

# Creating and Subverting German Models of *Galanterie*?

Heroes and Heroines in Texts by Christian Friedrich Hunold and Maria Aurora von Königsmarck<sup>1</sup>

*Madeleine Brook*

In his article on constructions of the heroic throughout history<sup>2</sup>, Ronald Asch lists as some of the defining characteristics of the hero their superhuman nature, possibly with a link to God or the gods, capable of superhuman deeds and possibly even suffering the torments of passions (however these are conceived), and set apart from the rest of society, which looks on in wonder at the figure they cut. If one subscribes to this definition, the seventeenth and early eighteenth-century monarch certainly did his best to create a heroic image for himself. With all the symbolism clinging to his chosen emblem,<sup>3</sup> the ritual surrounding his person which he established at court, and the style of rhetoric and behaviour known as *galanterie*, the Apollonian Sun King of France, Louis XIV, came to be an ideal model for European monarchs of the period by which to express the nature of their rule, power, and relationships, both within and beyond the geographical borders of their territories.<sup>4</sup> At the turn of the seventeenth century, it was Friedrich August I, Elector of Saxony and King of Poland – known as August the Strong – who

<sup>1</sup> This article is extensively based on parts of the chapter “August the Strong, the Eighteenth-Century Gallant Archetype”, in: Madeleine Brook, *Popular History and Fiction: The Myth of August the Strong in German Literature, Art and Media* (Cultural Identity Studies; 28), Oxford 2013, pp. 61–104.

<sup>2</sup> Ronald G. Asch, *The Hero in the Early Modern Period and Beyond: An Elusive Cultural Construct and an Indispensable Focus of Social Identity?*, in: *helden. heroes. héros.* Special Issue 1, 2014: *Languages and Functions of the Heroic*, pp. 5–14. DOI 10.6094/helden.heroes.heros./2014/QM/02.

<sup>3</sup> On the construction of Louis XIV’s image through art, see, of course, Peter Burke, *The Fabrication of Louis XIV*, New Haven/London 1992; for Louis’ employment of elemental symbolism in his fêtes, see Orest Ranum, *Islands and the Self in a Ludovician Fête*, in: David Lee Rubin (Ed.), *Sun King: The Ascendancy of French Culture During the Reign of Louis XIV*, Washington 1992, pp. 17–34, as well as other essays in that same volume.

<sup>4</sup> See, again, Burke, *The Fabrication of Louis XIV* (Fn. 3), in particular Chapter 11: *The Reception of Louis XIV*, pp. 151–177; and John Adamson, *The Making of the Ancien-Régime Court 1500–1700*, in: John Adamson (Ed.), *The Princely Courts of Europe 1500–1750*, London 1999, pp. 7–41, here pp. 40–41. More recently and on the tension in the projected public image of Louis XIV and that of Louis as a private man, see in particular the essays in Mathieu da Vinha [et al.] (Ed.), *Louis XIV: l’image et le mythe*, Rennes/Versailles 2014; in the same volume, on the role of foreign diplomats at court in providing a reaction to the royal image, see Sven Externbrink, *Le roi et le diplomate: l’image de Louis XIV à travers les dépêches et la Relation de la cour de France d’Ézéchiel Spanheim (1680–89 et 1698–1701)*, pp. 201–214.

seemed to aim at portraying himself as the ideal gallant ruler among the German princes. This self-constructed image was projected through all conceivable avenues of princely representation available to the artistic minds and technologies of the time,<sup>5</sup> and it was also taken up in the literature of the day: first in the *roman à clef* entitled *Der Europäischen Höfe Liebes- und Helden-Geschichte* (The Amorous and Heroic History of the European Courts; 1705) by Christian Friedrich Hunold (who also wrote under the pseudonym 'Menantes'). Principally a novel of entertainment in which the princely hero, Gustavus, is held up as an example for the book's bourgeois audience to follow, the book also gathers a large number of stories concerning the nobility of contemporary Europe. Secondly, August appears as the principal male actor in two short stories now firmly attributed to Maria Aurora von Königsmarck, who had been one of August's mistresses early in his reign of Saxony. These two stories, "Die Geschichte der Solane" (The Story of Solane) and "Die Geschichte der Givritta" (The Story of Givritta), are contained in the voluminous courtly novel commonly known as *Römische Octavia* (Roman Octavia; 1713/1762), one of the two great literary achievements of Duke Anton Ulrich von Braunschweig-Wolfenbüttel.<sup>6</sup> They narrate the actions of the respective eponymous heroines in relation to the prince and his image.

These texts are partly of interest because, while gallant literature often presented fictionalized, disguised, and encoded events and figures of contemporary bourgeois life, it was fairly unusual for a noble ruler of the same period to be fictionalized during his own lifetime.<sup>7</sup> They are also important texts in the history of the

<sup>5</sup> On August the Strong's artistic interests in relation to the construction of his image, see, for example, Claudia Schnitzer / Petra Hölscher (Ed.), *Eine gute Figur machen: Kostüm und Fest am Dresdner Hof*, Dresden 2000; Claudia Schnitzer (Ed.), *Constellatio Felix: Die Planetenfeste Augusts des Starken anlässlich der Vermählung seines Sohnes Friedrich August mit der Kaisertochter Maria Josepha 1719* in Dresden, Dresden 2014; Dirk Syndram / Jutta Kappel / Ulrike Weinhold (Ed.), *Das Historische Grüne Gewölbe zu Dresden: Die barocke Schatzkammer*, Munich/Berlin 2007; Kurt Milde (Ed.), *Matthäus Daniel Pöppelmann (1662–1736) und die Architektur der Zeit August des Starken* (Fundus-Bücher; 125), Dresden 1991; Kerstin Heldt, *Der vollkommene Regent: Studien zur panegyrischen Casuallryik am Beispiel des Dresdner Hofes Augusts des Starken* (Frühe Neuzeit; 34), Tübingen 1997.

<sup>6</sup> On the attribution of the stories to Königsmarck, see Stephan Kraft, *Galante Passagen im höfischen Barockroman: Aurora von Königsmarck als Beiträgerin zur Römischen Octavia* Herzog Anton Ulrichs, in: *Daphnis* 28, Issue 2, 1999, pp. 323–345. On Duke Anton Ulrich as an author, see, for example, Julie Meyer / Maria Munding, *Anton Ulrich als Dichter*, in: Rüdiger Klessmann (Ed.), *Herzog Anton Ulrich von Braunschweig: Leben und Regieren mit der Kunst*, Braunschweig 1983, pp. 201–212; Étienne Mazingue, *Réflexions sur la creation romanesque chez Anton Ulrich*, in: Jean-Marie Valentin (Ed.), *Monarchus Poëta: Studien zum Leben und Werk Anton Ulrichs von Braunschweig-Lüneburg* (Chloe; 4), Amsterdam 1985, pp. 47–53.

<sup>7</sup> Several examples of seventeenth and early eighteenth-century novels and in particular *romans à clef* may be referenced here in which real life bourgeois and aristocratic figures provided the events on which the plots were based: Hunold's scandal-inducing *Satyrischer Roman* (1706), Philipp von Zesen's autobiographical *Die Adriatische Rosemund* (1645), Johann Thomasius's *Damon und Lisille* (1663/65), Martin Opitz's *Hercinie* (1630), and others. Real contemporary noble figures are rather thinner on the ground: encoded anecdotes from the

reception and production of August the Strong's image as a ruler and gallant ideal, although admittedly, partly as a result of their encrypted nature, their long-term significance in this regard was superseded by other texts.<sup>8</sup> However, closer inspection of these two sets of texts reveals not only two different views of the male-gendered gallant ideal but also, in at least one instance, a tantalizing glimpse of what might be considered a gallant heroine, a *dame galante*. This article analyses the gaps between the gallant ideal of the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries and the interests of Königsmarck and Hunold in creating their texts, and thus examines how the concept of the hero is subtly, though perhaps unintentionally, undermined. In doing so, Königsmarck's text comes to suggest a veritable unmasking of the masculine gallant ideal as anything but heroic while – rather surprisingly – still upholding aspects of its notions of masculinity. Arguably, at the same time, she presents heroic possibilities for her female characters by playing gendered norms off against each other and demonstrating the necessity of the female element for maintaining an image of heroism in the *homme galante*. Finally, this article posits that even the tensions inherent in Hunold's presentation of Friedrich August as a gallant ideal have the effect of placing a question mark over the nature of the concept of the hero.

Friedrich August I., Elector of Saxony, who became August II., King of Poland, in 1697, was born in 1670, the second son of Johann Georg III., Elector of Saxony, and Anna Sophie, Princess of Denmark and Norway. The young electoral prince became well known for his feats of apparently immense physical strength which later earned him the soubriquet 'the Strong'.<sup>9</sup> Like many young princes of the period, shortly after his seventeenth birthday, August embarked on a two-year cavalier tour of the courts of Europe, which naturally included the court of Louis XIV of France.<sup>10</sup> In the years following his tour, August established a successful military reputation in imperial campaigns against France and the Turks, although this reputation would later be sullied by the events of the Northern Wars in the first decade of the eighteenth century.<sup>11</sup> In 1691, August married Christiane Eberhardine von

---

royal courts of Europe, past and contemporary, litter Duke Anton Ulrich's *Römische Octavia* and – as already mentioned in this article – Hunold makes August of Saxony and Poland the thinly veiled protagonist of his novel *Der Europäischen Höfe Liebes- und Helden-Geschichte*; otherwise such direct incorporation of real noble figures in fiction is rare.

<sup>8</sup> The other text in particular being Karl Ludwig von Pöllnitz's notoriously salacious work *La Saxe galante* (1734), published – significantly – shortly after August's death. See Brook, Popular History and Fiction (Fn. 1), esp. p. 90 and pp. 95–103.

<sup>9</sup> For the stories of August's manipulation of metal objects (among other things), see Georg Piltz, *August der Starke: Träume und Taten eines deutschen Fürsten*, Berlin 1986, pp. 17–19; Karl Czok, *August der Starke und Kursachsen*, Leipzig 1987, p. 11.

<sup>10</sup> See, for example, Mathis Leibetseder, *Die Kavalierstour: Adlige Erziehungsreisen im 17. und 18. Jahrhundert* (Archiv für Kulturgeschichte / Beihefte; 56), Cologne [et al.] 2004; Alain Viala, *La France galante*, Paris 2008.

<sup>11</sup> See, for example, Robert Frost, *The Northern Wars: War, State and Society in Northeastern Europe, 1558–1721*, Harlow 2000, p. 230, pp. 243–244 and pp. 263–264; David Kirby,

Bayreuth-Brandenburg. The match was not a particularly happy one: five years after their marriage, Christiane Eberhardine produced a son, their only child, but the clash of personalities between husband and wife meant they spent very little time together. August also acknowledged a number of illegitimate children by various mistresses, including a son by Maria Aurora von Königsmarck and three children by Countess Anna Constantia von Cosel, his longest-serving mistress. The unexpected death of his elder brother in 1692 brought August the Saxon electoral title.<sup>12</sup> He also began working on his political ambitions beyond Saxony by standing as a candidate for the Polish throne, which he won in 1697, thereby becoming the first German king – albeit not within his own hereditary territories – and by marrying his son, Friedrich August II. to the Habsburg Archduchess Maria Josepha of Austria. August died in Warsaw on 1 February 1733 and was buried in the royal crypt in Krakow.

In the decades marking the turn of the seventeenth century, approximately 1680–1730 – dates that almost perfectly encompass the duration of August's reign – the German middle and upper classes came into contact with and adopted a new style of social interaction and expression that had originated at the French court of Louis XIV. The French were universally held up as the masters of gallant behaviour, for example by the controversial juridical scholar Christian Thomasius in his 1689 lecture *Discours Welcher Gestalt man denen Frantzosen in gemeinem Leben und Wandel nachahmen solle?* (Considerations on the manner in which the French should be imitated in everyday life and manners). *Galanterie* was also a rhetorical system that could be applied to all conceivable aspects of life, but broadly covered conduct towards others, the expression of learning and knowledge; in short, communication of all kinds, written and spoken.<sup>13</sup> Its key principle lay in self-promotion; that is, promoting one's own interests by fostering a positive perception of oneself and one's position in the eyes of others. The means by which to achieve this required an ability to adapt and maintain personal ease in all social situations. Unsurprisingly, as a result, *galanterie* received praise and criticism alike from German contemporaries. There were voices who pointed to its civilising power, such as Johann Christian Barth, who explicitly linked it to virtuous and socially skilled behaviour:

Civility is a virtuous and gallant way to adapt oneself, in deeds as in words, according to the time and place, to the type of people with which one associates, so that one can recommend oneself and so help to improve one's fortunes.<sup>14</sup>

Northern Europe in the Early Modern Period: The Baltic World, 1492–1772, London 1990, p. 307.

<sup>12</sup> Piltz, *August der Starke* (Fn. 9), pp. 27–33.

<sup>13</sup> Peter Hess, *Galante Rhetorik*, in: Gert Ueding (Ed.), *Historisches Wörterbuch der Rhetorik*, Vol. 3, Tübingen 1996, pp. 508–509.

<sup>14</sup> All English translations, unless otherwise indicated, are my own. “Die Höflichkeit ist eine Tugendhaft und galante Conduite, sich, so wohl in Wercken, als Worten bey Erwegung der Zeit und des Orts, nach dem Genie der Leute, mit welchen man umgehet, zu richten:

But naturally there were also those who pointed in the opposite direction, at the potential *galanterie* held for encouraging immoral behaviour and false character. Some went so far as to link the potential encouragement of immoral behaviour with the growing (but still very much nascent) market in novels:

For there would be enough other forms of godlessness in such books, which tell of nothing but hatred, murder, dissimulation, disavowal, lies, deception, [...] and lecherous whickering and so forth, and what is more they praise all this as wit, propriety, and virtue in their heroes! Such things may well serve those people to whom whoring is a deed of *galanterie* and an *histoire galant* is a happy tale of nothing but adulterous affairs.<sup>15</sup>

This criticism from Gotthard Heidegger, a Swiss pastor and theologian, which focuses on reading fiction, and specifically gallant literature, as the expression of *galanterie*'s disreputableness, gives the view that the *homme galant*, the gallant hero, is absolutely the wrong sort of hero, the thoroughly bad example and representative of a topsy-turvy world in which vice is portrayed as virtue.

As Disselkamp has shown, the concept of 'heroic virtue' or *virtus heroica* in the Aristotelean tradition became ever more problematic during the later seventeenth century: definitions were largely contained within the theoretical field of ethical discourse such that a credible application within political theory and practical application within the developing political models of the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries became increasingly difficult, until the concept was rejected as no longer congruent with bourgeois existence during the Enlightenment.<sup>16</sup> The emphasis on the definitions by ethical philosophers of the visibility of heroic virtue through the performance of deeds meant that heroism as a concept was heavily engaged with the notion of performance and the necessity of achieving a heroic image. This also opened it up to criticism as an art of dissembling not easily compatible with Christian ideas of virtuous conduct in the individual (and especially the prince when it was applied to the political

Damit man sich recommandire, und also sein Glück befördern helffe." Johann Christian Barth, Galante Ethica, In welcher gezeiget wird, Wie sich Ein junger Mensch bey der Galanten Welt, Sowohl Durch manierliche Wercke, als complaisante Worte recommandiren soll, Dresden/Leipzig 1728, 3rd ed., in: Conrad Wiedemann (Ed.), Der galante Stil 1680–1730 (Deutsche Texte; 11), Tübingen 1969, p. 11.

<sup>15</sup> "Es were ja sonst anderwerts Gottlosigkeit genug in solchen Bücheren, die von nichts anders, als von hassen, morden, simulieren, läugnen, lügen-dichten, hindern Liecht führen, [...] und geilem wiheln &c. handeln, und dises alles, an ihrem Heros als Witz, Wolständigkeit, und Tugend noch dazu loben! [...] solche Sachen dienen wol unter diejenige Leuth, bey denen huren [...] eine *Galanterie* begehen, ist, und *Histoire Galante* ein Lust-Geschicht von lauter Ehbrüchen bedeutet [...]." Gotthard Heidegger, *Mythoscopia Romantica: oder Discours von den so benannten Romans, Das ist Erdichteten Liebes- Helle[n]- und Hirten-Geschichten: Von dero Uhrsprung, Einrisse, Verschidenheit, Nütz- oder Schädlichkeit: Samt Beantwortung aller Einwürffen, und vilen besondern Historischen, und anderen anmühligen Remarques, Zurich 1698* (facsimile edn., Walter Ernst Schäfer [Ed.], Berlin/Zurich 1969), Vorbericht, n.p. Emphasis in the original.

<sup>16</sup> Martin Disselkamp, *Barockheroismus: Konzeptionen 'politischer' Größe in Literatur und Traktatistik des 17. Jahrhunderts* (Frühe Neuzeit; 65), Tübingen 2002, p. 5 and pp. 26–39.

sphere of discourse).<sup>17</sup> Moreover, as Disselkamp explains, definitions that linked heroic virtue with divine inspiration, and thus the achievement of 'superhuman' virtue, proved equally unstable: the hero could only *appear* to overcome his human form due to his mastery of emotion, of himself – to achieve truly divine standards of conduct could not be acceptable within the established relationship between humankind and God – and the hero's overreliance on his own power and success could lead to his downfall and succumbing to vice.<sup>18</sup>

These problems hover in the background of Heidegger's criticism. Implicit in Heidegger's words is, on the one hand, an acceptance of the hero as a person who is recognizable by deeds, but on the other hand, they ought in particular to be deeds that are not self-serving. This is indicated most strongly by Heidegger's emphasis on the illicit and sexual nature of the acts he lists. It is clear, too, that Heidegger considers the literary hero to be a figure whose conduct will be internalized and emulated by the reader, and that readers will receive the novel as a guide for their own conduct. He works *ex negativo* in reference to the figure of the hero as he ought to be. The disdain Heidegger bears for the novels' heroes is palpable in his sarcastic tone and the focus of the list of 'heroic' deeds, which describes almost all in terms of deception and subterfuge, blurring the distinction between truth and appearance, or *Sein* and *Schein*, highlighting this in particular as a path away from godliness.

Nevertheless, adaptability and flexibility were key to the successful execution of gallant style and gallant behaviour. Intrinsic to its success was the art of the compliment, tailored to its audience and artfully composed for 'natural' expression and wit. 'How to' guides were common; the most prominent writers of these were Talander, Menantes, Amaranthes – the pseudonyms for the writers August Bohse, Christian Friedrich Hunold, and Gottlieb Siegmund Corvinus – but there were others. They advised their readers on the composition of 'gallant' letters and poetry of all kinds, and on conversation.<sup>19</sup> One of the overriding concerns – perhaps unsurprisingly – was the expression of love. Generally, behavioural instruction in these books aimed exclusively at men. Only one of Hunold's guides, published in 1710, *Die Manier höflich und wohl zu Reden und zu Leben* (The Way to Speak and Live Politely and Well), addresses the manners of women, but relegates this comparatively short section to the back of the book. The direction of *galanterie* in favour of the man and the extremely slight role given to women as 'dames galantes' hardly seems clearer here. The separation suggests that women were not envisaged as ac-

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., pp. 40–42.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid., pp. 44–47.

<sup>19</sup> An indication of the extent of the popularity of such works is given in the list of (selected) titles of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century etiquette books, their authors, and the number of editions provided in Manfred Beetz, *Frühmoderne Höflichkeit: Komplimentierkunst und Gesellschaftsrituale im altdeutschen Sprachraum* (Germanistische Abhandlungen; 67), Stuttgart 1990, pp. 106–107.

tive practitioners of the mode in the way, or to the extent, that was encouraged and prescribed for men. *Galanterie* as envisaged in German thought was a ‘male domain’.<sup>20</sup>

The root of ‘good’ *galanterie* lay in France and, importantly, in the behaviour of the princely court, although it was taken up and developed within French salon culture, notably by Madeleine de Scudéry. Hunold’s novels *Die liebenswürdige Adalie* (Sweet Adalia; 1702) and *Der Europäischen Höfe Liebes- und Helden-Geschichte* (1705) indicate that he saw the basis for gallant behaviour in a courtly – and therefore political – environment. Even so, this did not mean that the *homme galant* existed only in a courtly environment or that the model was one necessarily intended for a princely or noble audience. Theoretically, universal politeness was to sustain society throughout and between the different social classes.<sup>21</sup> However, several of the theoreticians of *galanterie* were also novelists, and many German novels of the period written in the gallant style have links to instructional literature clearly aimed at the middle classes. Indeed, the middle classes were generally the producers and recipients of gallant literature of all kinds and the names of the nobility are conspicuously absent from the roll call of gallant authors.<sup>22</sup> Nevertheless, the middle classes and gallant authors were present at court at various times in their lives – as courtiers, tutors, clerks, secretaries and so on – for example Benjamin Neukirch in Berlin, August Bohse in Weissenfels, and Christian Weise in Halle. Thus, it seems likely that gallant instructional books and guidance literature were aimed not simply at courtly men in general, but at the middle class men active or potentially active in and around noble courts, so that they might move more comfortably in these circles and establish careers.<sup>23</sup> It is

<sup>20</sup> Isabelle Stauffer, Die Scudéry-Rezeption im Pegnesischen Blumenorden: Galanterietransfer aus genderkritischer Perspektive, in: Ruth Florack / Rüdiger Singer (Ed.), *Die Kunst der Galanterie: Facetten eines Verhaltensmodells in der Literatur der Frühen Neuzeit* (Frühe Neuzeit; 171), Berlin 2012, pp. 251–274, here p. 251. Other works, such as books on manners, were aimed specifically at girls and young women, such as *Des Galanten Frauenzimmers kluge Hofmeisterin* (The Clever Lady Governess of the Gallant Woman; transl. from the French and published in Leipzig in 1696) or August Bohse’s *Des Galanten Frauenzimmers Secretariat-Kunst oder Liebes- und Freundschafts-Briefe* (The Secretarial Arts of the Gallant Woman or Letters of Love and Friendship; Leipzig 1698). See Cornelia Niekus Moore, *The Maiden’s Mirror: Reading Material for German Girls in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*, Wiesbaden 1987, pp. 117–120. On books of manners and conduct for women in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, see also Sabine Koloch, *Kommunikation, Macht, Bildung: Frauen im Kulturprozess der Frühen Neuzeit*, Berlin 2011, and on the complexities of the practice of the compliment for women, see esp. pp. 304–341.

<sup>21</sup> Pamela Currie, *Literature as Social Action: Modernist and Traditionalist Narratives in Germany in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries*, Columbia, SC 1995, p. 102.

<sup>22</sup> Johannes Süßmann, Wurde der deutsche Adel galant? Vorüberlegungen zu den unerforschten Wegen des Galanterietransfers in der Adelserziehung des frühen 18. Jahrhunderts, in: Ruth Florack / Rüdiger Singer (Ed.), *Die Kunst der Galanterie: Facetten eines Verhaltensmodells in der Literatur der Frühen Neuzeit* (Frühe Neuzeit; 171), Berlin 2012, pp. 317–337, here pp. 317–318.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid., p. 334.

worth noting in this regard that the kinds of interaction enumerated in Hunold's *Die Manier höflich und wohl zu Reden und zu Leben* are predominantly focused on the addressing of various court officials, while only a relative few explain how to approach an exchange with a prince or regent, meaning that the focus lies on those figures with whom aspiring court officials were most likely to interact.

It is worth pausing briefly here to remark once more on the apparent exclusion of women in this context, because at first glance, this can seem rather puzzling. If the courtly environment is inherently political, surely the sphere of the courtly woman is therefore also political. After all, women did indeed take on what would be considered political roles at court – as regents and guardians for male heirs still considered minors; as patrons of art, music, and literature; as active contributors to, as well as participants in, the courtly festival culture that presented the claim to power of the prince and his dynasty, thereby also shaping their own self-image and laying claim to particular roles of power themselves.<sup>24</sup> Yet the roles women occupied and the paths they navigated were nevertheless embedded in a social system that was by default patriarchal; the positions of power held by women were constantly being contested and were frequently deemed only temporary solutions until a suitable male came of age or status to take up the reins. This is particularly evident in the German lands of the Holy Roman Empire. The abbesses of Herford Abbey and Quedlinburg Abbey in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, while officially *reichsfrei* (directly subject to the Holy Roman Emperor), found themselves regularly having to resist pressure to cede their territories and privileges to nearby civic authorities or even their protectors in Saxony and Prussia.<sup>25</sup> Another example is the conflict that surrounded the accession of Em-

<sup>24</sup> See, for example, Heide Wunder, Herrschaft und öffentliches Handeln von Frauen in der Gesellschaft der Frühen Neuzeit, in: Ute Gerhard (Ed.), *Frauen in der Geschichte des Rechts: Von der Frühen Neuzeit bis zur Gegenwart*, Munich 1997, pp. 27–54, esp. 45–50. There has been much recent scholarship on the political roles and opportunities of women at royal and noble courts in the early modern period: see, for example, Jessica Munns / Penny Richards (Ed.), *Gender, Power and Privilege in Early Modern Europe*, Harlow [et al.] 2003; Clarissa Campbell Orr (Ed.), *Queenship in Europe 1660–1815: The Role of the Consort*, Cambridge 2004; Nadine Akkerman / Birgit Houben (Ed.), *The Politics of Female Households: Ladies-in-Waiting Across Early Modern Europe*, Leiden [et al.] 2014; James Daybell / Svante Norrhem (Ed.), *Gender and Political Culture in Early Modern Europe, 1400–1800*, London 2017.

<sup>25</sup> On the general situation of the 'Fürstäbtissin' or princess-abbess in this period, see Teresa Schröder-Stapper, *Fürstäbtissinnen: frühneuzeitliche Stiftsherrschaften zwischen Verwandtschaft, Lokalgewalten und Reichsverband*, Cologne [et al.] 2015, but esp. pp. 379–386 and pp. 499–503. On Herford in particular, see also Michael von Fürstenberg, "Ordinaria loci" oder "Monstrum Westphaliae"? Zur kirchlichen Rechtsstellung der Äbtissin von Herford im europäischen Vergleich, Paderborn 1995, esp. pp. 356–372. On Quedlinburg in particular, see also Jochen Vötsch, *Die Äbtissin von Quedlinburg als Reichs- und Kreisstand*, in: Clemens Bley (Ed.), *Kaiserlich – frey – weltlich: Das Reichstift Quedlinburg im Spätmittelalter und in der Frühen Neuzeit*, Halle 2009, pp. 120–129, and Frank Göse, *Be-schränkte Souveränität: Das Verhältnis zwischen Stift und Schutzherrschaft im 17. und 18. Jahrhundert*, in: Bley, *Kaiserlich – frey – weltlich*, pp. 130–150.

press Maria Theresia, the only woman of the period in the German lands to occupy such a politically significant position, from the Pragmatic Sanction of 1713 to the subsequent wars of succession.<sup>26</sup> However, a significant aspect of the works penned by the likes of Hunold, Weise, and Neukirch on the mode of *galanterie* is that they were not aimed at the members of the noble rank, who were more likely to have a presence at court and to have been educated in its communication forms, but at a middle class whose male representatives had not had that same exposure to courtly life and who aspired to a career at court. The very notion that women of a social class which did not in and of itself have a calling to rule (for example, through dynastic claim to power) might aspire to public office was actively discouraged and even learned women themselves could declare their disapproval of any such ambition on the part of members of their sex.<sup>27</sup> Isabelle Stauffer has demonstrated that the developmental change from the French notion of *galanterie* as a female dominated mode – thanks to its cultivation in seventeenth-century French salon culture – towards an almost exclusively male domain in German thought can be traced in the reception and expression of key ideas in the German-language literature of the late seventeenth century, even in that produced by women.<sup>28</sup> The apparent exclusion of women as addressees in these texts that functioned to a certain extent as guides to navigating the courtly environment through the gallant rhetorical mode is therefore rooted in the social developments of the period and in the socially defined roles prescribed not simply for men on the one hand and women on the other, but for men and women distinguished by social status and class.

Gallant behaviour was thus presented for a political environment and aimed at increasing the (middle class male) individual's chances of success in public life. Therefore gallant behaviour was also by default mainly the preserve of men, as is made clear in the contemporary guides to gallant manners. However, *galanterie*'s connection with the theme of love and the device of the compliment also creates a tension between the political public and the private spheres. Arguably, in

<sup>26</sup> Barbara Stollberg-Rilinger, *Maria Theresia: Die Kaiserin in ihrer Zeit. Eine Biographie*, Munich 2017, esp. pp. 67–80 and pp. 86–109.

<sup>27</sup> Anna Maria van Schurmann was among those women who professed their agreement, as she wrote in a letter to her mentor, André Rivet on 1 March 1632, in which she expanded her argument that women could and should engage in higher study: “[...] I remember reading somewhere that Ulpian women were barred from all civil or public office. By what justice this was decreed I will not now laboriously inquire, save that I think it is clearly proven from this that the leisure in which we pass time was praised and legitimate.” Anna Maria van Schurmann, *Whether a Christian Woman Should Be Educated and Other Writings From Her Intellectual Circle*, ed. and transl. by Joyce L. Irwin, Chicago 1998, p. 43. Cf. Anne R. Larsen, Anna Maria van Schurmann, ‘The Star of Utrecht’: The Educational Vision and Reception of a Savante, Abingdon 2016, p. 115.

<sup>28</sup> See Stauffer, *Die Scudéry-Rezeption im Pegnesischen Blumenorden* (Fn. 20).

both areas, it was a means to a self-interested end of successfully achieving personal objectives.<sup>29</sup>

It is in part against this background that the court of August the Strong came to be seen as the epitome of courtly ceremonial, represented by a particular kind of rhetoric displaying the universal abilities and interests of the ideal ruler, promoting his (self-)interests, which also involved formal display of some of his connections with women who were not his wife. So, by association, it also became the epitome of *galanterie* in German-speaking territories.<sup>30</sup> This is reflected in the contemporary literature that took August as a key character and conveyed him beyond the boundaries of his court circle in Dresden and Warsaw; a selection of these texts are examined here and present August the Strong as an *homme galant*.

Christian Friedrich Hunold had been a law student, but by 1700 his impecunious ways had forced him to move from Jena to Hamburg and to earn his way by writing occasional poetry and gallant novels under his pseudonym, 'Menantes'. His most notorious publication, *Satyrischer Roman, In Unterschiedlichen / lustigen / lächerlichen und galanten Liebes-Begebenheiten* (Satirical Novel in Various Entertaining, Humorous, and Gallant Love Affairs), in 1706 detailed the scandals of Hamburg society and resulted in his departure from the city. Yet another of his popular novels, though with less extreme consequences, was *Der Europäischen Höfe Liebes- und Helden-Geschichte*. In the first half of the eighteenth century, this novel was reprinted eight times, while Johann Georg Hamann produced two sequels published in 1728 and in 1740 (posthumously), the first reprinted three times and the second once.

*Der Europäischen Höfe Liebes- und Helden-Geschichte, der Galanten Welt zur vergnügten Curiosité ans Licht gestellet* (The Amorous and Heroic History of the European Courts Revealed to the Gallant World to Satisfy its Curiosity), to give its full title, presents the fictionalized and encrypted stories of the love lives of European royalty from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and stories of the battles they fought in the conflicts of the same period. Most characters and locations are provided with pseudonyms, many of which are simple enough to work out, but evidently not all the anagrams were entirely transparent, even to a fairly contemporaneous audience: a key was published in Cologne in 1731 under the title *Geheime Nachrichten und Briefe von Herrn Menantes Leben und Schriften* (Secret Mes-

<sup>29</sup> Peter Hess, Poetry in Germany, 1450–1700, in: Max Reinhart (Ed.), *Early Modern German Literature 1350–1700* (The Camden House History of German Literature; 4) Rochester, NY 2007, pp. 395–467, here p. 433.

<sup>30</sup> Süßmann suggests that this may also be a linked side effect of the political background of the Saxon court as a newly royal court at the time, which, as a consequence of its foreign interests, had a high number of foreign courtiers present, while the less wealthy native nobility was less engaged at court, maybe paving the way for a greater non-noble presence within the administration of the court. Thus, there was a greater interest in the uses of gallant conduct at a court where representation was of singularly critical importance. See Süßmann, *Wurde der deutsche Adel galant?* (Fn. 22), p. 333.

sages and Letters from the Life and Writings of Herr Menantes). Episodes of 'true' tales presenting stories of the likes of Philipp Christoph von Königsmarck (=Silibert von Cremarsig), Johann Georg IV., Elector of Saxony (=Albion), Afonso VI of Portugal (=Alfonso, King of Torgapulia), William IV of Orange (=Prince Iranio of Aurasia), Louis XIV of France (=King Silvio of Gallia), and Georg Ludwig of Hanover (=Prince Viciudo of Leburgino) form the majority of the novel's content. Delivered in the form of narratives told by the book's characters, they are backgrounded by the overarching story of the main character, Gustavus (=August the Strong/Friedrich August). Frequently, the narrators are members of Gustavus's entourage and he is therefore often among the respective narrator's audience. Gustavus's own story – of his travels round the various courts of Europe in a bid to rescue his true love, Princess Arione von Thurabe (=Christiane Eberhardine von Brandenburg-Bayreuth), from her supposed kidnappers – thus stands out by not being narrated in this pattern, as it forms the active frame for the other more or less passively received tales.

The tales told in *Europäische Höfe*, Hunold claims in the book's introduction, are not simply a kind of secret history, "for the performances of the heroes are already written down in many choice books, so you will learn nothing new here; and to touch on their secret love affairs is as dangerous as it is curious".<sup>31</sup> Hunold ostensibly seeks to distance himself and his work from the implication of scandal – even if the historical events were indeed scandalous – by explaining that such stories not only run the risk of offending the high society individuals they depict, they also present a risk to their audience. For those who behold the stories of these events could, in some way, be socially damaged through the destruction of their sense of *Ehrfurcht* (reverence) in the presence of such luminaries. Familiarity is to be avoided: these are individuals who are to be kept at arm's length and it is proper that this should be the case. Much rather, Hunold says, he writes to inspire respect for the heroes of these stories. Entertainment and the lessons of virtue sit side by side and give Hunold the excuse to depict the less salubrious exploits of his characters. In this case – apparently – the pleasure experienced in the act of reading these tales can pose no real risk to their moral fibre. Indeed, displaying the negative side of passion is necessary or else there could be "an vollkommener Tugend kein so grosses *Delectament*, wo man an vollkommenen Lastern nicht Abscheu tragen müsse" (no such great pleasure in perfect virtue where one would not also have to experience abhorrence at perfect vices).<sup>32</sup>

Although the novel's title merely promises entertainment, there is thus a claim to a level of instruction within the book. Moreover, it is presented in such

<sup>31</sup> "[d]enn die Verrichtungen der Helden sind schon in vielen kostbaren Büchern entworffen, daß man hierinnen nichts neues zu wissen krieget; und derselben geheime Liebes-Angelegenheiten zu berühren, ist so gefährlich als *curieus*." Menantes [Christian Friedrich Hunold], Vorrede, in: Der Europäischen Höfe Liebes- und Helden-Geschichte, Der Galanten Welt zur vergnügten Curiosité ans Licht gestellt, Hamburg 1705, no pag.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid., no pag.

a way that the reader may treat it as another ‘how to’ book. Ideal gallant behaviour in the characters is frequently accompanied by a snippet of wisdom on the best way to comport oneself, or a verdict on a difficult situation is passed with universal application by the narrator. Prince Iranio (=William of Orange) does not seek to impress Princess Amariane (=Princess Mary Henrietta of England) through bombast but treats her as he would all other women of his acquaintance. He thus draws a comment from the narrator of the first part of *Liebes- Und Helden-Geschichte Des Durchlauchtigen Printzen von Aurasien, Und der Printzeſin Amarien* (Amorous and Heroic History of the Serene Prince of Aurasia and Princess Amariana), that the gallant knows when to apply his *galanterie* to achieve greatest advantage and, importantly, does not view love as a feeling to be gratified immediately or to be forced into existence in the object of one’s desire.

Comportment stands alongside the etiquette of letters. Several characters compose and send poems and a great deal of plot explanation occurs through the medium of letters between lovers or friends. To highlight the good composition and style of these letters and poems, Hunold has Silibert von Cremarsig read out to Gustavus and his other rescuers a love letter he wrote to his captor Adina while under the influence of a magic potion. The gales of laughter with which his listeners greet his overly dramatic declarations of love are a conclusive verdict on its gallant quality. The particular mode of expression exemplified in Silibert’s letter is viewed by the men as a very un-German, i.e. morally dubious, practice and as ‘bad’ *galanterie*.<sup>33</sup> Here, ‘bad’ *galanterie* and its poor or misguided expression have resulted from ‘unnatural’ passion (made obvious through the use of a potion) rather than reasoned love. This is contrasted in the novel with the thoughtful and slow development of Gustavus’ love of Arione.

Gustavus is thus held up throughout the novel as the ideal *galant* and the heroic *galant* that the other men around him often fail to fully embody. Gustavus has a fiery spirit, is incredibly strong, keen to be a good ruler when he inherits his father’s throne, and is an accomplished performer of all princely activities and sports. Although (female) temptations are put in his way to make him stray from his fidelity to Arione, he remains steadfast. Even the ladies at Silvio’s court cannot induce him to have an extra-marital affair, although they have more success with his friend Heroald. Gustavus does indulge in a flirtatious friendship with Thersarie (=Marie Thérèse de Bourbon, Princess de Conti), but he is careful not to overstep propriety. Yet the narrator states that “Gustavuſ erwiese aber hierdurch, daß die Treue am aller-edelsten, wenn man schöne Gelegenheit hat, untreu zu warden” (through this Gustavus showed that faithfulness is the most noble when you have a wonderful opportunity to be unfaithful).<sup>34</sup> Here, it is the game of testing the boundaries of socially acceptable flirtation that is important in the appreciation of virtue and the control of passions it represents, or it is the possibility of false pas-

<sup>33</sup> Ibid., pp. 866–867.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid., p. 578.

sion and the resistance of temptation that makes Gustavus heroic, in contrast to Silibert or Heroald, who fail to exhibit self-control. Moreover, Gustavus's action represents a moralizing rejection of the apparent roots of *galanterie* at the court of Louis XIV. The repeated contrast between the site of ideal *galanterie* and that of undesirable *galanterie* is striking: France, and the French court in particular, is not only presented as less accomplished in the art of *galanterie*, but also as in a position to learn from the superior skill of its (morally superior) Germanic neighbours. With this, Hunold further distinguishes 'good' from 'bad' to meet the objections of *galanterie*'s detractors.

Hunold's Gustavus is thus very much a 'hero' in the sense that he displays many of the supposed features of a hero. Moreover, he is a gallant hero in that he is the one man of his entourage who, as they travel, does not succumb to the temptation to behave in a non-*galante* manner that would compromise the true direction of his sight: his love, Arione. Yet, time and again, the reader is shown that – with the exception of magic – the missteps of Gustavus' companions and friends are avoidable. Gustavus' heroism, whatever the truth might be concerning August's legendary super-strength, is therefore implicitly achievable. Those characters who fall short – and those characters are often noble or of the same princely status as Gustavus – not only give the reader concrete examples of incorrect or poorly conceived gallant conduct, the narrator interrupts with pithy advice. Readers are thus given every opportunity to learn how they may more closely emulate the hero, even while their social distance from him is protested by the author (Hunold's assurance of upholding the correct amount of *Ehrfurcht*), or even despite this.

Hunold's works analysed here – works of fiction and works of reference – clearly present *galanterie* as a masculine rhetorical mode on the one hand and the gallant hero as the ideal male embodiment of that mode on the other. Indeed, there is little, if any, room for an active feminine expression of that mode or an acceptable female embodiment. Nevertheless, the gallant hero model is given a rather different gloss in the texts by Maria Aurora von Königsmarck, which have female protagonists. These are contained in Duke Anton Ulrich von Braunschweig-Wolfenbüttel's extensive novel *Octavia: Römische Geschichte* (Octavia: Roman History), also known as *Römische Octavia* (Roman Octavia) (1677–1714),<sup>35</sup> whose overarching framework narrative is the fictionalized plight of the historical Octavia, early Christian empress of Rome and Nero's first wife. Hiding with other Christians from Roman persecution in the catacombs beneath the city, news of the outside world and other courts reaches her via a series of episodic narratives told by guests at her court, among which are the stories of Solane and Givritta. Both stories demonstrate the extreme reliance of the model of the gallant hero on the co-

<sup>35</sup> Kraft, Galante Passagen im höfischen Barockroman (Fn. 6), p. 323–324; Werner Schröder, Kritisches zur Edition der *Römischen Octavia* des Herzogs Anton Ulrich von Braunschweig, in: Euphorion 89, 1995, pp. 335–348.

operation of the female object of *galanterie* and show that without that cooperation, the position of the gallant hero, perhaps even of *galanterie* as a mode, is highly precarious.

Maria Aurora von Königsmarck was one of August the Strong's earliest and most famous mistresses. In addition to being known for her relationship to August and as the sister of the unfortunate Philipp Christoph von Königsmarck, she was well known as an accomplished poet, librettist, and musician.<sup>36</sup> From 1698 she embarked on a religious life at the prestigious Protestant convent in Quedlinburg, where for a time she also acted as coadjutrix. Although Königsmarck's affair with August (during which she bore him a son) was brief, she was a highly visible element of August's projection of himself and took part in the Procession of the Gods in Dresden on 7 February 1695.<sup>37</sup> The practice of maintaining an official mistress in addition to a legitimate wife was quite common at the European courts in this period, and it was consequently an important position. These women provided important points of influence for particular causes and interests, becoming gatekeepers to the royal chamber and the royal ear. The role of the mistress and the high profile of women at August's Saxon court is the focus of Königsmarck's two stories: *Die Geschichte der Solane* (The Story of Solane) in the fourth volume of the second edition published in 1712, and *Geschichte der Givritta* (Story of Givritta) in the seventh volume of the second edition published in 1762.<sup>38</sup> Comparing the two female protagonists reveals some of the tensions within courtly *galanterie* concerning the public and private aspects of the *galante*.

*The Story of Solane* tells a version of Aurora's (who takes the character Solane) own affair with August, who is here called Orondates.<sup>39</sup> Young Solane comes to

<sup>36</sup> Philipp Christoph von Königsmarck is thought to have been murdered in mysterious circumstances for his supposed affair with Sophie Dorothea von Celle, Duchess von Braunschweig-Lüneburg, the estranged wife of Georg Ludwig, Elector of Hanover and later King George I of England.

<sup>37</sup> The visual record of this is the festival work by Martin Klötzel, *Der von dem Chur-Fürsten zu Sachsen Hertzog Friderico Augusto, In Dero Residence Dreßden/Donnerstags den 7. Febr. 1695 Aus dem Chur-Fürstl. Reit-Hause, durch das Müntz Thor, bey dem Stall etc, wiedrumb in obenbemeldtes Reit-Hauss, angestellte und gehaltene Götter-Auffzug*, Dresden 1697. Details of Königsmarck's life can be found in Sylvia Krauss-Meyl, "Die berühmteste Frau zweier Jahrhunderte": Maria Aurora von Königsmarck, Regensburg 2006.

<sup>38</sup> The story of *Solane* is currently available online as a pdf document edited by Stephan Kraft, *Geschichte der Solane*, in: *Zeitenblicke* 1.2, 2002: [www.zeitenblicke.de](http://www.zeitenblicke.de), 30 October 2015. The story is included in the fourth volume of the second edition of *Römische Octavia* printed in Braunschweig in 1713. See Anton Ulrich Herzog zu Braunschweig und Lüneberg, *Werke: Historisch-kritische Ausgabe*, VI, 2 (=Römische Octavia IV, 2), Stuttgart 2010.

<sup>39</sup> This is the second episode in *Römische Octavia* to feature a heroine named Solane. The first – in the sixth volume of edition A, *Zugabe zum Beschlusß der römischen Octavia* (Addition to the Final Part of the Roman Octavia), published in Nuremberg in 1707 – portrays the story of Sophie Dorothea von Celle, Duchess von Braunschweig-Lüneburg (also known as the Princess of Ahlden), who was imprisoned by her husband Georg Ludwig, Elector of Hanover and King George I of England (1660–1727), after her affair with Philipp Christoph von Königsmarck (1662–1694), brother of Maria Aurora von Königsmarck. See Stephan

the court of Orondates in the hope of securing his help for her family. All the women at court like and respect her, including all those closest to the prince: his mother, his wife, and his brother's widow. She soon attracts the amorous attentions of the prince, first through her singing and then through an accidental fall, in which she lands in a position of obeisance at his feet. She works hard over a period of time to withstand his attentions, attempting to preserve her honour on the one hand and the 'purity' of their relationship on the other. Orondates makes her efforts difficult, though: he tricks her into dressing up in a white outfit that matches his, breaks into her room at night, and displays extreme jealousy of her male friends or any that she might make. The story also touches on Orondates' political activities, including war against the Thracians to improve his standing in Rome and his accession to a new throne after being elected king of Alanen. At this point, Solane finds herself betrayed by Orondates, whom she had considered her soulmate: he chooses a new woman to be at his side. However, Solane accepts this turn of fate and retreats into a religious life at the convent of Diana at Nujodunum. With this final information, the narrative abruptly ends and the story's fictional audience comment on the merits of Solane's conduct, in particular on her willingness to support the public image of the monarch.

*The Story of Givritta*, written some time in 1713, paints an unflattering portrait of one of Aurora's successors in August's affections, Anna Constantia von Cosel. Givritta (Anna Constantia), having fallen into disgrace at another princely court through pregnancy, has been returned to her father's estate, which she seeks to escape through marriage to Fredeboldus, a minister to the king of Daturia and Centaurien, Wilkinus (this is the fictional pseudonym for August). When they arrive at court, Givritta sets out to gain herself a reputation for virtue and patience, and for being the long-suffering but good-hearted wife of a man who does not seem to love her. The favour she gains at court is withdrawn – especially by the women – when she breaks court protocol by addressing Wilkinus without introduction and then following him around. Wilkinus reluctantly agrees to a divorce between Givritta and her husband, which prompts Givritta to begin pursuing her ambition of becoming Wilkinus's wife. Her numerous pregnancies reveal the nature of their relationship and her power at court and over the king grows. Wilkinus grows tired of her, yet her threats to kill herself and him if he does not remain faithful to her alarm him, and he allows her to have political knowledge and influence. A plot hatches to remove Givritta from Wilkinus' favour and when she travels to join Wilkinus, she finds he has a new mistress.

The two protagonists are thus evidently polar opposites: the motivations for their arrival at court and their conduct when there, the degree of acceptance (es-

Kraft, Geschlossenheit und Offenheit der 'Römischen Octavia' von Herzog August Ulrich: 'der roman macht ahn die ewigkeit gedencken, den er nimbt kein endt' (Episteme / Reihe Literaturwissenschaft; 483), Würzburg 2004, pp. 96–99. I use *Solane* or *Die Geschichte der Solane* to refer exclusively to the story attributed to Königsmarck's authorship.

pecially by the courtly women) that they experience as a result, their respective reactions to the reversal of their fortunes – in comparison, these two women are as night and day. Yet the two principal male characters are remarkably similar. Although there is no condemnation of their conduct, it is evident that both Orondates and Wilkinus lack the ability to control themselves or maintain their control over their own actions and agency when they come into contact with these two women. Ordinarily, it might be possible to lay the blame for this conduct at the door of the women as daughters of Eve and, consequently, inherent temptresses. Yet, at least in the case of Orondates, the men already have a dangerous reputation for consorting with women. Although this weakness may be exploited – as Givritta is portrayed doing – neither Solane nor Givritta are introducing new mores into the court in this respect.

Further, both these stories are declared within *Roman Octavia* to come from an external source, and this influences the reader's assessment to an important degree: *The Story of Solane* is read aloud by the physician of the character Antiochus Epiphanes in the presence of his friends, in order to pass the time and serve the patient as 'a pleasant medicine'. It is both entertaining and therapeutic. *The Story of Givritta* is read out ostensibly because Octavia appears unhappy, "so [die Geschichte] ihr vielleicht auch noch einige Aufmunterung würde geben können" (because the story might cheer her a little).<sup>40</sup> The reactions to the two stories are also different: when the reading of *Solane* is complete, the liveliness of the discussion is evidence that the men have been drawn into the story and have been thoroughly entertained, while Callinicus's pithy statement that "[e]inem Freunde zu gefallen [...] sein Glück zu verscherten/ ist mehr als großmüthig zu nennen" (to throw away one's happiness for the benefit of a friend should be deemed more than magnanimous)<sup>41</sup> provides a kind of general moral for the reader. At this point it is, however, *general*. This behaviour would be considered extraordinary of any person. All further debate is halted, though, by Epiphanes' reminder that the story has a basis in fact, and precisely because he is aware that the behaviour described here could be 'misunderstood' as sexual, he urges them to take a positive view of a virtuous woman sacrificing herself on the altar of friendship and loyalty to her lord.

In contrast to the eagerness shown by Epiphanes' friends to hear his tale, Octavia is not very interested in hearing the story of Givritta and it is virtually forced upon her. She relents only because she does not like "auf einige Weise sich jemanden mißfällig zu erzeigen [...], wie ungelegen es ihr auch kame, ihnen nicht abzuschlagen" (to be disobliging to someone in some way, and, however

<sup>40</sup> [Königsmarck], *Die Geschichte der Solane* (Fn. 38), p. 602; [Königsmarck], *Die Geschichte der Givritta*, in: *Römische Octavia VII*, 1, pp. 359–360 (=Werke IX, 1, pp. 357–358).

<sup>41</sup> [Königsmarck], *Die Geschichte der Solane*, p. 658.

unwelcome it was to her, did not wish to refuse them).<sup>42</sup> Nor is the reaction to *Givritta* as unequivocally positive as that to *Solane* – Octavia is visibly displeased by the story.

*Givritta* portrays characters who see marriage as a way to escape their parents, as a way to escape boredom, or as a way to secure power. There is no true love and no *constantia*, and the characters have psychological depth.<sup>43</sup> Wilkinus is actually described in terms that make his *inconstancy* necessary. In fact, he is frequently described as suffering “unter dem Joch der Beständigkeit” (under the yoke of constancy) and his continued faithfulness to Givritta causes alarm among his courtiers, as a result of which “man alle Hoffnung muste schwinden lassen, ihn jemahls mehr unbeständig zu sehen” (all hope of ever seeing him inconstant ever again faded).<sup>44</sup> The suspicion of sarcastic intent here should be countered with *Solane*, where the male protagonist is just as lacking in *constantia* as in *Givritta*, yet this is not commented on negatively by the story’s (admittedly male) audience. It is thus worth comparing the conduct of the two heroines, Givritta and Solane. In contrast to Givritta, Solane does not actively seek the king’s attention nor to amass power herself. Instead, she is raised up by the power of the king only, never actively takes control.<sup>45</sup> Nevertheless, both women are seen as a threat to the masculine political order in some way and the court deems it necessary to remove them – notably despite the prince’s prior sexual reputation. The decisive difference between the two women manifests in how they deal with their rejection as mistresses. Solane withdraws quietly from the world by going into a convent/temple – and this is decreed admirable self-sacrifice on behalf of a friend (Orondates) by those who hear her story.<sup>46</sup> Givritta, however, desperately tries to prevent her fall and refuses to withdraw gracefully, further threatening to destabilize an already precarious model of masculine image and gallant heroism.

Arguably, Hunold seeks to bring the notion of gallant heroism down to the level of more ordinary mortals for all his protestation of preserving and inspiring reverence. His success may be mixed: his work is steeped not in the didactic as such, but the instructional; it is a guide full of (anti-)examples of the *homme galant* with a single example of a true *homme galant*. Hunold’s work in providing guides for *galanterie* suggests that he ought to be concerned to provide an achievable model for his readers, yet Gustavus is perfect and none of his companions achieve his level of perfection. This is part of his heroic stature. Nevertheless, by showing how the other male characters go wrong in their *galanterie* and pointing out how

<sup>42</sup> Anton Ulrich von Braunschweig-Wolfenbüttel, *Römische Octavia* VII, 1, p. 360 (= Werke IX, 1, p. 358).

<sup>43</sup> Kraft, *Galante Passagen im höfischen Barockroman* (Fn. 6), p. 338.

<sup>44</sup> [Königsmarck], *Die Geschichte der Givritta* (Fn. 40), pp. 394 and 390.

<sup>45</sup> [Königsmarck], *Die Geschichte der Solane* (Fn. 38), p. 639.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid., p. 658.

it ought to be, Hunold seems to suggest that such stature is possible for others of lesser social status, as long as those errors are avoided. Yet this, surely, is at least partially contrary to what a hero is supposedly meant to be: a social status apart, recognisable by great deeds and self-mastery that hint at superhuman levels of Aristotelian virtue and resistance to vice, consequently admired by others who cannot transcend their human existence. While Hunold emphasizes that he aims to preserve that admiring *Ehrfurcht* and sense of distance in his work of gallant tales, the didactic elements bring a tension into his portrayal of the gallant hero that redirect attention to those in the audience who are not (yet) 'heroic'.

On the other hand, Königsmarck evidently does not subvert any notion of feminine heroism that may exist – her 'heroine' sacrifices herself for the perceived good of the hero. Her thoroughly dislikeable anti-heroine fails because she *will not* sacrifice herself. Yet at the same time, Königsmarck pits gendered norms of femininity and masculinity against each other with the result that she lifts the lid on the masculine 'heroism' of the *homme galant* as ultimately a façade which crumbles where the woman in the equation will not cooperate. Orondates actively makes life unpleasant, even frightening, for Solane because he is the king and he can; Wilkinus does not have the nerve to call Givritta's bluff when she threatens to kill them both or the strength of character to put her off at all, and others have to step in to dispose of his problem. Here is *galanterie* seen from the back side: its private aspect, which underpins its public aspect, is revealed to be rather less glossy than its image would lead the world to believe. Whether that is what she intended or not, it does become apparent through her two texts that the positive image of August the Strong – an image he had himself forged, an image as the epitome of the gallant prince, of the heroic gallant prince, even – was not as robust as that image suggested. As Jean M. Woods observed in 1988, there has not been a great deal of work on the active role of women in the phenomenon of *galanterie*.<sup>47</sup> Yet these two texts by Königsmarck present an opportunity to glimpse what active participation of women in that mode might entail for the dynamics of gender roles at court, in particular the role of the mistress in relation to other women at court, but more broadly for courtly behaviours and rules of conduct in general. Furthermore, in their fictional accounts of contemporary figures and events, both Hunold and Königsmarck reveal, first, an awareness of the slippage in the heroic model of the Early Modern period also evident in the theoretical tracts of the time (as shown, for example, by Disselkamp). They reveal, secondly, perspectives on that slippage rooted in the different social backgrounds and expectations of the bourgeois upper middle classes on the one hand and the lower nobility on the other.

---

<sup>47</sup> Jean M. Woods, Aurora von Königsmarck: Epitome of a "Galante Poetin", in: Erika Alma Metzger / Richard E. Schade (Ed.), *Sprachgesellschaften – Galante Poetinnen* (Literary Societies / Literary Women), *Daphnis* 17, Issue 3 (1988), pp. 457–465, here p. 460.