

*LES DEUX NOMS AND
PETIT JOURNAL DE LA FIN DE MA VIE:
CÉLESTE DE CHABRILLAN'S
MÉMOIRES INÉDITS*

JANA VERHOEVEN

Céleste de Chabrillan has fascinated academics, writers and amateur historians for a long time, and with good reason. The life of this colourful former Parisian courtesan who married a French aristocrat and after his death in Melbourne reinvented herself as a writer of fiction and autobiography, has been documented in various French, English, Australian and American publications. The first and most important biography, Françoise Moser's *Vie et aventures de Céleste Mogador, fille publique, femme de lettres et comtesse (1824-1909)*, appeared in 1935. For the description of Céleste's tumultuous life—her decision to become a registered prostitute at the age of sixteen, her career as a dancer, actress and circus rider, her relationship with Lionel de Chabrillan, her exile as the wife of the French consul in Melbourne and her beginnings as a *femme de lettres*—Moser relied on Céleste's two published autobiographical texts, *Adieux au monde* (1854) and *Un deuil au bout du monde* (1876).¹ Moser's account of Céleste's last forty years from 1859 onwards was to a great extent based on her later, unpublished accounts, *Les deux noms* and *Petit journal de la fin de ma vie*. The title of the first part of these manuscripts reflects Céleste's struggle to keep her married name 'de Chabrillan' against the pressure of her deceased husband's aristocratic family. The other name 'Mogador' was her *nom de guerre* as one of the most celebrated courtesans in her youth and it was the association of these two names which constituted the ultimate affront to the noble old line of the Chabrillans. Their indignation at the marriage of their spendthrift heir Lionel to his long-time mistress Céleste turned into outrage when the widow continued to use his name very publicly for her theatre and literary projects. However, the *cahiers* with the manuscript of *Les deux noms* and *Petit journal de la fin de ma vie* vanished almost eighty years ago. Every biographer and researcher since has regretted this intriguing loss. Recently I was fortunate to find the *cahiers* again.

These 'lost' *mémoires* reveal many fascinating aspects not only of Céleste's life but of the cultural and social world in which she lived, aspects which Moser's biography failed to capture.² Céleste's original manuscript is a

valuable socio-cultural milestone, perhaps not so much for its literary value, but as an example of female autobiography. It is through a reading of Céleste's original text with its linguistic specificities and in its authenticity and integrity, without Moser's omissions and abbreviations, that her third set of memoirs, even more so than the first and second, unfold as a feminist statement and a historical testimonial.

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The story of these original handwritten *mémoires* deserves to be outlined briefly. This is what Françoise Moser wrote about them in 1935:

[...] nous avons eu la bonne fortune, grâce à M. Georges Andrieux, de mettre la main, chez un libraire, sur les mémoires inédits de la Comtesse de Chabrillan. Ils forment une quinzaine de cahiers—de cahiers d'écolier couverts de cette écriture si personnelle, si dédaigneuse de la bonne volonté du lecteur, si dédaigneuse aussi de l'orthographe, et qui révèle à la fois, dans son allure fugueuse et dans son désordre, la très grande dame et la fille ... Ces cahiers inédits de la Mogador, aujourd'hui en notre possession, nous avons eu souvent du mal à les déchiffrer ; nous croyons y être parvenu sans trop d'erreurs. Ils embrassent la période qui va de 1859 à 1907, c'est-à-dire qu'ils font suite aux Mémoires publiés et ne s'arrêtent que deux ans avant la mort de Céleste.³

It seems that Françoise Moser, after creating a transcript of Céleste's notebooks and publishing her well-researched and well-written biography, left the *cahiers* in the care of the art dealer and collector Joseph Thibault (1880-1980). Another journalist, Thérèse Marix, had access to the *cahiers* in 1937/38, to write an article entitled 'Séjour de Bizet au Vésinet' in the *Revue de musicologie*: 'Le possesseur actuel, M. Joseph Thibault, connu de tous les érudits par la richesse de ses collections et pour son inaltérable complaisance, les offrait aux curieux de l'Exposition [about the life of the composer Georges Bizet, *Bizet et ses amis*] et nous autorise à publier les fragments.'⁴ After that, Céleste's subsequent biographers and researchers investigating her work would look for them in vain.

Réginald Hamel in his preface to *Les Voleurs d'Or* deplores the fact that researchers have to rely on Moser when trying to bring to life Céleste's later voice and ideas.⁵ Claire Marrone depended on Françoise Moser when discussing Céleste's later autobiographical writings. So did Marcia Glidden Parker in her 1993 PhD thesis on Céleste and the theatre⁶ and Patricia Clancy in her preface to *The French Consul's Wife* and in 'Céleste de Chabrillan's One-Act Comedy *En Australie* (1862)'.⁷ Even the most recent book on Céleste, Carol Mossman's *Writing with a Vengeance: The Countess de Chabrillan's Rise from Prostitution*, had to quote from Moser's rephrasing of Céleste's autobiographical text when evaluating her literary career.⁸



La Croix Rouge in Le Poinçonnet—the house has kept many of its original features

In 2006, having just read Moser's description, I recognised the documents as those of the lost manuscripts in a country house in Le Poinçonnet near Châteauroux, La Croix Rouge, which Céleste had built from her earnings as a courtesan in 1848. Joseph Thibault had kept the *cahiers* in an engraved leather case (see photo below). After his death in 1980, Thibault's enormous collection of works of art and historic documents was partly taken over by the departmental archives of the Indre, but much was sold off or even thrown away. In the early 1980s the *cahiers* were offered for sale to the current owner of Céleste's former country house, who has graciously granted me access to them.⁹

Céleste's labelling of the covers of the *cahiers*, *Les deux noms*, makes clear that she intended the manuscripts to be published. Unfortunately, by this time the craze surrounding her status as a courtesan, as the wife of a count and consul and as a prostitute-turned-artist had subsided and she obviously could not find a publisher. The later diaries from 1900 to 1907 are written on printed calendars and have not been reworked into an autobiographical narrative.



The two sets of *cahiers*: on top *Les deux noms*,
below the diary entries of *Petit journal de la fin de ma vie*

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Although Françoise Moser's well-written biography faithfully reproduces the gist of *Les deux noms* and *Petit journal de la fin de ma vie*, it is amazing to hear Céleste's own voice emerge when one reads the original manuscripts. It is a voice different from that of her first published *mémoires*, which were undoubtedly produced with the help of a ghost writer. *Adieux au monde* features the apologetic tone of a fallen woman seeking redemption, who uses a modest tone with the aim of justifying not only her scandalous past but also her daring to take up the pen, to be an author. It is also different from that of

her second autobiographical text *Un deuil au bout du monde*, which sets her travel experience mainly in the context of her status as a married woman, and which seeks in some ways to create a monument to her dead husband. Claire Marrone proposes a reading of Céleste's first two autobiographical texts as a bildungsroman.¹⁰ If we follow her argumentation, we could say that in *Les deux noms* and *Petit journal de la fin de ma vie*, the third instalment of her autobiographical texts, Céleste considers her education as finished: she speaks with the mature voice of a woman more than sixty years old, a lady confident in her writing skills (although her punctuation and spelling are still poor). Her style has improved—her cheeky descriptions of people are inimitable—Moser did not even attempt to reproduce them—and her outlook has changed. We hear the voice of a woman who likes to see the world and herself through her own eyes, and who starts to cultivate a myth about herself as the strong woman up against a hostile, patriarchal society.

Indeed, her text can be considered an early example of modern feminist self-writing; she had discarded the apologetic tone of her first set of *mémoires*, has largely cast aside the theme of adoration for her husband, and she no longer conceals her social and artistic ambitions. Humility has been replaced by anger: it is Céleste against the world, the patriarchal and conservative family of her late husband, the Chabrilans being the invisible enemy. She refuses traditional family-centred roles; her efforts as a substitute mother to her 'god-child' Solange, which were still used to give her credibility as a bourgeois wife in *Un deuil au bout du monde*, are now openly admitted as a failure. Her lack of maternal instinct becomes very clear when she dismisses Solange with the words: 'Elle ne savait absolument se rendre utile à rien.'¹¹

Céleste also rejects the prized female attributes of demureness, passivity and gentleness. She is very proud of her strong character: in one of her fictionally dramatised dialogues she describes herself to a male friend trying to patronise her: 'Je suis comme ceux qui n'ont pas rencontré leur maître.'¹² Defying gender conventions, she walks the line of her existence as a respectable consular widow and a *femme auteur* who enjoys the liberties of her former courtesan existence, her freedom of movement, the latitude to befriend men, to socialise with former lovers—nevertheless constantly reflecting on the appropriateness of it, and always claiming the marital love she enjoyed with Lionel as the justification of her social aspirations.

Her style corresponds to what is termed as 'écriture féminine', a type of writing that refuses the imitation of the dominating self-portrayals of men. One

instance of this is her treatment of the very feminine theme of the experience of the body, dwelling in long passages on ageing and sickness:

Mes cheveux avaient blanchi un peu vite car beaucoup de personnes qui m'avaient connue plusieurs mois plus tôt s'étaient figuré que je me les poudrais par coquetterie parce que cela m'allait bien : je n'avais jamais été accessible à ce genre de flatterie qu'on se croit obligé d'adresser aux personnes qui commencent à se défraîchir, je plaignais celles qui s'y laissent prendre, lorsque je ne les trouvais pas ridicules.¹³

Céleste also includes detailed descriptions of household arrangements, gardening and domestic servants, showing the great pride she takes in household affairs. When, in a rare period of financial affluence, she buys land and has a house built in Le Vésinet, she describes every feature of her 'Chalet Lionel' and almost every plant in the garden. These are the passages that Françoise Moser often skips in her retelling, as she must have considered them trite. Modern historiography has reassessed the value of descriptions of everyday life and, as Roche puts it in his *Histoire des choses banales*, these seemingly commonplace passages can be considered important documents of cultural history.¹⁴ On the other hand, Céleste is also very much interested in masculine domains: she is passionate about politics and comfortable on the public scene. Being an artist among artists and enjoying the authority of an author are her greatest sources of pride.

The ups and downs in Céleste's life-story provide fascinating reading. A passionate, volatile, active and intelligent woman, she takes up every professional and social opportunity to make an impact. But even in failure she remains powerful through the intensity of her despair. Whilst not the most talented writer or actress on the Parisian theatre scene, she is definitely one of the most energetic. When the staging of *Les Voleurs d'Or* in the mainstream theatres of Paris is sabotaged due to the intrigues of the Chabrilan family, she simply leases a building and runs her own theatre, directing her own plays and even taking on the leading roles. After the failure of her theatre and the ensuing bankruptcy proceedings, Céleste makes a suicide attempt, something she had tried several times before when confronted with a seemingly desperate situation. Not without humour, she reflects on what she calls her 'monomanie suicidaire' as a psychiatric condition inherited from her mother: 'Les gens qui

ont la monomanie de rêver au suicide passent pour des fous, et ceux qui l'ayant tenté se manquent pour des idiots.⁷¹⁵

But in many respects, Céleste's occupations are those of many nineteenth-century single women, striving for financial stability while trying to preserve the dignity of a bourgeois widow. When in the opening scene of *Les deux noms* high-ranking ministerial official Théodore de Lesseps refuses to grant her the consular pension to which she, as the widow of the French consul in Melbourne, is entitled, and instead offers a monthly payment in exchange for her renouncing the name de Chabrilan, the themes are set: the financial vulnerability which would haunt her for the remaining forty years of her life and her fight to keep her name—and with it her respectability.

Her writings also need to be evaluated as one of the rare expressions of a woman who, not having had the benefit of an aristocratic or *haute bourgeoisie* background, did not enjoy easy access to education, acquiring some book learning on her own while in Melbourne. She therefore does not speak from the perspective of the upper classes. Céleste, in her first and second sets of *mémoires*, climbs the social ladder and in the process provides herself with an education. Her third autobiographical text in many ways presents a reconnection with her working-class roots: intellectually when she stages her play at the Théâtre de Belleville and emotionally as she is influenced by Léon Gambetta, who exalts the voice of the people as powerful and authentic.

When she witnesses the siege of Paris in 1870 and the Paris commune, she adds a popular perspective to the historiography of those dramatic events. It is noteworthy that throughout her life Céleste managed not only to leave descriptions of her personal experience of three major upheavals in France—the 1831 silk-weaver strike in Lyon, the revolution of 1848 in *Adieux au monde* and that of 1871 in *Les deux noms*—but that she even chronicled the Eureka rebellion in Australia in *Un deuil au bout du monde*. Like many other women of the nineteenth century narrating history, Céleste concentrates on the anecdotal and does not provide a deeper analysis of social developments, but as Suzanne Fiette suggests in *De mémoires de femmes*, her observations contribute to 'a vision of female education and positions, to niches of feminine social power and feminist affirmations.'⁷¹⁶

If Céleste's contribution as a chronicler of historic events has not yet been sufficiently appreciated, her importance as a travel writer has been established. Her portrayal of gold-rush Victoria in her second autobiographical

text as well as in her novels and plays, has been analysed comprehensively by Patricia Clancy and Jeanne Allen.¹⁷ It is in her ‘*mémoires inédits*’—as styled by Moser and Marix—where she describes the staging of *Les Voleurs d’Or*, that the impact of her vision of the Antipodes becomes fully clear.

But apart from her significance as a feminist author, chronicler of history and travel writer, the third set of *mémoires* is also enjoyable simply for Céleste’s special character which unfolds with poignancy in the original text. In her interactions with her friends and family members, she appears as a difficult personality: domineering and occasionally spiteful, yet warm-hearted and mischievous. Angèle, for instance, the one friend who supported her throughout the lowest moments of her life is characterised condescendingly: ‘Elle m’était alors d’une reconnaissance parfois importune. L’instruction ne lui manquait pas absolument mais sa façon de s’exprimer était vulgaire, quant à son cœur, il était infiniment bon.’¹⁸ Céleste is also quite honest about her motives for keeping up the friendship with a relatively successful actress, Jeanne Essler: ‘J’étais flattée de l’amitié qu’elle me témoignait. Elle était quelqu’un dans le monde des arts, mais c’était tout.’¹⁹

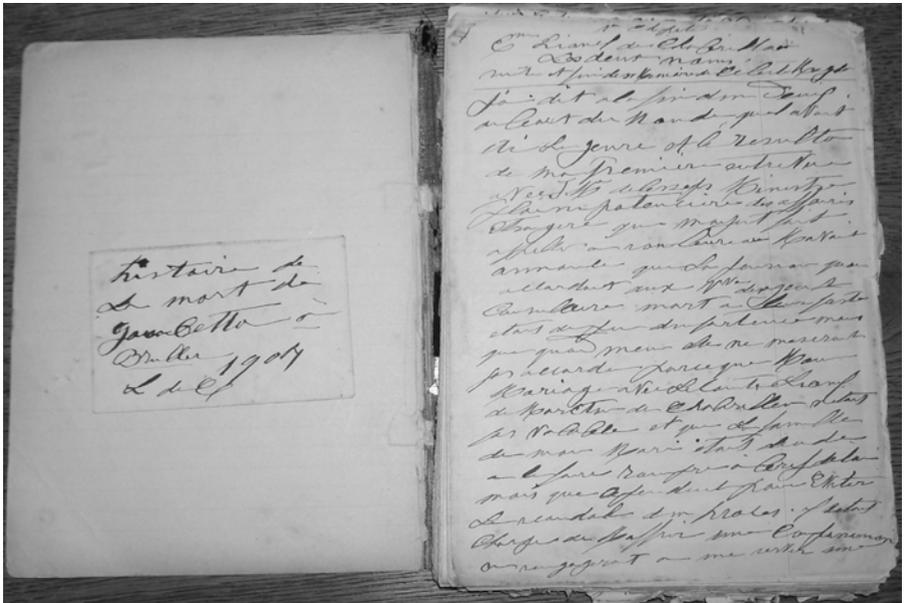
It is in seemingly trivial details that the delightful idiosyncrasy of Céleste’s writing style comes to the fore. When guests at a dinner hosted by Jeanne Essler found a hairpin in their soup, Céleste described her own and her friend’s reaction as follows:

Quant à moi, la vue du potage m’avait suffi pour dîner du regard, et cette brave Jeanne m’avait dit très sérieusement que s’il fallait regarder à tout de si près, on ne mangerait jamais rien. Elle avait peut-être raison. Enfin, chacun a sa façon d’envisager les choses et je n’étais plus retournée dîner chez elle.²⁰

The narration of this domestic faux-pas speaks for itself but Moser’s truncated version of Céleste’s text fails to bring out this very feisty and very feminine sense of humour.

After the bankruptcy of her Théâtre des Champs-Élysées, Céleste becomes a regular at the *table d’hôte* of the hôtel du Liban which was also frequented by Léon Gambetta. Moser, in her narration, omits to mention that Mme de Chabrillan found Gambetta’s dramatic personality slightly annoying:

Il était superbe en criant ‘on nous a violé la République de 48, mais nous la reprenons et malheur aux usurpateurs’. Il s’était levé, sa chaise était tombée. Tous ces effets à effets m’avaient déjà fatiguée. [...] J’avais fini par trouver interminables ces conversations de table d’hôte, tout ce déploiement d’éloquence inutile. Il était ambitieux, il souffrait d’être méconnu, parce qu’il avait conscience de sa valeur. Ses discours au sujet de sa politique faisaient un bruit de tonnerre qu’il produisait avec sa voix de stentor et si cela ne lui réussissait pas, il cognait du poing sur la table, ou cassait quelque chose.²¹



The first page of *Les deux noms*.

The difficulties in deciphering the manuscript are not only due to her handwriting, but also to a lack of punctuation and her erratic spelling.

While rejecting Gambetta’s pathos, she can display a good deal of it herself. It is amusing to watch Céleste who always had a penchant for the melodramatic, ‘stage’ herself, in the true sense of the word. For instance the reader is

left wondering whether to take her word when she describes how she was ‘pressured’ into accepting to play the role of a young miner in her own play *Les Voleurs d’Or*, presented at the Théâtre de Belleville in 1864:

M. Holacher m’avait dit à la suite d’une répétition : ‘Ma chère, en faisant répéter ce rôle-là, vous avez fait pleurer des gens qui vous écoutaient. J’y suis allé moi-même de ma larme, vous ne trouverez jamais un élève ayant assez d’expérience pour jouer la scène d’agonie douce sur laquelle doit baisser le rideau comme vous la comprenez. L’art est un rappel certain [...] il faut jouer ça vous-même. [...]’ Je n’avais pas peur au sujet du rôle d’Albert, c’était adorable à créer ... mais de ma double responsabilité. Le soir d’une première représentation enfin—il avait fallu dire oui.²²

The previous quote also highlights an instance of her frequent use of direct speech. Céleste’s trade-mark dialogues, which reveal so much of her character and her somewhat histrionic perception of self-hood, are often missing in Moser’s version. However, the description of her emotion at the public’s reaction during the premiere of the play seems authentic and profound:

J’avais été rappelée frénétiquement et lorsque j’étais rentrée en scène, tous les bras des spectateurs des premières places au poulailler s’étaient levés pour m’applaudir. Un seul cri s’était échappé [...] de toutes les poitrines : [...] ‘Bravo’ et ces cris qui partaient du cœur étaient arrivés jusqu’au mien qui en devait garder le souvenir jusqu’au jour de son dernier battement.²³

However, her pert nature and wry humour shine through when she adds: ‘Tout le monde avait eu sa part de mon triomphe, les chevaux eux-mêmes avaient été applaudis à leurs entrées.’²⁴ The staging of her play is in several aspects the centre of her *mémoires*, it could be described as the pinnacle of her artistic career, and *Les deux noms* can be considered a *roman d’artiste*, in which her creative ambitions are revealed much more clearly than in Moser’s biography. When after several failed attempts at Parisian theatres the opportunity presents itself to stage at the Théâtre de Belleville *Les Voleurs d’Or*, adapted from her novel of the same title with the decisive collaborative support of Alexandre Dumas,²⁵ Céleste leaves the higher-class neighbourhoods of Paris behind and rejoices in the opportunity to reconnect with the neighbourhood of her

childhood: ‘Je m’étais déjà senti redevenue quelqu’un et j’étais déjà plus éloignée dans ma pensée des habitants des grands quartiers de Paris que je ne l’avais été des Champs-Élysées, lorsque j’avais été aux antipodes.’²⁶

It is metaphoric that the disdainful Parisians who had once denied her success at the Champs-Élysées are now climbing the Belleville hills, the working-class outskirts, to witness Mogador’s success:

Qu’on ne s’étonne pas au sujet de mon immense fierté d’avoir considéré ce succès-là comme étant l’un des plus grands succès de ma vie d’artiste. Surtout en lisant les articles de journaux de ce temps-là on verra que des hommes, les plus grands hommes de notre histoire contemporaine montaient à Belleville, ensemble ou séparément, pour demander très humblement des suffrages aux habitants de Belleville qui ne les accordaient pas facilement. J’avais été pour eux la brebis, l’enfant prodigue de retour dans la grande famille. Ils connaissaient mon passé, mon histoire, ils n’avaient même pas songé à regarder en arrière.²⁷

It is here that Céleste’s *cahiers* mark an important aspect of French-Australian history. In terms of cultural history, she symbolises a significant link between France and Australia, not only because she provided a colourful facet of colonial life in gold-rush Melbourne, but also because she conveyed a powerful image of Australia to popular audiences in France. But while her novel *Les Voleurs d’Or*, and to a lesser degree her other publications relating to Australia seem to have had a wide distribution,²⁸ it was in the Théâtre de Belleville that an image of Australia was conveyed to French audiences on a wide scale. According to Céleste, the theatre could seat up to 1,600 people. She claims that for three weeks the play was performed to full houses, so that tens of thousands of *Bellevillois* and Parisians would have seen it. Furthermore, Céleste toured with the play to full audiences in the French provinces and as far as Belgium and Holland and it was also restaged in Montmartre. The image of a rugged and lawless frontier country, like that of the wild west, must have been imprinted in the imagination of many French and it is questionable if any other contemporary account of gold-rush Australia by an eye-witness had a similar impact.

Throughout the remainder of the *mémoires*, there is much more drama, emotion and action to follow: Céleste's friendship with Georges Bizet, her efforts during the siege of Paris as one of the instigators of the *Sœurs de France*,²⁹ her bizarre relationship with the communard Ranvier,³⁰ her role as a benefactress of war orphans.

However, in many respects these events are an anticlimax to the story of her success at the Théâtre de Belleville in 1864. Céleste had another thirty-five years to live and these remaining years are dominated by physical decline, lack of material stability and above all solitude. Particularly in the diaries of her final years, *Petit journal de la fin de ma vie*, Céleste expresses the worries of ageing and loneliness in an authentic and original way. Her short entries are full of complaints; her tendency to regard her surroundings with a critical eye must have increased and she seems to have become quite a cantankerous old woman. Her greatest grievance was that she gradually lost her memory, and with it the remembrances of a life lived to the limits, emotionally, geographically, socially and financially. Her last entry, dating from 11 December 1907, reads: 'Je suis née en 1824. Je perds de plus en plus la mémoire.'³¹

Although most of the facts are known through Moser's book and subsequent quotations from it, Céleste's original manuscripts, which have been so long buried, offer an authentic contemporary female perspective on many of the most striking events of France in the second half of the nineteenth century. With every page of the diaries and notebooks a very personal and moving story, not only of an observer but a woman trying to shape her destiny, her surroundings and even her society, unfolds through her own voice. Beyond the actual drama contained in her life-story, her special inimitable character with its strengths and weaknesses comes to life and speaks with the astonishing intensity of her own words.

The University of Melbourne

Notes

- 1 Françoise Moser, *Vie et aventures de Céleste Mogador, fille publique, femme de lettres et comtesse (1824-1909)*, Paris, Albin Michel, 1935; Céleste de Chabrillan, *Adieux au monde : Mémoires de Céleste Mogador*, Paris, Locard-Davi et de Vresse, 1854 and *Un deuil au bout du monde, suite des 'Mémoires de Céleste Mogador'*, par La Ctesse Lionel de Chabrillan, Paris, Librairie nouvelle, 1877.
- 2 The transcript entitled 3^e cahier was included in the two leather bound cases containing Céleste's cahiers: it seems to have been done by Françoise Moser more than eighty years ago. It corresponds word for word to Céleste's often almost unreadable handwritten manuscript.
- 3 Moser, *Vie et aventures*, p. 7-8.
- 4 Thérèse Marix, 'Séjour de Bizet au Vésinet, d'après les "Mémoires inédits" de Céleste Mogador, Comtesse de Chabrillan,' *Revue de Musicologie*, 19, n° 68, 1938, p. 142.
- 5 Alexandre Dumas, Réginald Hamel et Céleste Vénard de Chabrillan, *Les Voleurs d'or : Drame en cinq actes précédé d'un prologue*. Outremont, Québec, Stanké, 2006, p. 7.
- 6 Marcia Glidden Parker, 'Céleste de Chabrillan, Nineteenth-Century French Theater: Woman and Character', PhD thesis, University of Wisconsin, 1993.
- 7 Patricia Clancy, 'Céleste de Chabrillan's One-Act Comedy *En Australie* (1862)', *Explorations*, n° 46, June 2009, pp. 3-14.
- 8 Carol Mossman, *Writing with a Vengeance: The Countess de Chabrillan's Rise from Prostitution*, Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 2009.
- 9 The present owner, M. Deshais, had the authenticity of the handwriting established but was previously not aware of the fact that these constituted the long-lost memoirs. At this point I want to express my deep gratitude to M. and Mme Deshais not only for granting me access to the cahiers and allowing their complete photographic reproduction, but also for their generous hospitality. It is somehow symbolic that Céleste's memoirs ended up in a house she had built and loved and which still contains many of its original features. I would also like to thank Alan Willey whose prior research has helped trace the fate of the cahiers and whose transcriptions of the first part of *Les deux noms* are invaluable. A travel grant of the French Trust of the University of Melbourne enabled me to travel to Le Poinçonnet to photograph the cahiers.
- 10 Claire Marrone, *Female Journeys: Autobiographical Expressions by French and Italian Women*, Westport, Conn., Greenwood Press, 2000, p. 2. Two of the chapters in the book are devoted to Céleste.
- 11 Transcript Cahier 3, p. 65.

- 12 Transcript Cahier 3, p. 24.
- 13 Transcript Cahier 3, pp. 28-29.
- 14 Daniel Roche, *Histoire des choses banales : Naissance de la consommation dans les sociétés traditionnelles (XVII^e-XIX^e siècles)*, Paris, Fayard, 1999, p. 14.
- 15 Transcript Cahier 3, p. 2.
- 16 Suzanne Fiette, *De mémoire de femmes : L'histoire racontée par les femmes de Louis XIV à 1914*, Paris, Perrin, 2002, p. 8.
- 17 Jeanne Allen, 'La Vérité des *Voleurs d'Or* (1857) et d'*Un deuil au bout du monde* (1877) de Céleste de Chabrillan comme témoignages sur l'expérience vécue dans le Victoria des années 1850', Thesis (MA), University of Melbourne, 1991; Patricia A. Clancy, and Jeanne Allen (eds), *The French Consul's Wife: Memoirs of Céleste de Chabrillan in Gold-Rush Australia*, Carlton, Vic., Melbourne University Press, 1998 and Patricia Clancy, 'Céleste de Chabrillan's One-Act Comedy *En Australie* (1862)', *Explorations*, n° 46, June 2009, pp. 3-13.
- 18 Transcript Cahier 3, p. 2.
- 19 Transcript Cahier 3, p. 60.
- 20 Transcript Cahier 3, p. 59.
- 21 Transcript Cahier 3, pp. 20-21.
- 22 Transcript Cahier 3, pp. 36-37.
- 23 Transcript Cahier 3, pp. 39-40.
- 24 Transcript Cahier 3, p. 38.
- 25 Céleste de Chabrillan, *Les Voleurs d'or. Drame en cinq actes*, Théâtre Contemporain Illustré, Paris, Michel Lévy frères, 1864. Réginald Hamel attributes the primary authorship to Alexandre Dumas père, against the claims of Céleste as an author (Hamel, *Les Voleurs d'or*, p. 8). While I agree that the input of Dumas is undeniable, I believe that Céleste's name as the author of the play on the theatre poster appeared with Dumas's agreement. It is possible that after their combined efforts to secure a theatrical release in one of the Paris theatres failed, Dumas, having lost interest in the project, ceded his rights to Céleste. It needs to be noted that the drama closely follows the novel. The probably decisive contribution of Dumas was nevertheless done on a first draft written by Céleste. Céleste who admitted that her skills as a dramatist were mostly limited to one-acters, always acknowledged her friend's contribution in her memoirs (see transcript Cahier 3, p. 36 and Céleste's letter to the editor of the column 'Petit courrier des Théâtres', *Figaro*, 4 October 1864).
- 26 Transcript Cahier 3, p. 34.
- 27 Transcript Cahier 3, pp. 39-40.

- 28 The titles of further texts by Céleste de Chabrillan relating to Australia are the following: *Miss Pewel*, Paris, A. Bourdilliat, 1859; *Les Voleurs d'Or*, par Céleste de Chabrillan, Paris, Michel Lévy, 1857; *En Australie, Vaudeville en 1 Acte, de Mme La Comtesse Lionel de Chabrillan (Paris, Théâtre des Champs Elysées, 19 Juillet 1862)*, Paris, impr. de Cosson, 1862; *Les Crimes de la Mer, Drame en 5 actes, par la Comtesse Lionel de Chabrillan, (Paris, Théâtre de Belleville, 8 Mai 1869)*, Paris, impr. de Morris père et fils, 1869 ; *Les deux sœurs émigrantes et déportées, par Céleste de Chabrillan*, Paris, C. Lévy, 1876. Pierre-Robert Leclercq, author of *Céleste Mogador : Biographie*, Paris, La Table ronde, 1996, claims that the novel *Les Voleurs d'Or* sold more copies than Flaubert's *Madame Bovary*, published in the same year by the same publisher (interview with the author, July 2006).
- 29 A benevolent group of women which organised volunteer ambulances for wounded French soldiers during the siege of Paris in 1870 as part of the 'Société de secours aux blessés des Armées de Terre et de Mer'.
- 30 Gabriel Ranvier (1828-1879), member of the Central committee of the National Guard and elected Mayor of the 20th arrondissement. He proclaimed the Commune at the Paris town hall on 28 March 1871.
- 31 Cahier 1906/07, 11 December 1907.