's *Jugemens des Savans* (k,q,dd), Magirus' *Eponymologium criticum* (a,k, specification: Frankfurt/Leipzig 1687 in 4), *Istoria de' Poeti Graeci* by Crasso (n), Morhof's *Polyhistor* (cc), the *Bibliothèque choisie* of Colomiès (p,q), Bèze's *Icones* (s), Raynaud's *Erotemata de bonis & malis libris* (a,d), Bullart's *Académie des sciences* (a,d, Rotterdam, b and c), the *Lettres* of Guy Patin (d,o,p), the *Scaligerana* (in corpore, k,l), Verheiden's *Elogiae* (s and Rotterdam, b), Seckendorf's *Commentarius de Lutherismo* (b,t), Sleidanus' *De statu religionis commentarii* (q), Teissier's *Catalogus auctorum* (p), Bucholtzer's *Index chronologicus* (a,e,r), the *Abrégé chronologique et historique* of Saint-Romuald (d, specification: 1660), the catalogue of the library of Jacques-Auguste de Thou (l). These works all belong to the more or less permanent nucleus of reference works Bayle used for his articles. Abundant use is also made of them elsewhere in the *Dictionnaire*.

Other books used for the Erasmus and Rotterdam articles are referred to less frequently in the *Dictionnaire*, while some are mentioned nowhere else. This list, whose length is unexceptional, of works infrequently, if at all, mentioned elsewhere includes *Theatrum urbium Hollandiae* by Boxhornius (b,aa and Rotterdam, in corpore), *Sentimens d'Erasme de Rotterdam* by J. Richard (n,q,t, specification: 1688), Boissard's *Icones* (n,bb), the *Epistolae* of Gudius (cc, specification: Utrecht 1697) and Badius (b,c, specification: 1650 in 12), the *Orationes* against Erasmus and the *Epistolae* (in corpore, c,d,i-m, specification: Toulouse 1620 in 4), the notes to Aristotle's *Historia animalium* (k), *Poemata* (k) and *Exotericarum exercitationum liber XV* (k) written by J. C. Scaliger (the references to these last three works are probably derived from the index to Scaliger's letters), *Confutatio fabulae Burdonum* (l-m) and *Epistola de vetustate gentis Scaligerae* (k) by Jos. Scaliger, Joly's *Avis chrétiens pour l'institution des enfants* (n) and *Voyage à Munster* (a and Rotterdam b), the *Saxonia* (a) and *De laudibus Westphaliae* (e) of Chytraeus, Charles Patin's *Relations historiques* (h,n), Aemilius' *Orationes* (s), the *Délices de la Hollande* (a, dated: 1685), Catherinot's *Art d'imprimer* (a), Malincrot's *Tractatus de arte typographica* (p), the *Voyage de Suisse* by Reboulet and Labruno (h), Van Almeloveen's *Bibliotheca promissa et latens* (p, specification: 1692) and *Amoenitates* (Rotterdam, a, specification: Amsterdam 1694), Vitellius' version of Guicciardini's description of the Low Countries (s and Rotterdam, a, specification: Arnhem 1616), Heuter's *Tractatus de libera hominis nativitate* (b,c, specification: 1600), Loos' *Illustrium Germaniae scriptorum catalogus* (c,d, specification: Maience 1581), Simler's *Vita Bullingeri* (z), Leti's *Ceremoniale politico* (a) and *Teatro Belgico* (Rotter-

dam, b, specification: 1692), Vasari's *Vite de pittori* (s), Vossius' *De origine idololatriae* (k), the *Religion des Hollandois* (q), *Réplique à Costar* by Girac (dd), Munster's *Cosmographia* (Rotterdam, b), the *Voitages* of Monconys (Rotterdam, b), Barlaeus' *Bogermannus elenchomenos* (*in corpore* and ff, specification: 1615), Cenalis' *Gallica historia* (Rotterdam, a), Schoock's *De turfis* (Rotterdam, b), Calvete's description of a journey by Philip of Spain (Rotterdam, b), a book, not specified any further, against Drelincourt by Le Camus (b) and unspecified notes to *De rebus gallicis* by Priolo (a). Furthermore, there are references to Bayle's own *Nouvelles lettres contre Maimbourg* (r). It must be stressed once again that this list should in no way be regarded as exceptional in length; most of the articles of any size contain a hoard of references to works consulted infrequently or just for the sake of the article itself.

To the material thus obtained Bayle added details derived from scholarly journals: in the Erasmus article, quoting Magirus' *Eponymologium* he adds a reference to the review in the «Histoire des Ouvrage des Savans» (k), quoting Van Almeloveen's *Bibliotheca* he refers to the «Acta eruditorum» for a printed supplement to the book (p) and in a note on a forthcoming Erasmus biography by Joly he refers to the «Nouvelles» for an example of a work that had long been submitted to the censor. In the Rotterdam article (a), when disclosing the name of the burgomaster of Gouda who had tried to claim Erasmus for his city, he mentions the 1690 volume of the «Journal de Savans». Notes of this kind were by no means unusual: elsewhere in the *Dictionnaire*, too, Bayle is quick to provide his readers with additional information from scholarly journals.

Nor is there any lack of references – of a kind also found very commonly elsewhere – to comparatively apposite but not absolutely relevant remarks or «bon mots» by classical and modern authors: in this connection Bayle invokes the assistance of Horace (i), Terence (ee), Persius (ee), Martial (i), Propertius (Rotterdam, b), St. Jerome (ee), Tertullian (y), Ovid (ee), Molière (e), Vaugelas (i), Balzac (i) and Virgil (b,h and Rotterdam, b), and of the Book of Deuteronomy (aa).

It is clear that some of the information Bayle provided both here and elsewhere was the result of personal observation or had been communicated to him personally. In the Erasmus article he refers to the texts on Erasmus' monument (a). In the Rotterdam article he describes the precise location of this monument, also referring to the commemorative texts to Erasmus to be found in the façades of the house where the latter was born and of the Latin School (b). A remark by Vitellius in his translation of Guicciardini prompted Bayle to look everywhere for a portrait of Erasmus, rumoured to have been donated to the city of Rotterdam by the people and Senate of Basle, and to be located in some public building in that city. He was able to report that Jan van Brakel, a rear admiral attached to the admiralty at Maze, had had an origi-

nal Holbein with a likeness of Erasmus, but that nobody had known anything about the Basle portrait (*Rotterdam*, s). An apparently promising remark about a portrait of Erasmus in Gouda library proved to have been copied from Van Ameloveen's *Amoenitates* (*Rotterdam*, a). There is a well-documented account of an attempt by the Basle city fathers to buy the Erasmus monument; at the end it appears that the Rotterdam merchant who had acted as intermediary had told Bayle the whole story on 26 July 1699 (*Rotterdam*, b).

Bayle's reports concerning the Leiden edition of the *Opera omnia* (*Erasmus, in corpore*), a malicious rumour about Erasmus that was doing the rounds in Holland (e) and the biography of Joly (p) may also have been based on personal communications. What is more difficult to judge is the marginal note concerning a remark made by a satirical writer, introduced by «On m'a dit depuis quelques jours (en 1695)», which is meant to liven up the argument in «remarque» x of the Erasmus article. In view of the way hearsay is dealt with elsewhere, however, it would seem plausible that this is indeed a report of a conversation that actually took place.

The articles under discussion here also document the help Bayle received from others: for the Erasmus article he was able to draw on a very detailed «mémoire», largely reproduced verbatim, by Bernard de La Monnoye (c,l and r) that had been sent him by Claude Nicaise in 1693⁶⁴. In this way he could comment on a number of books which were not included in his own library: Herold's *Philopseudes* and the two *Orationes* by J. C. Scaliger in the Paris 1531 and 1537 editions respectively. The name of the author – and this is characteristic of Bayle – was duly revealed to his readers in the usual laudatory manner. La Monnoye was gratefully called a «fort habile homme» (c), and Nicaise was praised too, earning the epithet «illustre» (l). An excursus by La Monnoye on the true authorship of an anti-Erasmus pamphlet was included in the Lando entry (a). In the second «remarque» of this entry Bayle quoted La Monnoye on the same subject – this time almost certainly drawing on the latter's annotations in the previously mentioned notebook of 1697 to the article on Cardinal Aleandro in the first edition⁶⁵. The excerpts from a book by Heinrich von Eppendorff prepared for the article on Erasmus by Bachelier des Marets, a friend of François Janiçon, ultimately found their way into a specially written article *Eppendorff* (b,c). Janiçon had sent these notes to Bayle in 1697, and had not failed to inform the latter that Bachelier des Marets had a

⁶⁴ Cf. to Claude Nicaise, 17 September 1693, *OD* IV, pp. 693-694.

⁶⁵ From the second text it may be inferred that La Monnoye had forgotten all about his earlier intervention! Subsequently, incidentally, Pierre Desmaizeaux was also to contribute to the article (*Lando*, a).

«fort belle bibliothèque»⁶⁶. Here, too, both author and intermediary were warmly thanked for their work. It is possible that the Erasmus autograph from the collection of Le Leu de Wilhem, published in the article on Bore, «remarque» l (Bayle had a copy which he had personally collated with the original), was also originally intended for the Erasmus entry. It is, however, curious that the Erasmus entry itself contains no reference to this part of the Bore entry.

Finally, although Bayle's predecessor and opponent Moréri is not mentioned in the article *Rotterdam*, he is given a good drubbing in the Erasmus entry in a specially written «remarque» aa, after a few provocative sideswipes had been dealt in «remarques» a and q. In «remarque» aa he is accused of six errors, suitably numbered. There was, of course, nothing unusual in this: the *Dictionnaire* records over 1500 of his errors in all. We may add that in other articles Bayle makes regular references to the relevant article in Moréri, thus obviating the need for expositions of his own, and by way of exception there is even the occasional word of praise⁶⁷.

As may have become clear, the entries *Erasme* and *Rotterdam* offer a highly representative sample not only of the type, but also the variety of sources Bayle used while writing his *Dictionnaire*. What they illustrate in particular is that his virtual library – although this probably also applied to his real library – could easily match the actual private libraries he was allowed to make somewhat envious use of. The generosity with which he gave his readers access to that library probably had more than a little to do with the obstacles he himself met in his constant search for facts. His *Dictionnaire* made his reader's quest for information much easier. As Bayle had already declared in his «Nouvelles»:

Tout le monde doit convenir que si la mémoire n'est pas la principale piece d'un habile Docteur, elle est du moins ce qui contribüe le plus à le rendre fort savant. Mais comme c'est un talent de fort difficile garde, il importe beaucoup qu'il y ait de bons gros Livres qui soient destinez à la soulager, & à nous épargner la perte incroïable de temps que nous ferions, à chercher dans une Bibliothéque les choses que nous voudrions éclaircir. Et parce que les Livres & les Auteurs, qui ne devoient être originaiement qu'un moyen d'acquérir les Sciences, sont devenus enfin eux-mêmes l'objet d'une Science, pour laquelle il faut une prodigieuse mémoire, il importe de venir au secours des gens d'étude dans ce genre-là, par plusieurs sortes de *Lexicons*⁶⁸.

⁶⁶ From François Janiçon, 23 August 1697, RLC, Thott 1208 4o.

⁶⁷ Cf. *Adraste, in corpore; Calvin, in corpore*.

⁶⁸ «Nouvelles de la République des Lettres», February 1686, OD I, p. 499.