

THE EPIC FRAGMENT IN MID SIXTEENTH-CENTURY FRENCH POETRY
by Jean Braybrook, St Hugh's College. A dissertation submitted
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the University of
Oxford, Michaelmas Term, 1980 [i.e. 1981]

This study aims to produce a positive assessment of the Franciade, by viewing Ronsard's epic venture in the context of works by Ronsard himself and by poets such as Baïf and Belleau. The compositions considered extract single episodes from an epic whole, and are united by their structural and rhetorical techniques, forming a group dominated by the Franciade.

The first chapter examines the question of genre raised by the fragments, and reviews classical models utilized by the French poets, placing particular emphasis upon the Alexandrians. It reveals how the sixteenth-century poets long to produce a full-scale epic.

Chapter 2 groups the fragments according to theme, highlighting Argonautic poems, notably Ronsard's Hymne de Calais, et de Zetes, Hymne de Pollux et de Castor, and Hylas.

Chapter 3 examines the structure of the fragments in terms of contraction and expansion. Some poets circumscribe their material with a prelude and conclusion; others extend its temporal and spatial perspectives, by such means as retrospection, prophecy, and descriptions of ornate objects.

The rhetoric of the fragments is seen in Chapter 4 to reflect the expansive urge: simile, circumlocution, and preterition all widen the poetic vistas.

Chapter 5 studies Ronsard's approach to the problem of inventing an original framework for his epic, how he tries to lend it coherence by structural and rhetorical means. Yet the techniques Ronsard practised in the fragments finally prevail: the Franciade breaks up into a series of vivid miniatures: Ronsard repeatedly returns to material made familiar by classical epics.

The conclusion emphasizes that the 'accidental' fragmentation of the Franciade should be viewed alongside the voluntary fragmentation of the sixteenth-century heroic miniatures. The Franciade should, especially, be considered in conjunction with other Ronsardian productions, such as the Argonautic hymns. Together with these, it forms an intricate fretwork of epic motifs.

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At the root of this thesis lies the realization that there is a wide gap between, on the one hand, the epic aspirations of Ronsard, who yearned throughout his life to rival Homer and Virgil, and who was revered by his contemporaries for his ambition, and, on the other hand, the largely negative criticism that has been directed at his most sustained attempt to produce a heroic poem: the Franciade. I felt that the scope of the Franciade made a new examination of it worthwhile, indeed almost mandatory. I believed that a far more positive and balanced result would be obtained if the Franciade were considered in its relationship with sixteenth-century productions which might be termed epic in style if not in scope, and which consciously imitated the heroic poems of Antiquity.

Critics have attacked the Franciade for its feeble characterization, its repetitious nature, its moments of stasis, and have found comparatively little of worth in the work. P. Lange, in 'Ronsards Franciade und ihr Verhältniss zu Virgils Aeneide', views Ronsard's epic in isolation from the rest of Ronsard's oeuvre. He shows a marked preference for Virgil's poem, and overlooks passages in which Ronsard is original in his approach, whilst also failing to acknowledge the extent of Ronsard's debt to the Alexandrians. I. Silver, in Ronsard and the Greek Epic, considers both the Franciade and other

Ronsardian poems, thus suggesting the links between these poems and Ronsard's epic undertaking. He studies in great detail Ronsard's imitation of classical sources: the present thesis has drawn upon many of his findings. Nevertheless, having illuminated large sections of the Franciade, pointing out their relationship to or departure from antique models, he does not arrive at a favourable assessment of the work; on the contrary, he detects a lack of nobility in both its style and its protagonist, attributing this to a dramatic flaw.¹ The more recent works by B.R. Leslie and D. Ménager explicitly set out to study the Franciade in the context of Ronsard's shorter poems; but they too have negative preconceptions. In Ronsard's Successful Epic Venture: The Epyllion, Leslie provides constructive criticism of Ronsard's use of similes and, like the present study, examines Ronsardian miniatures he considers epic in nature; nevertheless, he proceeds to demolish the Franciade. Ménager, in Ronsard: Le Roi, le poète et les hommes, produces an excellent review of the Franciade against the backcloth of Ronsard's philosophical and court poetry, but concentrates on the reasons for the 'failure' of the poem, and leaves scope for an examination of its verbal fabric.

None of these critics considers other sixteenth-century writers in any detail. Works on Ronsard's contemporaries, amongst which one of the most illuminating is still M. Raymond's L'Influence de Ronsard sur la poésie française (1550-1585), do not focus on epic poems. G. Demerson, in La Mythologie classique

1. See especially Chapter 23, pp.435-46.

dans l'oeuvre lyrique de la 'Pléiade', considers a multitude of poets from a standpoint with which my thesis has many affinities, but still leaves room for a study uniting an evaluation of the Franciade with a review of many poets who wrote in Neo-Latin and French on epic themes.

In view of the unfavourable criticism that Ronsard's epic has received, I therefore felt that the Franciade, the product of plans and efforts made during the most creative period of Ronsard's life, would benefit from a study that would embrace both other Ronsardian works and pieces by different sixteenth-century poets, a study acknowledging that Ronsard was not the sole person of that time writing in epic mode. The Franciade was not to be seen as a still-born creation standing alone in the field of sixteenth-century verse: rather, it was to be considered in the light of a large number of other compositions, and against the background of contemporary aesthetics. Such an examination would, I thought, lead to a rehabilitation of the Franciade.

The research for this thesis consequently described a centrifugal movement. At its centre lay the Franciade; but it extended to include works linked to Ronsard's epic venture by their fragmentary nature. For I felt that fragmentation could be of two sorts: the voluntary and the involuntary; and that it was the notion of fragmentation which rendered vital an examination of many other works alongside the Franciade. The Franciade belongs to the category of involuntary fragmentation: Ronsard meant to complete it, to make it into a work coherent in its own right, but wrote only four out of the twenty-four books he planned. However, other pieces are intended by their

authors to be merely glimpses of an epic continuum, samples of the heroic style. They concentrate on one or a small number of episodes, leaving vast areas of their sources in shadow. I suspected that ultimately the results produced by these two forms of fragmentation would prove very similar.

The thesis therefore sets out to discover whether familiarity with voluntary fragmentation, practice in the epic miniature, influences the ultimate shape of the Franciade. It aims to produce a constructive account of the aesthetics of fragmentation, as a backcloth against which the Franciade may be viewed. So although the impetus behind the study is centrifugal, the five chapters themselves trace out a centripetal pattern, gradually closing in upon Ronsard's epic.

One problem raised by the afferent movement of the thesis was that of delimiting the area to be examined initially. I had defined the fragment as a poem selecting a limited number of episodes from a full-scale epic tradition; but where was I to draw the boundary between the specifically epic fragment and the mythological fragment? Were poems derived from Ovid's Metamorphoses - considered by critics of classical literature as a series of epic miniatures - to be included? As the Franciade was intended to be different, in theme at least, from both the epic and the mythological miniatures, it could provide little guidance here. Any process of selection had to be somewhat arbitrary. The solution I adopted was to provide, first of all, a sense of perspective by reviewing the classical models on which the sixteenth-century fragments relied, and then to concentrate for the sake of clarity upon a group of sixteenth-century poems specifically heroic in nature: those

derived from large-scale epics of Antiquity: the Iliad and Odyssey, the Aeneid, the Argonautica of Apollonius of Rhodes and Valerius Flaccus. In admitting poems into this group, I took account of many Neo-Latin works, some of which, whilst not written by Frenchmen, seem to have influenced the French productions. On the other hand, I discovered that the predilections of the sixteenth-century Neo-Latin and French poets made possible a further narrowing of the scope: the writers reveal a marked preference for episodes relating to the Argonautic cycle – episodes either derived directly from the heroic poems of Apollonius and Valerius Flaccus, or taken from Theocritus. Amongst the works they produce on the legend of the Golden Fleece, the Hymne de Calaïs, et de Zetes, the Hymne de Pollux et de Castor, and the Hylas of Ronsard stand out as the most significant productions.

Notwithstanding, to limit the survey to Argonautic poems would have been to restrict the field of vision rather as previous critics of the Franciade have done. I was convinced that useful illustrations and parallels were to be found in fragments essentially mythological in nature (Le Ravisement d'Orithye by B. Tagault being an excellent example), and that these fragments should be considered and used to support my arguments where relevant, although they would always be subordinated to a study of the Argonautic pieces.

The refusal to draw up excessively taut guidelines both provides a wide context in which Ronsard's Franciade may be viewed, and casts light upon much verse that has been largely ignored hitherto. Amongst the Neo-Latins, Quinziano Stoa produced a long poem in three books on Orpheus, which doubtless

drew the attention of the Pléiade to the prisci poetae and the Argonautic cycle. Nicolas Petit wrote an erudite piece of 1108 lines on Arion. Amongst the poets writing in French, Jean-Antoine de Baïf, on whom the most lucid work of criticism is still that by M. Augé-Chiquet, produced several epic fragments, one of which (Les Muses) contains indications that the poet was capable of composing a whole epic with Orpheus at its centre. He also wrote mythological poems related to the heroic miniatures in their techniques. With Le Laurier, he contributed to the establishment of the hymne-blason as a genre, and set an example that Ronsard was to follow in Le Houx. In this case he was a precursor rather than a simple imitator. Again, Remy Belleau, whose Amours et nouveaux échanges des pierres précieuses have recently been edited by M.F. Verdier, developed a form of aetiological poem stylistically related to the epic fragment, and showed great interest in the figure of the creator, the artist. Mention might also be made of Jacques Bereau, who wrote poems on Hylas, and Hippomenes and Atalanta (recently re-edited by M. Gautier); and of La Fable du faulx cvyder by Marguerite de Navarre and the Saulsaye by M. Scève (which has been republished in facsimile by M. Françon), two successful poems related in theme but indicating the course taken by sixteenth-century poetry, and with it the epic fragment, as it developed. The present study aims to recognize the individual worth of such creations, whilst bearing in mind their relationship with the Franciade.

Such, then, is the territory I proposed to explore. In Chapter 1, I consider the classical background, laying particular emphasis upon the Alexandrian school of poetry,

which provides a firm contour for the subsequent study of the sixteenth-century productions. In Chapter 2 I survey the main thematic categories into which the French poems fall, and include a brief review of specifically mythological fragments which provide parallels with points made in the subsequent chapters. Sources and themes are thus used in these two chapters as signposts along the expanse of sixteenth-century verse.

Once the materials had been selected, they clearly had to be treated in a way that would cast as much light as possible upon the Franciade. An indication of how this might be done lay in the versification of the Franciade itself. In spite of the opinion he expressed in the Abbregé de l'Art poétique françois that 'les Alexandrins sont propres pour les subjectz heroïques' (Lm. XIV, p.26), Ronsard composed his epic in decasyllabic lines. He was obliged to curb his digressive tendencies, to work in small syntactical blocks. His poem is a discordia concors, perpetually oscillating between freedom and restraint. I realized that a similar dichotomy was central to the epic fragments, and that it might be explored in terms both of structure and of rhetoric. For the authors of fragments are generally limited to one episode from the large-scale epic they are imitating: they experience a constraint similar to that imposed upon Ronsard by the decasyllable. Yet at the same time they develop techniques enabling them to assert their freedom, to extend the boundaries of their poems.

Chapter 3 accordingly centres on the opposition of contraction versus expansion, and deals with the structure of the epic miniatures. Some works appear as neatly circumscribed

entities; others are manifestly incomplete, and make the reader aware of wider vistas, of temporal and spatial depths they themselves cannot plumb. Chapter 4 examines the rhetoric of the poems, which represents above all the tendency to dilate, either by overt or by more devious methods.

In this way, I suggest that structure and rhetoric are closely linked in the fragments, and that their interaction is relevant to the Franciade. Chapter 5 takes further both the notion of the conflict between liberty and constraint, and the idea of the connection between external form and verbal fabric. It shows how Ronsard, trying for the first time to construct a full-scale epic with an invented framework, establishes a sense of cohesion by means of structural and rhetorical devices; and how, on the other hand, different structural and verbal features are constantly undermining what he is constructing. Ronsard emerges as the poet who enjoys ramifying and elaborating, who prefers colourful intensity to a swift series of actions concisely recounted, and who is constantly looking back to the epic past, rather than to the future which his protagonist is to forge for himself.

It becomes clear from a study of the Franciade in conjunction with the other epic fragments•that Ronsard is profoundly influenced by his practice at what indisputably becomes a typical sixteenth-century genre. He, like many of his contemporaries, grows adept at composing samples of the heroic style. He enjoys the freedom they allow him: for, although apparently restricted in scope, the epic miniatures impose few demands upon the poet; they may be as loosely structured as he wishes; they may consist of just one or a small number

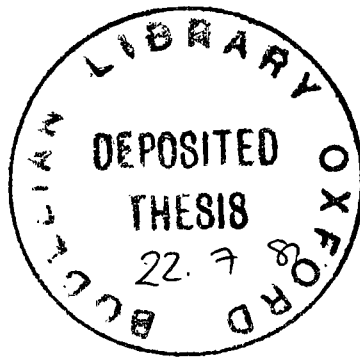
of episodes developed in depth and ramifying in numerous directions. Having exploited the structural and the rhetorical possibilities described in Chapters 3 and 4, Ronsard appears loath to abandon them in the Franciade. As a result, the Franciade becomes, not a continuous narrative, but a series of fragments.

The conclusion emphasizes that the Franciade is not to be condemned for its doubly fragmentary nature, for its obvious incompleteness combined with its episodic approach. On the contrary, it is to be judged alongside the examples of voluntary fragmentation, and, in particular, alongside the poems Ronsard intended to be miniatures, such as the Argonautic hymns. Although unfinished in itself, it links up with these poems to form an intricate web of epic motifs. The initial study of products of intentional fragmentation enables one to see the Franciade in a light far less harsh than that cast upon it by previous critics, and to realize that Ronsard's epic in fact receives its most appropriate valuation when it is considered as a richly woven fragment. It is the product of an age that recognized the value of the vignette, as well as the virtues of integrality. It forms the summit of a group of poems characterized by incompleteness, and adopting similar structural and rhetorical techniques as a means of compensating for and indeed profiting from their limited scope.

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PREFACE

Full details for all sources mentioned are supplied in the bibliography. Where several editions of a work exist, the references in the text are to the first one listed in the bibliography. When initially mentioned in the text, a secondary source is designated by the author's initials and surname and a full title. An article published in a festschrift or periodical is referred to only by the name of the author and the essay title. Subsequently, the works are identified by means of the author's name and a short title; but when only one work by a particular writer is listed in the bibliography, it is designated in the text by the author's name alone.

In quotations from sixteenth-century authors, the original punctuation and spelling have been maintained (unless modern editions adopting a different convention have been used); however, the ampersand has been resolved, as have abbreviations such as ā (for an), ō (for on), and q̄ (for que, in Latin texts).

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INTRODUCTION

A firm conviction lies at the base of this study: that a positive assessment of Ronsard's Franciade, his unfinished epic, is to be achieved through a consideration of Ronsard's epic miniatures, and that these miniatures are themselves illuminated by an acquaintance with epic fragments by other poets of the period. The thesis therefore sets out to examine Ronsard's epic poems as a group dominated by the Franciade, but surrounded by a host of minor works.

The juxtaposition in this study of a purportedly large-scale epic poem, the Franciade, with less ambitious heroic miniatures may at first seem surprising. However, the notion of fragmentation provides the link. For the miniatures are products of voluntary fragmentation: the poet consciously selects one episode or a limited number of episodes from a classical author and presents his work in heroic style. The Franciade, on the other hand, is an example of 'accidental' fragmentation: it remained incomplete. Although much longer than most of the poems surveyed here, it was published in 1572 as a mere fraction of the projected whole. More clearly than the epic miniatures, it displays the implications of fragmentation: they break pieces off from an epic block; it both does this and resists an explicitly formulated aim of making it into a much longer composition incorporating a complete poetic universe. In addition, it will be seen that the work Ronsard meant to be different is in many ways a mosaic of techniques with which he had already been experimenting. He attempts to compose a full work with the elements of the

poetic miniature.

The prior consideration of Ronsard alongside other poets, and the study of various epic fragments, are accordingly essential to an understanding of Ronsard's motivations and methods when it came to the composition of what he hoped would be a complete heroic poem.

The works surveyed here are thus primarily intended to explain and provide parallels with features of the Franciade. The number of poems considered is large; but criteria of selection have naturally been applied. The focus will be on secular epic subjects, neither purely religious nor purely historical in nature.¹ The term mid century will be taken, fairly loosely, to mean the years of the Pléiade's greatest activity, from around 1549 to 1572. The Neo-Latins will be considered in conjunction with the French writers, as, contrary to common belief, they frequently antedate the vernacular poets in their aspirations.²

1. On the religious epic, see R.A. Sayce, The French Biblical Epic in the Seventeenth Century, Part I, 3, 'The Origins: I. The Sixteenth Century', pp.27-48. On the historical epic, see D. Maskell, The Historical Epic in France: 1500-1700. Reference will be made in Chapter 4 of the present study to works mentioned by Maskell.

Ronsard is anxious to distinguish the poet - especially the epic poet - from the historian. See the 'Au Lecteur' to the 1572 edition of the Franciade, Lm. XVI-1, pp.3-4; and the 'Preface svr la Franciade, touchant le poëme heroïque', Lm. XVI-2, pp.336-7.

2. On the importance of the Neo-Latins, see Mvsae Redvces, edited by P. Laurens, II, p.256.

THE CONTRIBUTION OF CRITICS

The achievements of the Pléiade in the realm of epic poetry have attracted the attention of a number of critics, most of whom concentrate on the most extensive sample of the heroic genre, Ronsard's Franciade. The studies of the Franciade to date may be divided into three main types, the first of which adopts a negative approach, and the second of which examines the Franciade in the light of its sources. The third views the epic in its relationship with other works by Ronsard.

The first sort of approach is exemplified by H. Bénac's 'Problèmes de l'épopée dans l'Europe du XVI^e siècle'. Bénac considers the way sixteenth-century epic theory was divorced from reality, so that the Franciade, the poem which tried to adhere more closely to this theory than any other European production, was virtually doomed to remain unfinished. He sees the epic venture as a reflection of the problems and conflicts of the Renaissance. G. Spillebout, in 'Ronsard et le poème épique', examines Ronsard's aim of proving that 'la France était l'authentique héritière de la pensée des Grecs et des Latins ...' (p.29), but shows how lack of patronage, political circumstances, and the loss of youthful ardour all proved to be obstacles blocking the path to the great epic. 'La Pléiade et le poème épique', by A. Cioranescu, starts from the premise that the Franciade is a failure, and sets out to discover why. Cioranescu thinks that the reason lies in the shortcomings and contradictions of contemporary epic theory, and in the fact that literary critics ensconced in abstract lucubration tried to dictate to the poets what they should do. Again, in a longer work, La Vision de l'histoire

dans l'oeuvre de la Pléiade: Thèmes et structures, A.

Roubichou-Stretz examines the growth and political significance of the Francus legend, and looks at the Franciade. Asserting that the Pléiade completely misunderstood the relationship between poetry and history, she claims that Hercules would have been a better subject than Francus for an epic.¹

The approach to the Franciade via its sources tends to be more productive. 'Ronsards Franciade und ihr Verhältnis zu Virgils Aeneide', by P. Lange, shows how Ronsard weaves echoes of Virgil into his poem. Usually, Lange prefers Virgil's rendering.² He provides a detailed analysis of imitations of the Latin poet, arranged under such headings as 'epithets' and 'antonomasia' (pp.26-36). Whilst tending to give the impression that the Franciade is simply a patchwork of Virgilian motifs, not always well imitated, this study does at least have the merit of examining the poetic fibre of the Franciade. I. Silver, in 'The Birth of the Modern French Epic: Ronsard's Independence of Jean Lemaire de Belges's Homeric Historiography', examines the importance of Lemaire's Illustrations de Gaule et Singularitez de Troye, and shows how Ronsard, in theory at least, differed from Lemaire in drawing a sharp distinction between history and poetry, and in borrowing more frequently from Homer. J. Vianey, in 'L'Arioste et la Pléiade', pp.301-5, A. Cioranescu, in L'Arioste en France des origines à la fin du XVIIIe siècle, I, pp.174-8, A. Cameron, in The Influence

1. See especially Chapter 2, 'L'Histoire et l'épopée', pp.59-97.

2. See pages 10 and 14.

of Ariosto's Epic and Lyric Poetry on Ronsard and his Group, and A. Parducci, in 'Le imitazioni ariostee nella Franciade del Ronsard', have all studied the specific question of the use Ronsard makes of Orlando Furioso in his Franciade.

The tendency to study the Franciade in the light of other Ronsardian works is more recent. In French Epic Poetry in the Sixteenth Century: Theory and Practice, M.P. Hagiwara deals with other epics besides the Franciade, as he is not concerned solely with secular, non-historical themes. He clarifies aspects of sixteenth-century theory and, like Cioranescu in his aforementioned article, indicates its shortcomings.¹ One section of his book does concentrate upon the Franciade: it discusses the early references in Ronsard's work to his plans for an epic; the relationship of the Franciade with its sources, notably Lemaire de Belges's Illustrations; Ronsard's original ideas concerning the plot; the use of epithets; the development of classical sources; the influence of mediaeval romances.² More original in its approach, however, is D. Ménager's Ronsard: Le Roi, le poète et les hommes, an important part of which attempts to understand Ronsard's epic venture in the context of some of his other compositions. Unlike the present study, it does not focus on the specifically epic poems alone, but considers, for example, certain of the non-legendary hymns and the Discours des miseres de ce temps. Ménager's arguments are undeniably cogent; nevertheless, like the critics in the first category, he analyses above all the reasons for the 'failure'

1. See pp.14-47.

2. See pp.85-135.

of the Franciade: the poet's 'idée de propriété du texte' and inner reluctance to make his work express collective ideals (pp.290-1); the change in political circumstances (pp.294-9); the public's lack of familiarity with the Francus legend (p.301); the fundamental opposition between the epic venture and Ronsard's philosophy of metamorphosis and change (pp.304-5, p.312, p.314), which makes what should be a paeon to the continuity of the French race into a hymn to the destructive power of Time (p.316). In Chapter 5 of the present thesis, several ideas similar to Ménager's are formulated, but are counterbalanced by a search for the positive qualities of the Franciade.

However, the work of criticism most closely related, by virtue of its subject-matter, to my thesis is B.R. Leslie's Ronsard's Successful Epic Venture: The Epyllion, which views the Franciade in the context of the Hymne de l'Hyver in particular. Leslie gives a good survey of the use of similes in the Franciade; his findings will be referred to frequently in Chapter 5. But he tends to vitiate a potentially fruitful comparison between the Franciade and the Ronsardian fragments by what is, once again, a negative approach: he concentrates first upon the weaknesses of the Franciade ('general problems' in Chapter 1, pp.15-27, and 'derivative weaknesses' in Chapter 2, pp.28-57), and then studies Ronsard's poetic miniatures in order to highlight the failure of the epic. The present thesis views the Franciade as the culminating point of Ronsard's epic compositions, rather than as a blot upon the horizon. And, unlike Leslie, it considers works by poets other than Ronsard.

Such, then, are the main groups of criticism concerning the Franciade. I attempt to exploit the insights of all three,

but to produce new results by considering Ronsard's epic in a much wider context. Studies other than those devoted to the Franciade have therefore proved useful. Amongst the many books and articles by I. Silver, Ronsard and the Hellenic Renaissance in France. - I. Ronsard and the Greek Epic deserves special mention thanks to the information it provides about Ronsard's knowledge and treatment of his sources. It examines a large number of compositions, including the Franciade. The Intellectual Evolution of Ronsard. - II. Ronsard's General Theory of Poetry is also useful as it clarifies aspects of Ronsard's poetic theory of relevance to the epic.

The works so far discussed generally confine their remarks to the works of Ronsard; but a further series of studies contributed material to my thesis thanks to their reference to poets other than Ronsard. In many cases, discovery of the minor poets mentioned here was facilitated by a reference in M. Raymond's L'Influence de Ronsard sur la poésie française (1550-1585), and his accompanying Bibliographie critique de Ronsard en France (1550-1585). However, I also take into account poems from earlier in the century, including several in Latin. Some of these Latin poems are mentioned by F. Joukovsky, whose works constitute an interesting examination of points adjacent to the present study. Her Orphée et ses disciples dans la poésie française et néo-latine du XVIe siècle furnished many details vital to the survey of prisci poetae themes. La Gloire dans la poésie française et néolatine du XVIe siècle (Des Rhétoriciens à Agrippa d'Aubigné) proved useful thanks to its study of the heroic world as represented in sixteenth-century verse, and to its examination of the

Argonautic legend.¹ A. Cioranescu's Bibliographie de la littérature française du XVIe siècle provided references to many collective works which, on perusal, were found to contain epic fragments.

As will be seen, the epic fragment and the short mythological poem are closely related. Consequently, works dealing specifically with questions of mythology had much to contribute to the consideration of the epic miniature.² They include, notably, G. Demerson's erudite La Mythologie classique dans l'oeuvre lyrique de la 'Pléiade', which casts much light upon the fragments of Baïf and the Argonautic hymns of Ronsard, and considers a multitude of minor poets writing in Latin and French, placing them against the backcloth of theoretical statements, the fine arts, and court celebrations.³ An article by T.C. Cave, 'Ronsard's Mythological Universe', makes valuable comments on decorative richness and fragmentation, and has provided the impetus for several aspects of this thesis.⁴

1. See especially pp.221-3.

2. For a review of works devoted to Ronsard's use of mythology, see P. Léonard, 'Lectures de la mythologie chez Ronsard'.

3. In relation to the present thesis, see especially Chapter 3, pp.161-216, and Chapter 6, pp.395-453.

4. See also T.C. Cave's more recent and more comprehensive book: The Cornucopian Text: Problems of Writing in the French Renaissance. The third chapter of Part II is devoted to Ronsard (pp.223-70).

THE BOUNDARIES OF THE EPIC FRAGMENT

Such, then, are the works of criticism most relevant to the subject of the present thesis; others will be mentioned in the footnotes. These works left scope for an examination of the epic fragment as a particular poetic form. For, whilst the poetic miniatures to be considered here have been selected thanks to the light they cast upon the Franciade, they at the same time belong to a group with its own, individual features: features which this study sets out to define.

It is undeniably difficult to delimit the territory of the epic fragments, to isolate their essential characteristics. For one thing, the epic miniature seems to span several traditional genres. It may, for example, combine traits of the hymn and of the blason: it is a hybrid. The present study will adopt a twofold approach to this question of genre. First, classical models will be examined; secondly, sixteenth-century pieces themselves will be considered, from the point of view of theme.

Attacking the problem from the former angle, Chapter 1 will therefore examine the sources, chiefly Alexandrian, exploited by the poets of the Renaissance. It will show how these sources can assist one in the search for appropriate guidelines to this mixed narrative form, and how, indeed, one encounters in exploring Alexandrian works and the critical studies they have provoked a problem of terminology similar to that found in connection with the sixteenth-century poems. It is a problem centred on the appellation epyllion. The chapter will hence compare the sixteenth-century term poème with the epyllion to which modern critics of the classics refer. Believing that the sixteenth-century poets were deeply

influenced by classical models, I have placed the ancient body of literature in prominent position at the outset of the study. I thus adopt a procedure different from that of Leslie, who postpones his consideration of Alexandrian literature until the conclusion of his work (pp.107-11).

A preliminary review of sources hence helps one in marking out the field to be surveyed. It also suggests that since other poets use the same models as Ronsard, they too should be taken into account. Nevertheless, having concluded from a study of Alexandrian literature that one is dealing with a hybrid genre, one occasionally finds it hard to decide which French poems belong to the category of the epic fragment. Ronsard, Baïf, and Belleau may be taken as illustrations of the problem. B.R. Leslie provides a list of the Ronsardian poems that he considers as epyllia (pp.130-1, note 42). He seems to adopt a fairly loose definition of the genre, and yet excludes some compositions he might well have admitted on the basis of the same broad criteria: the Complainte de Glauce à Scylle Nimphe, La Defloration de Lede à Cassandre, the Ode de la Paix, Au Roi, the Harangue que fit Monseigneur le Duc de Guise ..., La Grenouille, Le Houx, and L'Hinne de Bacus. The present study, on the other hand, will use such pieces to provide further support for points made, whilst concentrating on those Ronsardian poems which are associated with the Argonautic cycle and therefore most clearly extracted from an epic whole: L'Orphée, Hylas, and, notably, the Hymne de Calaïs, et de Zetes and the Hymne de Pollux et de Castor.

If one applies the same epic criteria to Baïf's oeuvre, as a means of selection, one finds that Les Muses is connected with the Argonautic cycle, and that L'Hippocrene is also a

heroic fragment, whilst being taken from a different legend. Yet many of Baïf's Poemes, which will be found listed in the bibliography, help to elucidate his aims and techniques in the specifically epic poems. Belleau's pieces, again, are not, strictly speaking, epic in nature; but poems from Les Amours et nouveaux échanges des pierres precieuses and from La Bergerie will be considered, as they furnish parallels with the main observations made in this study, as well as providing a counterbalance to Chapter 1 by illustrating the inventiveness of the Pléiade poets.

The study thus begins with the attempt to circumscribe the material by means of a comparison with classical models; but subsequently, excessive restriction of the field is avoided. First, poets other than Ronsard are considered as representatives of the epic fragment; secondly, no attempt is made to establish rigid criteria for admission of poems into the terrain to be surveyed. Baïf's mythological Poemes, to name but one instance, prove that taut guidelines are undesirable. Since it is difficult to distinguish the epic miniature proper from the brief mythological pieces that proliferate in the sixteenth century; since both types sometimes use very similar structural and rhetorical techniques (as Baïf's compositions, notably Le Laurier and Le Ravissement d'Europe, demonstrate), it seems desirable, in fact, to keep the boundaries of the fragment sufficiently elastic to allow for the inclusion of mythological pieces too as examples at several points.

On the other hand, the thesis will focus primarily upon a well-defined category of poems: those derived from full-scale epics of Antiquity, or from classical authors imitating these

epics (as opposed, say, to poems taken from the relatively discontinuous Metamorphoses): for in extracting their works from a larger whole, the sixteenth-century poets are exercising a conscious choice, rejecting some elements and maintaining others, and contriving to suggest a heroic purpose in a much smaller setting. They are developing a structure and a rhetoric peculiar to the fragment. At the same time, several have in mind a great work that will transcend the fragment-form, and for which the latter is a preparation.

THEMES, STRUCTURE, AND RHETORIC

Chapter 2 will be concerned with grouping the relevant poems according to their themes. First, pieces on the border-lines of the epic fragment will be briefly surveyed. They include poems narrating a transformation or a ravishment; aetiological compositions (a type much favoured by the Alexandrians); works telling of amorous exploits; and pieces exploring the situation of the poet and the domain of artistic creativity. Many of these - as Chapters 3 and 4 indicate - employ the techniques of the epic miniature; but they do not have a heroic or nationalistic pith. In fact, they throw into relief by contrast the epic aspirations represented by poems derived from the Argonautic cycle, from the body of mythology often used for royal entrées and court festivities. For both the Neo-Latins and the French compose poems on Jason and his crew; some concentrate upon the love-interest contained in the legend, whilst suggesting its link with the epic quest; others focus on the figure of the hero, or, as in Ronsard's two

Argonautic hymns that form the climax of the chapter, highlight a pair of heroes.

Thus, although the problems related to charting the contours of the epic fragment are manifold, and although Chapters 1 and 2 guard against setting too narrow a boundary to the territory explored, the second chapter at the same time shows that these compositions may be grouped according to their subject-matter. It would be wrong to see them as an amorphous mass of material. Theme alone, however, is not an adequate definition of a genre. Chapters 3 and 4 continue the process of selecting the vital constituents of the fragment, by examining their structural and rhetorical features. For these miniatures are characterized by traits, not all of which are simultaneously present in any given poem, but which form different combinations to produce works having many points of contact with the epic, whilst being much shorter. The heroic fragment, although it is an open narrative form having some affinities with the short mythological poem, differs from the latter thanks to its intimate connection with the epic.

The structure of the fragment is studied in Chapter 3 on the basis of the dichotomy of contraction versus expansion, or of the episodic versus the encyclopaedic urge. For, rather as the reader at first finds it difficult to know how many compositions to admit into the realm of the miniature epic, so, on the level of the individual poem, the sixteenth-century writers seem to have lurking in their minds the question of how closed or open to make their works. On the one hand, the poet appears resolved to mould his piece into a compact shape, to suggest that it is self-sufficient. On the other hand, he hints that his work is merely part of a

larger whole, one portion of an epic cosmos, which is capable of being extended both in spatial and in temporal terms.¹

Descriptions enable the poet to draw into the orbit of his work other areas of experience, other sections of mythology.²

Glimpses of past and future, passages of retrospection, or recordatio, and prophecy enable him to create an impression of temporal depth.³ The poet exploits to the full the very shortness of the form he is manipulating, and develops a technique of allusiveness. Whereas the full-scale epic has to tie up all ends, to work all motifs into a coherent whole, the epic fragment can highlight areas of past and future, and leave others in shadow. It need not respond to the demands of symmetry and balance.

Chapter 3 hence shows that some poets seem content with the fragment as such, and endeavour to chisel it into a pleasing shape; others reveal even in their poetic miniatures the wish

1. I shall refer to many passages of spatial and temporal extension as secondary narratives, meaning by this episodes and descriptions which digress from the primary narrative, that is, the main plot, and which constitute another level to the poem. I envisage poems containing such secondary narratives as multidimensional entities..

2. For parallels in the contemporary visual arts, with their creation of a richly decorated surface, see J. Shearman, Mannerism; and M. Raymond's introduction to his collection La Poésie française et le Maniérisme.

3. The motifs of retrospection and prophecy will be discussed in both Chapter 3 and Chapter 5. A similar critical approach, involving the identification of 'analepses' and 'prolepses', is adopted towards A la recherche du temps perdu by G. Genette in Figures III. The 'analepses' correspond to the devices of retrospection, and the 'prolepses' to the techniques of anticipation. See pp.77-121, and especially p.82.

to provide the depth of vision associated with the large-scale epic. The two tendencies are not mutually exclusive, as Ronsard's Hymne de Calais, et de Zetes and Hymne de Pollux et de Castor indicate; but it is above all the latter tendency that finds expression in the rhetoric of the fragment. Chapter 4 aims to present, not a survey of all the rhetorical devices utilized, but simply an examination of three figures - simile, circumlocution, and preterition - which seem central to the encyclopaedic urge. Whereas Chapter 3 hinges on the contrast between contraction and dilation, Chapter 4 deals with the overt and the secret. Simile and periphrasis are devices that draw attention to themselves, and which are discussed in the theoretical works of the poets who use them; preterition appears to be a more private domain, in which the writer tries to conceal the urge to extend. The chapter suggests that proclivities represented on a structural level are also embodied, by means of these figures, in the individual period.

THE FRANCIADE

Chapter 5, the focal point on which Chapters 1 to 4 converge, aims to examine the poetic fibre of the Franciade in productive rather than destructive fashion. For the Franciade, although incomplete, constitutes a colourful interweaving of many of the motifs that are so attractive in the epic fragments, such as extended descriptions and similes. It frequently conveys an impression of exuberance, by means of rhetorical techniques of accumulation. Yet the Franciade is very different from the fragments in that,

whereas they are based on well-known myths and can rely on the reader's knowledge to supply connecting threads and even the sense of an ending, it requires a framework of the poet's own invention. Far more originality - in the straightforward sense of the term - is needed here than in the fragments. The narrative must also be carefully structured, and the reader guided along the epic paths. The chapter examines both Ronsard's attempts to do this, and the features that act against the establishment of coherence. It will be seen that the heroic comparison perhaps best illustrates Ronsard's desire to ramify as he does in the fragments, whilst at the same time providing narrative guidelines. Yet the fact that the Franciade was never completed suggests that this precarious balance was ultimately destroyed: perhaps Ronsard felt the pull of lyricism at the expense of action. A study of devices such as retrospection, once a means of widening the vista of the fragment, indicates exactly how Ronsard reacted when faced with the task of inventing material with which to shape the epic.

The conclusion of the study will discuss two questions: whether the distinction between static description and action is justified in connection with the Franciade, and what the undoubted redeeming features of the work are. It will suggest that the Franciade is to be viewed in a new way.

The thesis thus moves from poems which their authors intended to be short, mere samples of the epic style, often based on classical models similarly restricted in their scope, to a work which the author hoped would be on a par with the

Homeric and Virgilian epics. It suggests that constant practice in the former genre has a marked effect on Ronsard's attempts to produce a full-scale work, and that his magnum opus, although unfinished, has positive worth. It aims to consider little-known pieces besides the most obvious representatives of the epic fragment, to place these in the context of the antique sources, and to give an impression of the modes of composition they adopt, and of the pattern they describe around Ronsard's Franciade.

CHAPTER ONE

THE CLASSICAL BACKGROUND

The sixteenth-century poets were deeply influenced by the works of Antiquity. A glance at Muret's commentary on Ronsard's Amours, at the footnotes to P. Laumonier's edition of Ronsard, at I.D. McFarlane's edition of the Délie, or at The Gallo-Roman Muse by D.G. Coleman, provides adequate proof of this. And it is in the belief that a study of the originals should illuminate the imitations that the present chapter sets out to survey the classical background lying behind the mythological fragments of Renaissance France. A consideration of the literary models used by the French writers will lend a degree of homogeneity to the apparently disparate themes of the French poems.

Many of the sixteenth-century fragments are based on Alexandrian works. The focus of this chapter will hence be on the Alexandrian school of poetry, and on a favourite theme of this school: the Argonautic cycle. However, it is not intended to provide a complete survey of classical and Alexandrian works, but rather to concentrate on poems of particular significance for the development of sixteenth-century French poetry. Another reservation should also be made at the outset: the ensuing statements on the classical works will inevitably be influenced by modern scholarship, which attempts to grasp literary productions as wholes. In one sense, the Renaissance too tried to apprehend works in toto: for it saw the epics of Antiquity as encyclopaedias of knowledge. Yet on the other hand, it was not averse to reducing large-scale compositions to fragments, to considering simply isolated episodes from them. This was a

process reinforced by the translation of selected passages: Du Bellay, for instance, translated the fourth and sixth books of the Aeneid, together with other extracts; in the edition of 1561 (Paris, F. Morel), these were 'la Complainte de Didon à Enée, prise d'Ovide, la Mort de Palinure, du cinquième de l'Enéide et l'Adieu aux Muses, pris du latin de Buccanan'. The publication of compendia of choice extracts also strengthened this trend. They included Mirandula's Viridarium illustrium poetarum (1512), often republished in the sixteenth century. So it should be borne in mind that any impression this chapter may give of the classical models as a uniform corpus of material may not have been completely shared by a Renaissance reader or writer. Nevertheless, the fact that different authors did have recourse to the same works of Antiquity suggests that the approach to them via their models is to be commended; and one might start by asking whether there is any particular tradition to which the originals and the imitations belong. What are the characteristics shared by these individual works?

(1) TERMINOLOGY

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The French poems to be considered in subsequent chapters, and their classical models, reveal great differences in poetic technique. The fact that they deal with mythological subjects does, it is true, provide a guideline. Yet one may still initially be uncertain of the precise genre to which these poems belong. It therefore seems advisable to begin this survey in the realm of terminology, and to ask two further questions. First, does the problem of genre form a link between the ancient

works and sixteenth-century poetry? Secondly, should one attempt to relegate the mythological fragments to a single genre, such as elegy or hymn, or should one rather accept that they are hybrids, spanning several categories of poetic composition?

(a) The epyllion

In reply to the second of the three questions posed above, it appears that there is indeed a link between Alexandrian and sixteenth-century epic fragments, in the sense that both demand to be classified under a certain genre-heading, whilst simultaneously resisting any endeavour to place them in the strait-jacket of strict conformity to established rules and accepted forms.

Critics dealing with Latin, and, more particularly, with Greek literature have on occasion attempted to assign the mythological and epic fragments to a specific genre, which they call the epyllion. In Greek, this word means 'a versicle', 'a scrap of poetry'; the use of the term to denote a literary genre seems to have originated in the first half of the nineteenth century, amongst German scholars.¹ In 1904, J. Heumann published his thesis, De epyllio alexandrino, in which he defined the epyllion as a small independent narrative poem written in hexameters, on a mythological subject. But the most significant work for the dissemination of the term epyllion was probably The Epyllion from Theocritus to Ovid, by

1. See J.F. Reilly, 'Origins of the Word Epyllion', p.111.

M.M. Crump (1931).¹ The author tries to establish certain features as hallmarks of a particular form of poetry: the criterion of length, for example - 'an epyllion seems never to have exceeded the length of a single book, and probably the average length was four to five hundred lines' (p.22); the epyllion deals with human beings rather than gods, and often has a sentimental theme; and it contains digressions, either narratives told by one of the characters, or descriptions of works of art.²

Yet the accuracy and relevance of such a definition of the epyllion have been disputed. The chief objection is that firm guidelines cannot be drawn up for a shifting territory housing very disparate poems. Another critic, W. Allen, argues that it is unjust to group together these poems simply because 'they have the point in common that they are each a mixture of different types of poetry in different proportions'.³ He concludes: 'It is most desirable, then, that we should banish from our critical vocabulary the term epyllion, and from our critical thinking the grouping of poems under that name' (p.25).⁴ The epyllion, Allen indicates, spans several genres. Allen also objects to the fact that, in determining the hallmarks of the

1. This work was influential since it set out clearly the criteria for the epyllion. But it was preceded by less obtrusive articles, such as C.N. Jackson's 'The Latin Epyllion'.

2. See L. Richardson, Poetical Theory in Republican Rome, p.23. The importance of object-descriptions for the French poets will be discussed in Chapter 3, below (pp.146-63).

3. 'The Epyllion: A Chapter in the History of Literary Criticism', p.16.

4. Compare A.M. Crabbe, 'The Aristaeus Epyllion', p.27; and G.W. Williams, Tradition and Originality in Roman Poetry, p.52.

epyllion, too many surmises have been made about fragmentary poems.¹

Allen's argument is cogent. One should, nevertheless, recall that no genre has strictly definable limits: it is as unwise to try to delimit the term epyllion too precisely, as it would be to lay down rigid rules for any class of poetry.² The reader is likely to feel that the epyllion is a useful category for poems hybrid in nature, combining the features of several traditional genres, but not necessarily containing all these features at once. The poems are short when compared with full epics; they nevertheless deal with heroic themes; they often contain an interpolated narrative; they frequently blend features from the hymn and the blason. They form a loose group, but share affinities with one another: they are undoubtedly a typical Alexandrian composition. The sixteenth-century poets themselves, engaged in imitation of the Alexandrian epyllion, seem to have been aware of the characteristics that their short pieces have in common, as an examination of their terminology will suggest.

(b) The 'poème'

The question of genre, so problematic as far as the Alexandrian fragments are concerned, also disturbed the poets of the Renaissance. How, they wondered, were their own

1. 'The Non-existent Classical Epyllion'.

2. A liberal view of the term epyllion is found in Richardson's Poetical Theory See, for example, page 23, page 78, page 85, and page 88.

compositions to be classified? Most of their ideas on this subject have to be deduced from their arrangement of their work into sections, since they made few explicit statements on the matter.

The sixteenth-century poets did not merely imitate poems brief in their original form; they also selected pieces from the full-scale epics of Antiquity, as this and the following chapter indicate. One therefore feels that the production of miniature epics in the period reflected a real interest on the part of the poets in the fragment as a form. This interest may be exemplified by the use of the term poème in Renaissance France. The meaning of the word in the sixteenth century was rather different from the modern signification. Poème was utilized as the title for a certain genre, as a way of designating, not poems in general, but a specific type of short piece. The term is important in relation to the works of Ronsard and Baïf in particular: for they seem to have felt that certain of their works did not belong to any of the commonly recognized genres, and that they could be classed only as poèmes, as a new category of composition.¹ Although their criteria for admission of pieces into the realm of the poème are unstable, they appear to have at their root the desire to form the fragment into a genre - rather as modern critics use the term epyllion in their attempt to classify the miniature epics.

Ronsard maintained the title Poèmes from 1560 until the end

1. See H. Chamard, Histoire de la Pléiade, IV, p.168; and P. Laumonier, Ronsard, poète lyrique, pp.195-6, and p.198.

of his life; it is preserved also in posthumous editions of his work. It was derived from the Latin poema, which meant simply 'a composition in verse', usually short, 'a carmen' - or even 'some verses of a poem' (Cicero, De divinatione ad M. Brutum, I. 31. 66). It had been only rarely employed in French before the sixteenth century, the title Poësies being generally preferred for collections of poetry. In Latin, on the other hand, poesis normally referred to poetry as a class (see Horace's Ars poetica, line 361); the French poets up to the sixteenth century had therefore blurred the distinction between poëme and poësie. In Old French, in fact, there were two terms comparable with poësie: poeterie and poeserie. Poeterie could mean both 'poetry' and 'a poem'; this perhaps led to a similar confusion concerning the exact sense of poeserie - in which case one can understand how poësie too came to be deprived of a clearly defined meaning, and to be used in the plural as a title for collective works.¹

However, the sixteenth century seems to have become aware of a further distinction made by Latin grammarians, whereby poesis applies to a long work, especially an epic, and poema

1. André de la Vigne writes: 'Charles le grant dont les hystoires et poeteries depuis luy faictes ne taysent pas les vertus comme il s'ensuit' (Louenge des roys de France, 1507 edition, fol. 16, quoted by F. Godefroy in his Dictionnaire de l'ancienne langue française, VI, p.244, under the heading 'poeterie'). And in Nicolas Oresme one discovers the phrase 'une poetrie de Omerus' (La Politique et les Economiques d'Aristote, traduites par Nicolas Oresme, Paris, A. Vérard, 1489, fol. 67D - also quoted by Godefroy, VI, p.244).

to a short composition.¹ This contrast is brought out in Nonius Marcellus' quotation of Marius Terentius Varro's Menippeae, 398:

poëma est (...) verba plura modice in
quandam conjecta formam. Itaque etiam
distichon epigrammation vocant poëma.
Poësis est perpetuum argumentum e
rhythmis, ut Ilias Homeri et Annales
Ennii. (De Conpendiosa Doctrina,
428, 19 ff.)

The sixteenth-century use of the word poëme seems to have been influenced by this distinction, and to have resulted from a search for more precise categories; and the specific meaning with which it endowed poësie appears to have stemmed from an awareness of the nobility of the epic genre. Poësie became more lofty in meaning; and poëme came to designate in particular

1. J.C. Scaliger, in his Poetices libri septem, I, Chapter 2, mentions and rejects this distinction:

Poesin autem et Poema, quidam, inter
quos etiam Plutarchus, ita distinxere,
vt Poesis iustum sit opus: Poema
pusillum. Ilias Poesis, Margitis Poema.
profecto malè. Námque Poema est opus
ipsum: materia, inquam, quae fit.
Poesis autem, ratio ac forma Poematis.
(Faksimile-Neudruck der Ausgabe von
Lyon 1561, p.5, col. 2)

There is a translation into English of selected passages from Scaliger by F.M. Padelford. However, Padelford's rendering of this passage (p.18) is not entirely satisfactory. He translates 'iustum' as 'legitimate', whereas surely 'of full measure' is what is meant; and 'pusillum' he interprets as 'insignificant', which, although nearer the mark, obscures Scaliger's distinction between the relative sizes of the works.

a work on an elevated subject, but of limited length.

Ronsard formulated a definition of the poème in the preface published in the 1587 edition of the Poèmes (Lm. XVIII-1, pp.283-4, 'Au Lecteur'). He compares poésie to a meadow dotted with flowers, and poème to a single bloom or tree. Moreover, he continues,

D'Homere l'Iliade et sa soeur l'Odyssée
Est une Poésie en sujets ramassée
Diverse d'arguments: le Cyclope eborgné,
D'Achille le boucler, Circe au chef bien peigné,
Prothée, Calypson par Mercure advertie,
Est un petit Poème osté de sa partie
Et de son corps entier. (ll.13-19, p.284)

The subjects Ronsard mentions are all from Homer, all mythological, and all potential miniature epics. This suggests that Ronsard at this stage sees the poème specifically as an epic fragment. He is referring to the contemporary poème / poésie distinction just examined. One is, notwithstanding, inclined to wonder to what extent the distinction determined the shaping of the 1560 edition. It may well be that the preface published in 1587 was coloured by the preoccupations of the later Ronsard, who had become concerned with the fragmentary nature of his work after the failure of his attempt to write a complete epic, and who was certainly more engrossed in questions of critical terminology.

To what degree, then, does the 1560 edition of the Poèmes conform to the definition Ronsard advances here? From an early stage, Ronsard seems unwilling excessively to restrict his own use of the term poème. He emphasizes the variety of his work, as in the Elegie à Louis des Masures Tournisien, the concluding piece (Lm. X, pp.362-3, ll.11-14). The motif of diversity occurs

nine years later in the final lines of Hylas (Lm. XV, p.252, ll.417-26), and again in the opening sonnet of the Poèmes of 1578 (Lm. XVII, p.375, ll.1-4), where the motif of wild flowers prefigures the image used in connection with poésie in the preface of 1587.¹ One is, therefore, not surprised to find in the 1560 edition a mingling of genres reminiscent of the Alexandrians. Many pieces were, indeed, re-classified as early as 1567.² Some became Elegies, Mascarades, Epitaphes, Gayetez (from 1584 onwards), or went into the Discours des miseres de ce temps (1567-87) or the Bocage royal (1584). Out of a total of one hundred and forty-one poèmes, only thirty-three continued to be grouped together under this title. One is hence not dealing with a precisely defined category.

At first sight, one is tempted to conclude that in the Poèmes of 1560 Ronsard has collected pieces that could not easily be assigned to any particular genre, or which were unusual in his work and did not form a large enough corpus to be published separately. Indeed, the arrangement of the 1560 edition was determined to some extent by the external form of the poems: especially by their rhyme-scheme and stanza-pattern.³ Nevertheless, there are certain definite

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1. Ronsard repeatedly links the diversity of his work to images from nature: the landscape seen from a window; a bee amongst flowers; the flowers of a field.

2. Even then, they did not necessarily remain in the place allocated to them: many poems that are in 1567 classed as élégies become écloques in the 1578 edition: for example, the Cyclope amoureux of 1560, and the Chant pastoral of 1559 ('J'estois fasché de tant suivre les Rois ...').

3. See Laumonier's note to A Dieu pour la famine, II, p.186.

characteristics shared by the poèmes that continue to be classed as such. Many of the pieces are epistle-like compositions in Alexandrine couplets, often containing personal observations and touching on philosophical themes. One thinks in this respect of C. Ennius Lucilius' definition of the poema:

Pars est parva poëma, proinde ut epistola
quaevis. Illa poësis opus totum (...)
atque istoc opus unum Est majus multo quam
quod dixi ante poëma. (Quoted by Nonius
Marcellus, De Conpendiosa Doctrina, 428,
12 ff.)

The comparison is interesting, even though Ronsard may not have been aware of this particular definition. Other poèmes reflect Ronsard in his role as political poet at a time of increasing unrest. Composed between August 1558 and August 1559, they include the Exhortation au camp du Roy pour bien combattre le jour de la bataille (Lm. IX, pp.3-11), and the Exhortation pour la paix (Lm. IX, pp.15-26). More significantly, another type of poem already to be found in this edition is the hymne-blason, a genre simultaneously cultivated by Belleau, praising or criticizing an object, animal, or insect. Thus Ronsard now places in the Poèmes La Grenouille and Le Freslon, from Le Bocage of 1554. Finally, some poèmes of 1560 may be classified as miniature epics, thus foreshadowing the preface of 1587. Examples are Le Narssis, with its reference to the Argonauts (ll.37-40, Lm. VI, pp.75-6), and the Harangue que fit Monseigneur le Duc de Guise ... (Lm. V, pp.203-19, from the Cinquième Livre des Odes, 1553). And the poem 'Quand le fameux Jason ...' (VII, pp.225-30), whilst not a miniature epic, introduces, like Le Narssis, the Argonautic material that will be so important for Ronsard. It deals with Neptune's

gift of a lump of earth to the Argonaut Euphemus; Euphemus' dream; his casting of the clod into the sea, on the advice of Jason; and the creation of a beautiful island. A poem such as Le Houx (VI, pp.135-46) spans the two categories of the hymne-blason and the miniature epic.

In spite of the presence of these categories, Ronsard's conception of the term poème was not rigidly fixed. It seems to have caused him as many difficulties as the epyllion does to modern critics. In the Sixième et Septième Livres des Poèmes of 1569, the poème remains a shifting genre. Only fifteen pieces out of sixty appear in later editions of the Poèmes. Most of the rest are placed under the title of Amours from 1571 onwards. Ronsard in fact excused himself for the preponderance of love-sonnets in the second half of the Septième Livre (Elegie à Du Lac, ll.87-91, XV, p.171). Nevertheless, certain of the works incorporated into the five books of Poèmes in 1571 are, once again, blasons: Le Chat, Le Soucy du Jardin, Le Rossignol, L'Ombre du cheval. The blasons may be combined with the conversational epistle, as in 'A Monsieur de Belot', later entitled La Lyre (XV, pp.15-38). The miniature epic is also fairly strongly represented in the 1569 edition, suggesting that perhaps Ronsard's final definition of the poème is already present in his mind. Thus one has Les Parolles que dist Calypson, ou qu'elle devoit dire, voyant partir Ulysse (Sixième Livre des Poèmes, XV, pp.48-60); Le Satyre (Sixième Livre, pp.67-76); Le Pin (Septième Livre, XV, pp.178-85); and Hylas, au seigneur Passerat (Septième Livre, pp.234-53).

The later editions of the Poèmes do not significantly alter whatever conclusions the reader may have drawn concerning the nature of the poème. For instance, the new piece, Paradoxe, in

the 1571 edition, belongs to the blason category, singing as it does the praise of hands (Lm. XV, p.309, ll.81-2). Changes to the 1578 edition accentuate the royal nature of the collection. A group of sonnets is devoted to the death of Charles IX ('Donque, entre les souspirs ...'; 'Comme une belle fleur qui commençoit à naistre ...'; 'Carolus in terris terrarum ...'; 'Nul ne devoit pleurer la mort d'un si bon Roy ...'; 'Si le grain de forment ne se pourrist en terre ...').

Ronsard's Poèmes hence constitute a fluctuating area. There is considerable migration in and out of the collections. The definition of 1587 seems to be an attempt to account in retrospect for a multifarious assortment of pieces; it ignores factors, such as metre, that played a part in the shaping of the 1560 edition. It does not account for important categories, such as that of the epistle-like poems. The various editions of the Poèmes harbour at different times almost all the sorts of poetry that Ronsard wrote. They are the hub of his work, a place through which pieces pass to have their identities clarified prior to their relegation to different genres. The concept of clearly defined genres does not apply to a work as long as it remains in the Poèmes: there, different species of composition may co-exist. Genres are mixed in this collection, rather as they are in the individual Alexandrian epyllion.

Yet it cannot be denied that Ronsard was haunted by the desire to find a category into which his epic fragments would fit. This urge underlies the preface of 1587. He realized that the poème in the sense of the miniature epic was an endemic feature of his work. In the editions of 1560 and 1569, he was already grouping together the rather similar forms of the blason and the mythological fragment, reaching out towards the

Latin concept of the poema as a segment of the epic poesis.

In the work of Jean-Antoine de Baïf, too, the poeme is an unstable category. It includes works that are moral or didactic; others written for specific occasions; official court poems; and epistles to personal friends, reminding one of Ronsard's letter-like compositions.¹ Like Ronsard, Baïf points to the variety of his nine books of poems, in an epistle to Charles IX, written as a general introduction to the Evures en rime of 1572-3 ('Au Roy', M-L. I, p.iii). He uses the image of 'vn jardinet / Planté diuersement'. For Baïf too, the poeme seems to have been a convenient general term for pieces of varied inspiration, the diversity of which could be evoked by means of an image drawn from nature. Yet Baïf appears, again like Ronsard, to have been groping towards a category that would fit the miniature epic: for all his epic fragments, with the exception of two poems which are in any case closer to the mythological fragment - Le Cyclope ou Polypheme amourevx and Pan (published as the eighth and ninth Eclogues of Baïf's Jevx, M-L. III, pp.45-56) - were classed by the poet as poemes. Both Baïf and Ronsard seem therefore to have been aware of the possibility of gathering together certain of their works by virtue of their subject-matter and fragmentary composition.

(2) THE ALEXANDRIAN BACKGROUND

Whilst remembering that epyllion is a modern label,

1. See Chamard, III, pp.174-5; and M. Quainton's edition of Baïf's Poems, p.141.

whereas poème was used in the sixteenth century, and indeed employed by the writers themselves in connection with their work, one observes certain broad similarities between the classical pieces and the sixteenth-century compositions. Both break down the traditional concepts of genre. Yet the affinities extend much further than this, especially as far as the Alexandrian, or Hellenistic, works are concerned. For the writers of Renaissance France held positions in society in some respects analogous to those held by the Alexandrians; and, with a conscious act of volition, they attempted to imitate specific Alexandrian poems, many of which were epyllia. The two bodies of writing are united by links both social and literary, unconscious and conscious. As a result, a survey of Alexandrian literature in both Greek and Latin helps to explain aspects of the later works.¹

The miniature epic gained ascendancy as an art form in the Alexandrian period, particularly under the reign of Ptolemy II Philadelphus (285 co-regent; sole regent 283 until 247 B.C.). At this time, Alexandria, with over three hundred thousand inhabitants, was the largest city in the world. Just as the French poets tend to write for a select audience, notably the court, so Alexandrian literature was composed for connoisseurs.²

1. On Alexandrian poetry, see: A. Couat, La Poésie alexandrine sous les trois premiers Ptolémées (324-222 av. J-C.); A. and M. Croiset, Histoire de la littérature grecque, V; A. Körte, Die hellenistische Dichtung; A. Lesky, A History of Greek Literature, pp.642-806; P.A.E.F. Legrand, La Poésie alexandrine; U. von Wilamowitz-Moellendorff, Hellenistische Dichtung in der Zeit des Kallimachos.

2. See R.R. Bolgar, The Classical Heritage and its Beneficiaries, p.20; and Leslie, p.111.

The Alexandrian writer had to please both the scholars based in the Library on the one hand, and the court on the other. This led to a cultivation of erudition, to a penchant for the obscure, to the exclusion of emotional outpourings.¹ Mythology gave to the Alexandrian poets the opportunity to construct a world dependent upon shared knowledge of the use of fable in the Ancients, upon the ability to understand passing references.

The Alexandrian poets did not, however, confine themselves to the writing of verse. They engaged in other pursuits, such as the gathering of scientific and geographical information, and the cataloguing of books.² One thinks of the sixteenth-century predilection for scientific themes, and of the manifold interests and activities of poets such as Baïf and Belleau. But the parallel must not be over-emphasized: the whole ancient conception of the poet changed in Alexandrian times, with poetry being divorced from celebrations of the state, and becoming an exercise of the intellect and a profession, rather than a calling demanding complete surrender of the self. One witnesses in the Renaissance an attempt at connecting the poet once again to the vates of Antiquity; so that, although the status of the sixteenth-century poet resembles that of the Alexandrian writer in practical terms, it diverges from it on the level of theory.

There is, nevertheless, an undoubted similarity between the awareness that poets such as Ronsard and Du Bellay have of writing with the weight of the past upon their shoulders, and the Alexandrians' realization of being late-comers.³ Their

1. See Lesky, p.700.

2. See Couat, p.69; and Croiset, V, p.157.

3. For reflections in the Argonautica of Apollonius' realization that he is an epigon, see Wilamowitz-Moellendorff, II, pp.217-18.

perception of this fact was sharpened by the careful collection of the works of the past in the Brucheum and Serapeum libraries in Alexandria. The Alexandrians, like the Renaissance writers, knew that they were treating old material, and that consequently refinement of form was all-important. The emphasis shifted from substance to technique. The Alexandrians had before them a vast amount of erudite material - numerous versions of the same legend, for instance - and were constantly choosing from this material the elements for their own works. They treated mythology with a certain critical reserve, and indeed sometimes with irony: hence their often humorous or frankly disrespectful handling of the gods and goddesses.

Perhaps aware of the vanity of attempts to copy the Iliad and the Odyssey in a different age and different civilization, most of the Alexandrian writers preferred to produce much shorter poems on mythological and heroic themes: generally narrative pieces in hexameters. These tended to resemble the elegy, and, unlike much Alexandrian poetry, were not didactic, but rather indulged in the telling of fable for its own sake. Many are no longer extant - the Hermes of Philetas of Cos is an example.¹ However, the subject-matter of some of these can be deduced from allusions in other authors, or from the occasional isolated section that has been preserved.

1. See R. Pfeiffer, 'The Future of Studies in the Field of Hellenistic Poetry', p.71. Philetas' Hermes told of Odysseus' intrigue with the Aeolid Polymele, and contained an account of the wanderings of the hero.

(a) The Callimachean School

(i) Callimachus

Callimachus was amongst the foremost figures of the Alexandrian age. He condemned attempts to produce a long epic, and is thought to have written the Hecale as a manifesto on the proper length and style of the mythological poem. The work survives only in fragmentary form, but told of Theseus' combat with the bull of Marathon, and of the death of Hecale, the old woman with whom he sheltered overnight. A long digression involving two birds centred on the advisability of informing the triumphant hero of Hecale's death, and narrated the tale of Erichthonius. It reflected the Alexandrian love of digression for its own sake, being largely irrelevant. A new slant was given to an old theme in the poem as a whole, for the story of the Marathonian bull was displaced from the centre of interest in favour of Theseus' stay with Hecale. Such shifts in perspective, one of the consequences of a critical awareness of ancient legends, are also typical of Alexandrian poetry.

(ii) Theocritus

Although born in Sicily, Theocritus met Callimachus in Alexandria, and endorsed his poetic principles. In the seventh Idyl, a goatherd reveals his hatred for builders who try to construct houses as high as the mountain of the Gigantes (compare the Odyssey, VII, 1.58), and for those birds who with their cackling try to vie with the Minstrel of Chios (Homer). The sense is that imitation of Homer and of his full-scale epics is a vain undertaking.

The poet of Syracuse included themes from great heroic

legends in his Idyls - which were probably first so called by some grammarian compiling an anthology of short poems by Theocritus.¹ The title of the collection reminds one of the sixteenth-century poëme, for the idyl (Greek eidyllion, 'little image') was virtually synonymous with 'a short poem'. In the plural, it was the title of a collection of poems by Ausonius.

Hylas and Heracles, the thirteenth Idyl, is one of the four poems by Theocritus that have been termed miniature epics. The shortest of the group, it is addressed to Nicias, the physician and poet, and tells how Hylas is dragged into a spring by naiads whilst filling his pitcher. The poem is linked to the Argonautic cycle, as it depicts the Argonauts landing at Propontis. It illustrates the powers of love, showing how Heracles wanders through many lands in search of Hylas. (The Alexandrians often adapt old legends in order to accentuate aspects of human love.) The piece was to inspire several renderings in the sixteenth century; these will be discussed in Chapter 2, pages 88 to 100.

Theocritus' twenty-second Idyl, The Dioscuri, was to be imitated by Ronsard in his Hymne de Pollux et de Castor. It again links up with the Argonautic legend, in that it depicts the Argo reaching the land of the Bebryces, and the crew, including Castor and Pollux, disembarking. It proceeds to narrate first the duel between Polydeuces and Amycus, after a sharp exchange of words between the two, and then Castor's fight with Lynceus, brother of Idas, and fiancé of one of the two girls who have been abducted by Castor and Pollux.² The moral

1. See Croiset, V, page 183 and note 2.

2. This is a deliberate inversion of the theme of the Iliad, being the theft of a pair of brides by Helen's brothers.

import of the poem is disturbing: Castor, who is in the wrong for having abducted a girl betrothed to someone else, is permitted to triumph over the brave Lynceus. Like the whole theme of the poem, this suggests an attempt to parody the epics of Antiquity. The moral ambivalence is present also in Ronsard's version.

Another feature of the poem that influenced Ronsard is the detail with which the first combat is evoked. The reader moves swiftly from one figure to another as the blows are exchanged, and takes in also the reaction of the onlookers.¹ Ronsard exploited the passage twice, first in the Hymne de Pollux et de Castor, then in the Franciade.

It has been suggested that in these two idyls on Argonautic themes, Theocritus was deliberately producing a new version of Apollonius.² Heracles becomes a pederast, rather than an epic hero; Polydeuces is no longer a demigod, but a cunning boxer, a modernized Alexandrian figure. The poet seems to parody not only Homer, but also the epic writers of his own time. Theocritus produces with these re-shaped characters brief vignettes in familiar style, omitting details that are not essential to his purpose (such as Heracles' breaking of his oar - which Ronsard, following Apollonius, includes).

Theocritus' other two epic idyls are not as important for the development of sixteenth-century poetry. Idyl XXIV, Heracliscus, or The Infant Heracles does, however, contain a

1. See Couat, p.406. Legrand suggests that the evocation of Amycus is based on a sculpture, as it is so vivid (pp.113-14).

2. See B. Otis, Virgil: A Study in Civilized Poetry, pp.13-15; also Appendix 3, especially p.399, p.401, and p.404. The question of priority - whether Apollonius antedated Theocritus here, or vice versa - has, however, still not been finally resolved.

prophecy, of the sort that was to occur frequently in the French miniature epic. Tiresias, the seer, foretells Heracles' future. The twenty-fifth Idyl, Heracles Leontophonus or Heracles the Lion-Killer, contains an account by Heracles of how he made his own club from a wild olive-tree that he pulled up complete with its roots; this anticipates the opening of Ronsard's Hylas (ll.145-80, Lm. XV, pp.240-2).

The eleventh Idyl, The Cyclops in Love, is of greater interest in the context of sixteenth-century poetry. The work, again addressed to Nicias, teaches that song is the only cure for love, and proceeds to tell the tale of the love-sick Cyclops, Polyphemus. Whereas in Homer the Cyclops is a formidable figure, he is here portrayed as forlorn rather than frightening - an excellent indication of the Alexandrian interest in romantic themes. Theocritus' Polyphemus is at once a comic and a pathetic figure. Comic, in the way he blames his misfortunes on his mother, who did not speak to Galatea on his behalf; comic in his wish that he might become a fish in order to follow his beloved. Pathetic, thanks to the very force of his hopeless passion, and to his realization that his dreams of an idyllic life with his beloved will never come true. The subject was remembered by Ovid in his Metamorphoses (XIII, ll.778-869). It also formed the basis, in combination with the Ovidian rendering, for poems by Ronsard, Baïf, and Magny - to name but the principal writers on the theme.

(iii) Moschus

Moschus, of Syracuse, composed a miniature epic, Europa, which, with its striking visual detail, was to inspire both Ronsard and Baïf. Twenty-five of the one hundred and sixty-six

hexameters describe Europa's basket, thus constituting an ekphrasis, common in the work of this school, as Chapter 3 will indicate (pp.146-7).¹ The evocation differs from many Alexandrian object descriptions in focusing upon one tale, that of Io, rather than on isolated pictures. The ekphrasis is the most highly developed in Alexandrian literature of this era (Catullus was later to take the process much further in Latin); yet the poem itself is the shortest of all the Hellenistic miniature epics except for Hylas.

(iv) Bion

Since the Renaissance, a poem called the Lament for Adonis has been attributed to Bion, of Phlossa near Smyrna, who is of a later period in Alexandrian poetry.² This complex, highly coloured piece, with its refrain repeated throughout with certain variations, appeared in most early editions of Theocritus' and Moschus' Idyls, beginning with the editio princeps (Milan, Accursio, c. 1493) and the Aldine (Venice, 1495-6). It inspired the Elegie ou chanson lamentable de Venus sur la mort du bel Adonis, by Melin de Saint-Gelais, which seems to be based on the Greek text; and it was imitated by Alamanni, L'Amomo, and Baïf.³

1. See T.B.L. Webster, From Mycenae to Homer: A Study in Early Greek Literature and Art, Chapter 8, 'Alexandrian Art and Alexandrian Poetry', pp.156-77. For a study of seven Latin versions of Moschus' poem (1530-84), see S. Bernardinello, 'Le traduzioni latine cinquecentesche dell' Europa di Mosco e la tradizione manoscritta greca'.

2. See Lesky, p.727.

3. Bion's poem provided details for Rosso's fresco in the Galerie François Premier at Fontainebleau, the Death of Adonis. See D. and E. Panovsky, 'The Iconography of the Galerie François Premier at Fontainebleau', pp.139-44.

Bion's refrain was used by Ronsard in L'Adonis (XII, pp.108-26). The Alexandrian poem impressed the French poets as a rhetorical expression of grief.

(b) Apollonius of Rhodes

Alongside the Callimachean school stood the writers of epic proper. Despite the argument of one critic to the contrary, it is doubtful whether the full-scale epic was as important as the mythological fragment.¹ Only segments exist of most of the epics written in the period.² But there is one outstanding figure, whose epic is still extant: Apollonius of Rhodes. Apollonius had a quarrel with Callimachus, doubtless partly on the subject of the appropriate length for mythological works: a quarrel recorded in literary history, but about which little is known with certainty. Apollonius apparently retreated to Rhodes as a result of the scorn poured upon him by Callimachus. He also seems to have taken passages from Callimachus' work and re-fashioned them in his own style, as a practical statement of his principles.

Apollonius composed an epic poem, the Argonautica, which was to prove an important storehouse of material for the poets of

1. K. Ziegler, Das hellenistische Epos: Ein vergessenes Kapitel griechischer Dichtung. Much of the argument for the importance of the epic in Alexandrian times is based on dubious parallels with historic events and the plastic arts (see especially pp.47-8), and on suppositions concerning lost works. Compare B. Otis, Virgil ..., Appendix 2, notably p.397.

2. Names connected with the epic are: Musaeus of Ephesus, who wrote a Perseid; Rhianus of Bene, who wrote a Heracleias and four tribal epics: Thessalica, Achaeica, Eliaca, and Messeniac. See G.L. Huxley: Greek Epic Poetry: From Eumelos to Panyassis.

sixteenth-century France. In writing his epic, he had to sift through the vast amount of material that had been accumulating since early Antiquity on the subject of the Argonauts' journey.¹ His poem aims at many points to display the erudition of the writer, and is the first to bring together into a coherent whole the various written reports on the voyage. Apollonius' attitude towards his material is often one of critical superiority, and, indeed, of irony.

A striking feature of the Argonautica is the skill with which emotions are depicted. Apollonius' portrait of the love-stricken Medea was to influence Ronsard's presentation of his two heroines in the Franciade. Love becomes a main theme of Apollonius' epic; Homeric terminology is subtly adapted to suit the novel romantic interest. Apollonius is also adept at rendering familiar scenes in touching detail. Much of his imagery was imitated by the Pléiade: examples will be seen in subsequent chapters. He reveals a predilection for seascapes, in which he shows a new sensitivity to colour that was to appeal to Catullus and the French poets. For instance, Ronsard at the close of the first book of the Franciade (ll.1216-20, Lm. XVI-1, p.90) will remember Apollonius in his evocation of the foam in the wake of Francus' ship. .

Both Ronsard and Baïf break down the Argonautica into fragments, thereby reverting to the Callimachean model, and clearly revealing their veneration of the poetic miniature. It must be admitted that Ronsard makes considerable use of Apollonius in what he intended to be his full-scale epic, the Franciade; but

1. See Couat, p.297, and Körte, pp.127-8.

apart from this, what appealed to the French poets was the vivid individual description, the isolated episode. One might compare this with Legrand's suggestion that the Alexandrians' taste for shorter works is connected with their love of the polished form:

Comment s'explique cette défiance à
l'égard du poème de longue haleine?
Elle est, chez les Alexandrins, une
manifestation de leur amour pour le
travail distingué et fini. Par sa
nature, l'oeuvre de longue haleine
est exposée (...) à certains incon-
vénients: la monotonie, les lenteurs,
les redites. (p.160)

This statement reminds one that the Alexandrians, and after them the sixteenth-century poets, were perhaps not simply daunted by the mightiness of classical Greek literature; their cultivation of short forms may have been the result of a positive choice. Certainly, they were able to concentrate upon the elaboration of details, the erudite allusion, the refinement of versification. One must guard against adopting a pejorative view of their aesthetic.

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(c) The revival of interest in the Alexandrians

Having established that the Renaissance poets imitated the Alexandrians, one wonders what accounts for the sudden growth of interest in Hellenistic works during this period.

The Italians had led the way in the attempt to find out more about the Alexandrians. Angelo Poliziano (Politian), for instance, had started from Latin poets, Catullus, Virgil, and Ovid, and had tried to discover their Greek models. He endeavoured to

reconstruct lost poems by Callimachus, and lectured on Theocritus.¹ The curiosity of such scholars led to the establishment of modern editions of the Alexandrian works; and these new editions in turn helped to spread the knowledge of this body of literature.

The hymns of Callimachus were brought to the attention of the public in a series of editions: in or around 1496; in 1513; in 1532; and in 1549, in a Parisian publication.² The Parisian version was used by Dorat and Ronsard.³ Even greater interest was shown in Theocritus, although there was some confusion as to which works were by him: pieces by Bion and Moschus were attributed to Theocritus. Ronsard and Henri Estienne did, however, contribute to the clarification of the question of authorship. The majority of the Idyls, which had already been published in Milan, 1480, were printed by Aldus Manutius in a collection of works, in Venice, 1495.⁴ Here poems now attributed to Bion or Moschus are printed as Theocritus' compositions. The Child Heracles and Heracles the Lionkiller, amongst others, are omitted. Another edition, published in Paris by Gilles de Gourmont, appeared in 1507 or 1508. The two Heracles idyls were incorporated in the Juntine edition printed in Florence, 1516, the text of which was established by Eufrosino Bonini. They were also contained in the Callièrgine edition printed in Rome, 1516; in two Venitian editions, of 1539 and 1543; in a Basle edition used by Denys

1. See Pfeiffer, page 69.

2. Details of these editions may be found in the catalogues of the British Library and the Bibliothèque Nationale.

3. See P. de Nolhac, Ronsard et l'humanisme, page 106, and note 4.

4. For the interest shown in Theocritus, see Nolhac, pp.101-3.

Lambin, and in a Parisian edition – to name but the most important. The large number of editions testifies to the growing interest shown in Theocritus by various European countries in the sixteenth century. The Idyls were soon translated into Latin. Both the Greek text and a Latin rendering were published between 1530 and 1531, in Basle. The Latin translation was republished in 1546, in Paris. The popularity of Theocritus, Bion, and Moschus was reinforced by Henri Estienne's translation into Latin of some of their poems (Venice, Aldus, 1555).

As far as Apollonius is concerned, the Argonautica had been published in Greek in Florence: the Bibliothèque Nationale has an edition dating from 1496. Another edition was published in Venice in 1521. The work was translated into Latin by Johann Hartung.¹ When considering Apollonius, therefore, one finds further proof that the works of the Alexandrians were, by the mid sixteenth century, becoming fairly widely available, in Greek, and in a Latin translation.

The teaching of Dorat played an important part in introducing many of the Pléiade poets to Alexandrian literature. Dorat, at the Collège de Coqueret, taught Greek literature above all, especially Pindar, Aeschylus, and Homer. But his particular preference seems to have been for the Alexandrians.² He lectured on even the most obscure of their number, such as Lycophron, whom he must have regarded as a challenge to his

1. See the bibliography, below, for full details of this translation.

2. Nollac comments on Dorat's predilection for the Alexandrians with unconcealed surprise (pp.85-6).

exegetical skills.¹ His pupils tended to place the Alexandrians on a par with Homer.² Under his influence, Guillaume Canter produced a Latin rendering of Lycophron, and prefixed his translation with some verses by his teacher, recommending his work.³ This, together with the other translations mentioned, is proof of the general revival of interest in the Alexandrian poets, of the wish to make accessible to a wider public the works edited just before or during the period under consideration.

(3) THE INFLUENCE OF LATIN LITERATURE

It was seen that Poliziano, so important in initiating the study of the Alexandrians, first approached them via the Latin poets. And indeed, the sixteenth-century writers probably shared this approach, being in general more fluent in Latin than in Greek, more familiar with Roman literature. They found in the Latin poets many traces of Alexandrian influence. For the Latin writers also cultivated the mythological and epic fragment, in emulation of the Hellenistic era, and as a means of repudiating the cruder Roman past. Very little is known of mythological poems dating from before Catullus, a poet of the late Republic.

1. Lycophron's presentation of Cassandra's oracular utterances doubtless appealed to Dorat, since, as Nollhac indicates, 'Dorat en était venu à avoir la réputation d'expliquer les prophéties et les oracles' (p.86, note 1). - Lycophron's work was published by A. Perexylus Arlenius and N. Gerbelius, Basle, Oporinus, 1546.

2. See A. Beaunier, 'Ronsard et l'antiquité'.

3. See Nollhac, p.90. Nollhac calls Canter 'un des meilleurs élèves de Dorat'. Lycophron was also translated into Latin by Bernard Bertrand and Joseph Scaliger.

But with the contemporaries of Catullus, one can see the main features of Latin Alexandrianism developing: a concern for artistic form; a love of erudition and mythological allusion; a taste for the portrayal of emotions; a mingling of realism and elaborate ornamentation.

(a) Catullus

The so-called Neoteric poets, a circle of writers around Valerius Cato, included G.L. Calvus, G.H. Cinna, and Quintus Cornificius. They composed mythological narratives, which seem to have included prophecies and descriptions of ornate objects.¹ But the earliest extant Latin epyllion is Catullus' sixty-fourth Carmen, The Marriage of Peleus and Thetis. In four hundred and eight hexameters, this shows the ship Argo breaking the silence of the sea, watched by astonished nymphs; the passion of Peleus and Thetis; the marriage. Much of the poem is taken up with a digression on Ariadne, whose tale is wrought on the coverlet of the bed which the whole of Thessaly comes to admire.² The work is eminently Alexandrian, with its erudite allusions, apostrophes, and tricks of style and rhythm. The emphasis is on emotions rather than action, a feature that renders the composition very different from the Homeric poems.³

Catullus must have made a particularly strong impression on the sixteenth century, thanks to the fact that he was not

1. See Crabbe, p.38.

2. On the thematic complexity of this poem, see G.W. Williams, The Nature of Roman Poetry, pp.49-50; and Richardson, pp.54-65.

3. See C.W. Mendell, Latin Poetry: The New Poets and the Augustans, pp.49-50.

known in the Middle Ages. His works had been lost until a single manuscript was either discovered in Verona itself, or brought there, at the start of the fourteenth century.¹ This mysteriously disappeared again, but not before at least two copies had been taken. The fifteenth century saw the first printed editions and commentaries. The prime French edition was printed in Lyon, probably in 1503, and was a counterfeit of the Aldine edition of 1502. In the mid century, interest was fostered by Marc-Antoine Muret's lectures, held in 1551 at the Collège du Cardinal Lemoine and the Collège de Boncourt in Paris, and by his edition of Catullus (1554; it was reprinted several times).

In the realm of prose, the wedding of Peleus and Thetis had been integrated by Lemaire de Belges into his Illustrations de Gaule, Book One, Chapters 28 and 29 (Stecher's edition, pp.200-20). However, Lemaire's treatment of the theme is very different from that of Catullus: the French writer omits the evocation of the scene on the coverlet, and instead dwells at length on the deities invited to the wedding, including Bacchus; on the flowers placed for the couple on Mount Pelion in Thessaly by Flora; on the songs of the four Sirens, the music of Pan, and the hymns of the Muses. In the domain of poetry, Catullus' hymn was translated into blank verse by Luigi Alamanni, early in his life.² It inspired a Latin paraphrase in the late sixteenth century: Panagii Salii ad Catulli Epithalamium Parodia (1589).

1. See M. Morrison, 'Ronsard and Catullus: The Influence of the Teaching of Marc-Antoine de Muret', pp.240-1; and 'Catullus in the Neo-Latin Poetry of France Before 1550', pp.365-6.

2. The translation was printed in 1888, following the manuscript of the Gambalunga Library, Rimini ('Per nozze Bonini-Gobbi'). See H. Hauvette, Un Exilé florentin à la cour de France au XVI^e siècle, Luigi Alamanni (1495-1556), sa vie et son oeuvre, pp.234-8.

It was employed in many epithalamia.¹ The wedding of Peleus and Thetis also forms the background to Ronsard's Le Ravissement de Cephale: Neptune dons his new cloak in order to attend the marriage. And many poets were to remember the picturesque scene of the nymphs surrounding the Argo, and of the waves, chopped by the oars, growing white with runnels of foam.²

Catullus' sixty-third hymn, Attis, was the basis for a complete poem by Ronsard: Le Pin (Lm. XV, pp.178-85). Attis is the only surviving work, either in Latin or Greek, to be written in galliambic verse. It tells of how Attis castrates himself in a frenzy of devotion to Cybele, then bitterly regrets what he has done. The last three lines constitute a return to the personal situation of the poet: he prays that he might be protected from such mad desires as those of Attis. At the end of his epic fragment, Ronsard similarly turns to his own status as a poet. In the poem as a whole, however, Ronsard blends Catullus with Ovid (Metamorphoses X, ll.103-5, and Fasti IV, ll.223-44).

(b) Virgil

Virgil and Cornelius Gallus inaugurated a second phase in the development of the Latin miniature epic. The Ciris has been attributed to Virgil, although it is more likely to be by an imitator. It contains an Alexandrian digression, centred on a girl who is the object of a love she does not return. But of

1. See Demerson, La Mythologie classique ..., p.537, note 82.

2. See Pontano, De Orpheo navigante, et post ad inferos pro uxore descendente, ll.9-16, fol. 89 recto; Baïf, L'Hippocrène, ll.107-11, M-L. II, p.64, and Pan, ll.42-4, III, p.52; Ronsard, 'A André Thevet', ll.25-30, Lm. X, pp.266-7.

greater importance for Renaissance poetry is the miniature epic in Book Four of the Georgics (ll.315-558), which links together the tales of Aristaeus and of Orpheus and Eurydice.¹ Like many of Callimachus' poems, the piece is aetiological, purporting to explain, in lofty tone, how bees can be born from the putrefying blood of a slain bullock (ll.281-6). Aristaeus, having lost all his bees by disease, is told by Cyrene, his mother, to consult Proteus. The latter reveals that Orpheus is the cause of the death of the bees: he is avenging the loss of Eurydice. One hears of Orpheus' descent to the Underworld. Then Cyrene tells Aristaeus of the sacrifice that will engender new bees. Various features here are typical of the epyllion: there is an ekphrasis of the underwater court and cave; there are long passages of direct speech. Whereas the Ariadne episode in Catullus' Peleus and Thetis is merely juxtaposed with the main body of the narrative, Virgil's tale of Orpheus and Eurydice is causally linked with the rest of the poem, and presented in oracular form. Stoa and Ronsard were to recall this section, and to share Virgil's respect for Orpheus, as indeed was Baïf in Les Muses.²

1. On the Ciris, see Mendell, pp.81-2. On the epyllion in the Georgics, see Crabbe, *passim*. .

2. Crabbe remarks:

Virgil himself is not Orpheus, does not have Orpheus within him, but aspires towards his poetic being. For Orpheus is the poet who achieves the impossible; he does enchant the woods and rivers; he does descend to Hades and bewitch the shades and their guardians; he does overcome the powers of death with his music. His failure is on a human level and not related to his poetic mastery. (p.342)

(c) Propertius

Propertius too contributed to the cult of the epic fragment: he wrote his own 'Hylas' (Odes, I. 20) in imitation of the idyl by Theocritus. A framework is provided by the poet's advice to his friend, Gallus: he warns the latter to keep a wary eye on his favourite boy. Once again, love is the main theme. The piece is remembered by the sixteenth-century poets, especially Ronsard, as Chapter 2 will indicate (see pp.88-100, and particularly p.98).

(d) Ovid

Ovid was of the same coterie of poets as Propertius. His Metamorphoses were extremely influential in Renaissance France. This work is like a series of miniature epics, diverse in nature and united by artificial transitions, but nevertheless woven into a perpetuum carmen. It belongs to the third phase of the Latin epic fragment. Ovid reveals an Alexandrian predilection for the love-story, and lends new form to old material. His narratives are dramatic, often containing direct speech - a feature that was to appeal to Baïf. They are colourful and dynamic.¹ Their structure reminds one of Callimachus' Aetia (a narrative elegy containing a series of aetiological legends of varying lengths).

Interest in Ovid was not new to the Renaissance. The Middle Ages had developed the idea that the Metamorphoses could be interpreted allegorically. The question of allegory has been thoroughly treated by J. Seznec, and it is not the purpose of this chapter to expand his survey. However, works of special

1. See S. Viarre, L'Image et la pensée dans les 'Métamorphoses' d'Ovide, pp.69-97.

note should be mentioned at this point because they testify to a sustained interest in Ovid. The anonymous Ovide moralisé dates from the end of the thirteenth or the beginning of the fourteenth century: the Metamorphoses are here interpreted in terms of Christian morality.¹ But allegorical readings of Ovid were still being published in the sixteenth century. The year 1509 saw the republication of the Metamorphosis Ovidiana moraliter a magistro Thoma Walleys (...) explanata, first printed in 1484. It was reprinted in Paris, 1511, 1515, and 1521, and in Lyon, 1513; there was also a French version entitled La Bible des poètes: the Bibliothèque Nationale has a copy dating from as late as 1531. The author of the Latin work, the Benedictine Pierre Bersuire, intended his book, written in the fourteenth century, to be the fifteenth in his Reductionum morale.² Petrus Lavinius also produced allegorical commentaries on the Ovidian myths, believing that Ovid's aim was to reform the hearts of men. An edition of his commentaries appeared in Lyon in 1510; there were further editions in 1517, 1519, and 1526.³ One work even tried to find in Ovid an exposition of the principles of alchemy; this was Le Grand Olympe ou philosophie poétique, composed in the first half of the sixteenth century.⁴

1. See J. Seznec, The Survival of the Pagan Gods: The Mythological Tradition and its Place in Renaissance Humanism and Art, pp.92-3.

2. See Seznec, pp.174-5; and D.C. Allen, Mysteriously Meant: The Rediscovery of Pagan Symbolism and Allegorical Interpretation in the Renaissance, Chapter 7, pp.163-99.

3. See the catalogues of the British Library and the Bibliothèque Nationale.

4. See Y. F-A. Giraud, La Fable de Daphné: Essai sur un type de métamorphose végétale dans la littérature et dans les arts jusqu'à la fin du XVIIe siècle, pp.189-90; and P. Kuntze, Le Grand Olympe: Eine alchemistische Deutung von Ovids Metamorphosen.

Yet the sixteenth century also saw a rapid growth in the number of translations of Ovid, indicative of a concern for the fables in themselves. Barthélemy Aneau translated Book Three of the Metamorphoses, although he accompanied his version (printed with a rendering of the first two books by Marot) with a proem concerning the problem of interpretation, and, in the Lyon edition of 1556, with marginal comments and allegorical explanations. Michel d'Amboise, Lazare de Baïf, Guillaume Bochetel, and Louis des Masures translated the Biblis and Caunus episode from Book Nine. The last three versions were published in 1550, 1548, and 1557 respectively.¹ (Des Masures seems to have imitated Bochetel rather than Ovid.) Jacques Colin translated Book Thirteen; and François Habert produced a rendering of the complete work (1556).²

Whereas the Middle Ages had been intensely interested in Ovid's views on love, the Renaissance was original in concentrating upon the Metamorphoses above all other works by Ovid.³ Poets in this period seem to have been fascinated by the theme of transformation, and by the sensuous details and rhetorical elaborations in which Ovid clothed his work. They freed the legends from the bonds of allegory. And they found in the

1. For the reference to D'Amboise's translation, see A. Leykauff, François Habert und seine Übersetzung der Metamorphosen Ovids, p.43. Leykauff deems it 'ziemlich weitschweifig und umständlich'. The imprimatur was issued 6 March 1532.

2. For further details of these translations, see the bibliography. On Habert, see Leykauff, p.120. R. Schevill, in Ovid and the Renaissance in Spain, lists Italian, French, and Spanish translations of the Metamorphoses, without claim to completeness, but with detailed bibliographical information (pp.236-50).

3. See D. Bush, Mythology and the Renaissance Tradition in English Poetry, p.75; and D. Stone, Jr., 'The Sixteenth Century and Antiquity: A Case Study'.

collection a host of tales capable of being detached from their context and treated separately.

(e) Valerius Flaccus

In the consideration of Alexandrian poetry, it was seen that alongside the Callimachean school stood Apollonius of Rhodes, the representative of the epic tradition. Similarly, in Latin literature, one finds an epic on the Argonautic legend which incorporates, despite the fact that it is incomplete, aesthetic principles entirely different from those underlying the mythological miniatures. This is Valerius Flaccus' Argonautica, composed in the course of the decade A.D. 70 to A.D. 80, and constituting a free rendering of Apollonius' story. Like the epic of Apollonius, this exercised considerable influence over the French poets. They turned above all to the tale of Hercules and Hylas, in Books Three and Four; to the combat between Pollux and Amycus, the routing of the Harpies by the sons of Boreas, and the episode of the Cyanean Rocks, in Book Four. Their interest is likely to have been stimulated by Gervasius Amoenus' edition of the Argonautica, Paris, Ascensius, 1512, republished in 1517 and 1519.

(4) HUMOUR IN THE MINIATURE EPIC

The miniature epic in both Greek and Latin also embraced humorous elements: a fact that Ronsard in particular was to exploit, in poems such as La Grenouille (Lm. VI, pp.83-9) and Le Satyre (XV, pp.67-76).

The Batrachomyomachia, a pseudo-Homeric poem, is a parody of the warlike epic. It portrays the gods, at first deciding not to take part in the battle between the mice and the frogs, for fear of being wounded: a vision far from the Homeric presentation of the deities. But finally Zeus puts an end to the strife by hurling his proverbial thunderbolts and sending an army of humble crabs to rout the mice. Although this mock epic did not inspire any creative imitations in the sixteenth century, it was translated, into both Latin and French.¹ Perhaps the liveliest rendering was Antoine Macault's Le Grand Combat des rats et des grenouilles of 1540, in Alexandrine couplets. It contains comic versions of the Greek names of the animals, and colourful dialogue.

In Latin poetry, one has the Culex, once thought to be an early work of Virgil, but now ascribed to a later period. The poem tells how a sleeping goatherd is approached by a serpent. As the latter is about to bite him, the goatherd is awakened by a gnat, which saves his life by stinging him in the eye. The poor gnat is crushed as the goatherd starts up to strike the serpent, and later appears to the goatherd in a dream, lamenting its fate and depicting the Underworld in a long digression.² The appearance of the ghost of the gnat parodies the apparition of Patroclus to Achilles (Iliad, XXIII, ll. 65-92). The time of day is set with epic pomp; the spot where the goatherd strikes the snake with a branch is described in Homeric detail. The account of the Underworld is a playful reminiscence of Book Six

1. See the catalogues of the British Library and the Bibliothèque Nationale.

2. See Mendell, pp.77-81; E. Fraenkel, 'The Culex'; and C. Plésent, Le Culex: Etude sur l'Alexandrinisme latin. Plésent tends to take the poem too seriously.

of the Aeneid. Lines 268 to 296 are devoted to Orpheus and Eurydice, reminding one of the Aristaeus epyllion. This is a Latin counterpart of the Batrachomyomachia.¹

The Culex was probably remembered by Lemaire de Belges, when he came to write, in the autumn of 1505, his Seconde Epître de l'Amant vert. Here, the parrot who was killed by a dog in the first epistle descends to the Underworld, and is led by Mercury through the hell where animals reside. Then he is admitted to the animal paradise, where he finds 'L'Esprit vermeil', another parrot who has met a tragic death. The Latin poem seems also to have inspired a little piece by J. Jaquemot, 'De Culice Globulo succinosius Electro incluso'. Such examples indicate that the sixteenth century perceived how the traditional epic lent itself to parody.

(5) THE IMPORTANCE OF THE FULL-SCALE EPIC

The fact that the Argonautica of Apollonius of Rhodes and of Valerius Flaccus demand recognition alongside the miniature epics of Antiquity as important influences on the sixteenth century has already been observed. However, other epics also had a role to play. The Iliad and the Odyssey, as archetypes

1. Statius draws a parallel between the Batrachomyomachia and the Culex, in an attempt to justify the light-hearted nature of his own work:

et Culicem legimus et Batrachomachiam
etiam agnoscimus, nec quisquam est
inlustrium poetarum qui non aliquid
operibus suis stilo remissiore prae-
luserit. (Silvae, introduction to
Book One, 'Statius Stellae suo salutem')

of two different sorts of epic, were much exploited.¹ But it is with the Aeneid of Virgil that the affinities are the most apparent.² Virgil, like the poets of Renaissance France, was engaged in the process of imitation, transferring the riches of Greek literature to his own tongue. He was also fulfilling patriotic aims, by glorifying the age of Augustus, introducing glimpses of contemporary conditions by devices such as prophecy.³ His dynastic principle, as well as episodes such as the tragic love of Dido, influenced Ronsard's conception of the Franciade. Ronsard expresses his admiration for Virgil in the second preface to his poem (Lm. XVI-2, pp.338-9). His work abounds in Virgilian reminiscences. In other poets, the influence of the Latin writer is to be found in individual images and set pieces, such as descriptions of tempests, rather than in the subject-matter of whole poems.

But the Renaissance writers do not confine their interest in the epic to classical models. They are also attracted to Ariosto's Orlando Furioso.⁴ Ariosto's poem was first published in forty cantos in Ferrara, 1516; the definitive edition in forty-six cantos was printed in 1532. By the time the Pléiade

1. See Nolhac, pp.124-9, for Ronsard's knowledge of Homer.

2. See A. Hulubei, 'Virgile en France au seizième siècle: Editions, traductions, imitations'.

3. See H. Bardon, Les Empereurs et les lettres latines d'Auguste à Hadrien, p.73; and E.S. Shuckburgh, Augustus: The Life and Times of the Founder of the Roman Empire (B.C. 63 - A.D. 14), pp.284-5.

4. See Cameron; Cioranescu, L'Arioste en France ...; and Vianey.

Ariosto's Orlando Furioso was crudely translated into French prose by Jean Martin, and published in Lyon in 1543, edited by Jean des Gouttes.

poets were starting to produce their major works, Ariosto's fame had already spread. Ariosto's purpose, although it is often lost from sight, is to praise the Este court; in this respect, he anticipates Ronsard's Franciade. And indeed, Ronsard borrows from Orlando Furioso at many points, in spite of his criticism of Ariosto in the first preface to the Franciade (Lm. XVI-1, p.4). Again, Baïf in La Geneure (M-L. II, pp.231-60), continuing a translation by Melin de Saint-Gelais, recounts the tale found in Orlando IV. 51 to VI. 61; and in Fleurdepine (M-L. II, pp.261-72), he adapts another extract: XXV. 24 to XXV. 69.¹ In general, the French poets seem to have found the romantic chivalry of the Italian epic particularly appealing, although its basic construction was the very antithesis of that of the epics of Antiquity.² Peletier du Mans recommended to the prospective epic poet the study of the Old French romans de chevalerie, and actually mentioned Ariosto as an example of a writer who had used such sources.³

Despite the interest displayed in the epic fragment, in fact, the sixteenth century is undoubtedly haunted by the desire to write a full-scale epic. Several poets refer to their plans to compose such a work: thus both in his Art poétique and in L'Amour des Amours. Vers liriques. Ode à Madame Marguerite, Peletier mentions his vain attempt to construct an epic around

1. Ariosto's Guinevere also figured in a poem by Claude de Taillemont, published in 1556: Conte de l'Infante Geniéure fig'le du Roy d'Ecosse pris d'ú furieus

2. See Bénac.

3. L'Art poétique de Jacques Peletier du Mans (1555), edited by A. Boulanger, II. 8, p.201.

the Hercules legend.¹ He would have written such a work, had he had adequate time, talent, inspiration, and 'fortune'.

Contemporary poetic theory also accords a major place to the epic.² The first critic to raise the question of the heroic poem in this period was Thomas Sebillet, in his Art Poétique François pour l'instruction des jeunes studieux et encore peu avancez en la poésie françoise. However, Sebillet does not devote much attention to the matter; he treats it in Book Two, Chapter 14, under the heading 'De la Version' - thereby relegating it to a minor position. Regretting the dearth of original works, the excessive amount of straightforward translation being undertaken, he nevertheless recommends imitation of Homer, Virgil, and the Roman de la Rose.³

Du Bellay, doubtless wishing to express the ideas of the nascent Pléiade on a subject treated by an opponent, devotes a chapter of the Deffence et Illustration de la langue francoyse to the topic of the epic: 'Du long poëme francoys' (II. 5). He realizes that a modern French epic would contribute greatly to the enrichment of the French language.⁴ He begs:

choysi moi quelque un de ces beaux vieulx
romans francoys, comme un Lancelot, un
Tristan, ou autres: et en fay renaitre au
monde un admirable Iliade et laborieuse
Eneïde. (Ed. Chamard, pp.235-6)

Du Bellay stresses that such a work would demand long preparation

1. See the Art poétique, I. 3, p.86; and, for the Ode, the 1555 Lyon edition, published by J. de Tournes, pp.120-1.

2. See Hagiwara, and Cioranescu, 'La Pléiade et le poème épique'.

3. Art Poétique François, edited by F. Gaiffe, p.187.

4. See B. Weinberg, Critical Prefaces of the French Renaissance, pp.21-2.

(p.238), and acknowledges that contemporary conditions are not perfect, since there are no longer generous patrons such as those Virgil had. Nevertheless, he encourages poets to undertake the composition of an epic, trusting to posterity. But he gives few precise instructions regarding the form and style of the epic. The chapter may well reflect Ronsard's aspiration to sing the glory of the French nation, since the Deffence is known to have resulted from discussions between Du Bellay and Ronsard.

Peletier too holds in high regard 'l'oeuvre heroïque', which he discusses in greater detail than his predecessors.¹ Comparing other poetic genres to streams, he calls the epic an ocean, and 'une forme e image d'Vniuers' (p.194), doubtless alluding to the idea that the writers of epic had embodied in their work a veritable encyclopaedia of knowledge.² Peletier gives certain concrete precepts: the poet should begin with an invocation to the Muses. His tone should be natural and modest, rather than bombastic; he should start in medias res, whilst making clear the plan that the poem will follow. Peletier advocates the insertion of allusions to philosophy and science, referring to the Aeneid as an example. He stresses that the poet should not adhere with excessive faithfulness to historical fact, and thus anticipates Ronsard's distinction between historian and

1. II. 8, 'De l'Euvre Heroïque'. See E. Egger, L'Hellénisme en France, I, Leçon 17, 'L'Epopée française au seizième siècle', p.397. Egger shows that Peletier virtually limits the subject-matter of the heroic work to 'les exploits de guerriers', and that he bases his theory on Virgil.

2. See T.C. Cave, 'Copia and Cornucopia', p.58. Peletier's ocean-image is derived from Quintilian, Institutio oratoria, X. 1. 46. Quintilian uses it of Homer: the Greek writer, providing as he does examples of every sort of eloquence, is like his own conception of the ocean, source of all streams and rivers.

poet in both the 'Au Lecteur' to the 1572 edition of the Franciade (Lm. XVI-1, p.4), and the posthumous 'Preface svr la Franciade' (XVI-2, pp.336-7).¹ However, Peletier has little to say about epic style, although he does make some comments on Virgil's techniques.

J.C. Scaliger's Poetices libri septem were published posthumously in 1561, but had probably been circulating amongst his humanist friends for some time before that date. They introduced much Aristotelian thought into French critical theory.² Although Scaliger limits his study to Greek, Latin, and Neo-Latin works, he does consider the epic, comparing various of its aspects with those of tragedy: unity of action, consistency of characterization, vraisemblance. He places the epic above tragedy by virtue of the fact that it is a mixed form, containing a great variety of material. It is third in rank after, first, the summit of achievement, the hymn and paeon, and, secondly, the mele, ode, and scholia.³ Scaliger devotes Chapter 96 of Book Three to the laws governing epic poetry.⁴ He rejects the Horatian precept that the poet should begin ab ovo; rather, he should start 'ab illustrare'. Warning against the dangers of tedious repetition, Scaliger recommends that the reader be kept in suspense. He also advises the poet to divide his work into chapters and sections, 'naturae imitatione'. In this chapter as elsewhere, Scaliger reveals his

1. Compare also Aristotle's distinction - commented upon at length by the Italians - between poetry, which treats 'universals', and history, which deals with 'singulars' (Aristotle, On the Art of Poetry, translated by I. Bywater, p.43).

2. See J.E. Spingarn, A History of Literary Criticism in the Renaissance, pp.141-2.

3. I. 3, 'Poematum per modos diuisio, et eorum ordo', p.6, col.2.

4. See p.144, columns 1 and 2.

admiration for Virgil: he proposes the Latin poet as the model one should imitate when introducing subsidiary episodes into one's work. The long third chapter of Book Five, 'Homeri et Virgilii Loca', compares specific passages by Homer and Virgil, and concludes that the latter is superior. Amongst the extracts Scaliger discusses are the tempest scenes from the Aeneid, which were to be employed by Ronsard in his Franciade. Scaliger had more to say about matters of style than some of the earlier theorists. He also gave catalogues of similes used by Greek and Latin writers: these were, potentially, a rich source of material for any aspiring epic poet (V. 18). Unfortunately, the scope of his work was limited by his failure to discuss vernacular literature.

It becomes clear from a consideration of these theoretical works that the epic was a highly respected genre, deemed worthy of imitation, but also hedged around by awe. The rising tide of nationalism was an important factor in the desire to create an epic on a par with those of Greece and Rome, and was to be a motive force behind Ronsard's composition of the Franciade. However, many of the pronouncements remained vague, perhaps because most of the critics did not try to put their theories into practice; and there was little discussion of whether the heroic spirit of Antiquity really could be revived. Du Bellay alone seems aware of the difficulties caused by the radical change in cultural conditions. Significantly, too, the theorists concentrate upon individual episodes rather than on the overall structure of the epic. Their views are more suitable for the epic fragment than for the full-scale heroic work.

The tension between the epic miniature and the extended work was already present in the classical literature with which the sixteenth-century poets were acquainted. On the one hand were the little heroic and mythological poems that proliferated in Alexandrian times, and which were imitated by the Latin writers frequently read in the Renaissance. Ovid's Metamorphoses, so often commented on and translated in the sixteenth century, can in fact be seen as a vast collection of pieces in Alexandrian style. Yet on the other hand stood the writers of epic: Homer and Virgil, of course, but also Apollonius of Rhodes and Valerius Flaccus, who represented the urge to compose a large-scale work even when other poets were content with miniatures.

This dichotomy was a feature of the sixteenth century too. The example of Ariosto had shown that an epic could still be written - albeit one different from the classical type. The theorists longed to see the creation of an epic that would constitute the pinnacle of poetic achievement and prove that France could stand comparison with Greece and Rome. Yet their few practical statements showed that they thought more readily in terms of the small work, the isolated episode. And until Ronsard published the Franciade in 1572, the productivity of the sixteenth-century poets in the realm of secular themes was confined to the heroic and the mythological fragment, a fragment incorporating original as well as imitated elements, as the next chapter will indicate, but on a much smaller scale than the epic of which they dreamed.

CHAPTER TWO

THE THEMES OF THE SIXTEENTH-CENTURY FRAGMENTS

Chapter 1 surveyed the works of Antiquity that the sixteenth-century poets are likely to have known and imitated. The present chapter aims to highlight the principles of selection applied by the French poets when faced with this corpus of material.

In the first section of this chapter, both epic and mythological fragments will be very briefly considered: for, as indicated in the introduction, it is difficult completely to separate the epic fragment from the short mythological narrative; and the two types of poem will serve as illustrations for points made in Chapters 3 and 4. The purpose of this examination will be to discover which types of story the sixteenth century preferred. It is not intended to give a detailed description of the poems mentioned, but simply to arrange them in categories, to chart the terrain of the Renaissance fragment rather as Chapter 1 surveyed the classical works. Further details may be found in the bibliography.

Against the backcloth of the narrative types favoured by the sixteenth century, the second section, the focal point of the chapter, will examine poems on the Argonautic legend. The Argonautic material has been selected for consideration thanks to its essentially epic nature. Whereas many sixteenth-century fragments - those derived from the Metamorphoses, for instance - are taken from a work in which the connection between episodes is often tenuous, and from which it is easy to detach tales, the Argonautic poems generally come from a continuous narrative, from the epics of Apollonius of Rhodes and Valerius Flaccus.

The poets of the Renaissance are selecting single events from works informed by an epic purpose. The Argonautic pieces therefore demonstrate more clearly than many other mythological narratives produced in the period their personal approach to the aesthetics of fragmentation, their awareness of the problems involved in taking simply one episode from works in which each stage in the action is to some extent dependent upon and explained by surrounding passages.

The Argonautic poems form a fairly compact whole and are typical, in structural and rhetorical terms, of many other pieces produced in the sixteenth century. It will be suggested that in them, motifs from the Argonautic cycle can assume new life, often reflecting the writer's own preoccupations, inspiring one poet of the Renaissance to imitate another, and sometimes being completely re-shaped. At certain points in the second section, structural and thematic considerations will overlap: this is notably true of the survey of Ronsard's two Argonautic hymns, which form the climax of the chapter - in fact explicitly anticipating issues raised in Chapter 3 - and which illustrate how traditional material has become part of a new poetic micro-cosm, with its own parallels and contrasts, with a constant tension between symmetry and imbalance. •

There is a further reason for concentrating upon the Argonautic legend. As will be seen below (pp.80-6), it had, by the mid sixteenth century, come to represent the aspirations of the French nation; and, in its link with patriotism, it anticipates the Franciade. It is more closely connected than other contemporary narrative poems to an epic purpose. A survey of the main themes of these other poems should make the point clear.

(1) THE DOMINANT THEMES

Before endeavouring to isolate different narrative strands, one should remember that a characteristic feature of many late mediaeval and Renaissance compositions is their attempt to weave together as many legendary threads as possible, drawn from as many different sources as possible: these works are in some ways comparable with Ovid's Metamorphoses. Typical in this respect are Boccaccio's Genealogia deorum gentilium (first published in 1472, but printed in French in 1531) and Lemaire de Belges's Illustrations de Gaule et Singularitez de Troye (1510-13). Whereas the aim of this section is to separate out certain themes, such works attempt to produce an amalgam of them. Yet there is a relationship between these compositions and the epic fragment: the former are often discontinuous, having flimsy transitions between one episode and another, whereas some fragments bear traces of their former context. Once again, one has an interplay of the encyclopaedic and episodic urges mentioned in Chapter 1 (pp.18-19); and whilst one must beware of thinking that the sixteenth-century writers considered themes treated in individual poems as completely independent one of another, one is encouraged by the episodic nature of their compendia to begin by classifying dominant motifs.

(a) Myths of transformation and ravishment

(i) Transformation

As indicated in the previous chapter, the poets of sixteenth-century France extracted from Ovid's Metamorphoses many poems recounting a transformation. It is tempting to speculate as to

why they were attracted to metamorphosis as a theme: did it express their preoccupation with instability and change? or did it on the other hand enable them to explore the concept of immortality, to develop the belief that some forms of existence can transcend death?¹ It seems safest to conclude that they favoured the motif because it enabled them to tell a colourful story presenting the occasional burlesque element and, in many cases, dramatic passages of direct speech.

Many poets imitated transformation episodes from Ovid. Pontus de Tyard, who is called by J.C. Lapp 'le vrai poète des métamorphoses', produced an ode, Les Grenouilles, derived from the Metamorphoses VI, ll.339-81, telling how Latona causes some vulgar peasants to be turned into frogs.² Jean-Antoine de Baïf composed several paraphrases of the Latin poet: Salmaci (from Metamorphoses IV, ll.285-389); L'Amour de Medee (from Metamorphoses VII, ll.5-99); Atalante (from Metamorphoses X, ll.560-704 - a passage also remembered by Bereau in L'Histoire d'Hippomene et d'Atalante); and Amour de Vertun et Pomone (Metamorphoses XIV, ll.623-94 and 761-71).³

Some transformation tales from the Metamorphoses attracted more attention than others. The story of Apollo and Daphne had already been employed by Lemaire de Belges in his passage on Paris' pursuit of Oenone.⁴ It formed the basis for Le Laurier

1. See Demerson, 'Poétiques de la métamorphose à la Renaissance'.

2. See Lapp's edition of Pontus's Oeuvres poétiques complètes, p.xli, and pp.202-7.

3. See W.L. Wiley, 'Antoine de Baïf and the Ovidian Love-Tale'.

4. Les Illustrations de Gaule et Singularitez de Troye, Stecher's edition, I, pp.165-75. See H. Gmelin, 'Das Prinzip der Imitatio in den romanischen Literaturen der Renaissance'.

of Baïf and for La Jessée's Metamorphose de la nymphe Fvgeres, ditte Fugueros, which owes much to Baïf, as well as to Ovid.¹

The transformation of Narcissus, with the connected tale of Echo, inspired a cluster of poems.² These include Luigi Alamanni's lengthy Favola di Narcisso, which was imitated by Belleforest in La Fable de Narcisse, et Eolio; Habert's La Fable du beau Narcissus amoureux de sa beaulté, dont il mourut (a compressed version of the Ovidian material); the Description poetique de l'histoire du beau Narcissus, which has been variously ascribed to Jean Bourdel, Habert, and Jean Rus; Ronsard's Le Narssis, which condenses, expands, and re-shapes Ovid all at once; and Vauquelin de la Fresnaie's eighth Foresterie, which focuses on Echo, and contains reminiscences of Baïf and Ronsard. Many poets were also attracted to the tale of Pyramus and Thisbe, as narrated by Ovid in the Metamorphoses, IV, ll.55-166. Their interest in this episode was nothing new; for there was an Old French version of the tale, which some of the sixteenth-century poets consulted.³ Two early interpretations of the story are moralistic: the first is by Habert, published in La Jeunesse du Banny de lyesse, escollier, estudiant à Tholose ... in 1541, and influenced by Le Grand Olympe des histoires poétiques du prince de poésie Ovide Naso en sa Métamorphose; the second is Baïf's Le Meurier, ov La Fable de Pyrame et Thisbe. Later in the century, Guillaume Belliard's poem, Les Tragiques Amours de Pirame et

1. See Giraud; and W. Stechow, Apollo und Daphne.

2. See L. Vinge, The Narcissus Theme in Western European Literature up to the Early Nineteenth Century.

3. It is reproduced by C. de Boer: Pyrame et Thisbé: Texte normand du XIIe siècle. See Bush, page 50.

Tysbé, prises d'Ovide, again displays didactic aims, but also a search for psychological consistency. These three poets seem to have had recourse to mediaeval renderings of Ovid's account. However, the elaborations in L'Amomo's Favola di Pyramo e Thysbe a Madonna Olymphia, published in 1535, are peculiar to the Italian poet, consisting largely of images. They are recalled by La Roque in Les Amours de Pirame et Tisbee, published in 1597. A study of this group of poems thus reveals how interest in the Ovidian tale was maintained throughout the sixteenth century, and how the poets frequently had recourse to mediaeval and contemporary sources, as well as to the Latin poet.

Not all the transformation-poems produced in this period were derived from Ovid. For three writers composed, at different dates, a group of poems centred on the metamorphosis of nymphs into willows. The seminal influence was exercised by Sannazaro's Salices, published in 1526.¹ Marguerite de Navarre used Sannazaro's composition in her Fable du faulx cuyder, printed in 1543.² However, whereas Sannazaro never pauses to moralize, Marguerite's piece is composed with religious aims in mind. Her satyrs are more evil than Sannazaro's, and plan in advance to ravish the nymphs; her nymphs are consecrated to Diana, a fact that makes their blindness the more serious. The transformation itself assumes a symbolical meaning; and 'cuyder' becomes a leitmotif.³ Marguerite's poem was almost certainly remembered by Scève when

1. It was republished in several other editions, notably the Lyon version of 1547: the year in which Scève's Saulsaye was printed.

— On the Salices, see Giraud, pp.210-11.

2. See A. Hulubei, L'Eglogue en France au XVIe siècle: Epoque des Valois (1515-1589), pp.270-1.

3. See R. Lebègue, 'Le Cuyder avant Montaigne et dans les Essais'.

he composed his Saulsaye, Eglogue de la vie solitaire, printed in 1547. Scève had written introductory sonnets and a postscript for the two 1547 editions of Marguerite's work.¹ An engraving already used to illustrate Marguerite's poem, in J. de Tournes's edition of La Suyte des Marguerites de la Marguerite des Princesses, was also printed along with Scève's text.² However, the main source is Sannazaro. The poem, which differs from the other two in that the mythological narrative is not the sole focal point, will be examined in Chapter 3 (see pp.137-41).

(ii) Ravishment

Although fewer in number, poems were also composed on the subject of the abduction of a nymph. The chief source was Ovid. In the Metamorphoses VI, ll.675-721, the Latin poet had told the story of Boreas and Orithyia. This inspired G.B. Pigna's 'Pity's', from the Satyrae; and B. Tagault's 1151-line poem, Le Ravissement d'Orithye, which will be discussed in Chapters 3 and 4. Other poets were inspired by different Ovidian episodes. Ronsard produced La Defloration de Lede à Cassandre, and Baïf Le Ravissement d'Europe, which were influenced by Moschus' second idyl, as well as by the close of Book Two of the Metamorphoses.³ Ronsard also wrote Le Ravissement de Cephale, divisé en trois poses, derived in part from the Metamorphoses VII, ll.690-862. Magny placed in his ode 'A Madame Soeur du Roy'

1. See Giraud, p.213.

2. See M. Françon's edition of the Saulsaye, p.86 and p.166.

3. See A. Lombard, Un Mythe dans la poésie et dans l'art: L'Enlèvement d'Europe, especially Chapter 3, pp.34-50, and Appendix 2, pp.117-25 (Neuchâtel edition).

a version of the tale of Pluto and Proserpine, from the Metamorphoses, V, ll.385-538. The first part of La Péruse's Ode à I. Boiceau was inspired by Ovid's numerous accounts of Jupiter's escapades with various nymphs.

(b) Aetiological myths

Certain Ovidian episodes use transformation as a means of elucidating, in humorous rather than strictly scientific manner, the origin of a natural phenomenon, such as a tree or plant. This aspect of the Metamorphoses also appealed to the French poets. Inspired by Ovid's example, they scrutinized objects around them, and produced aetiological myths of their own.

A good illustration is provided by the Amours et nouveaux échanges des pierres précieuses of Remy Belleau. In various poems from this collection, Belleau invents a myth to show how certain precious stones were created. L'Onyxe, derived from a terse indication in Pliny, Naturalis Historia, 37. 24 ('Sudines dicit in gemma esse candorem unguis humani similitudine ...'), and L'Agathe. A Mademoyselle de Surgères, both feature Venus. The latter poem contains a secondary narrative (ll.115-44, Verdier's edition, pp.181-2) derived from pseudo-Orpheus, of a kind that will be examined in Chapter 3. More typical of Belleau, however, are aetiological myths telling of a metamorphosis and focusing on a pair of lovers.¹ Les Amours d'Hyacinthe et de Chrysolithe, Les Amours d'Iris et d'Opalle, and L'Améthyste,

1. Compare Belleau's introduction to the 1576 edition of the Pierres précieuses (Verdier, pp.4-5). See also R. Besser, Das Verhältnis von Remy Belleaus Steingedicht (...) zu den früheren Steinbüchern und den sonstigen Quellen, p.18.

ou les Amours de Bacchus et d'Améthyste belong to this category, and involve the creation of new mythological personages.

The French poets also reveal a predilection for stories in which nymphs become flowing water. They use them to point to the origin of rivers or springs. G.B. Pigna's Satyrae contain many such metamorphosis pieces (see especially 'Nymphae', ll.147-9, p.141). Le Duchat's 'Satyrus', in Praeludiorum Liber I (1554), tells of a triple transformation. But most interesting is the group of poems written to celebrate a spring in the territory of Jean Brinon, a spring around which the poets of the Pléiade must often have gathered.¹ The poems are: Dorat's Villanis, a witty piece telling of a nymph who awakens the desires of Pan; Le Duchat's 'Villanidi Nimphae, et fontis Brinonio', which is closely linked to the tale of Aymone; and Baïf's Medanis, written in Greek and followed by a Latin rendering. Clearly, these works must have been the result of some prior arrangement between the poets to treat the same material: the prefatory and concluding remarks of Dorat and Le Duchat, with their reference to the other writers, indicate this.

A completely different aetiological poem, on the other hand, seems to have remained isolated, by virtue of its subject-matter, from other contemporary productions. This is Baïf's L'Hippocrene, which describes how the spring on Mount Parnassus was created. Baïf consciously tried to produce an epic fragment on a subject that had not been fully treated by any other poet. The numerous episodes in his poem owe much to contemporaneous mythographers.

1. See J. Pichon, 'Mélanges historiques et littéraires: Mémoire pour servir à l'histoire du village et de l'ancienne seigneurie de Medan, près Poissy', especially pages 12 to 14.

(c) Amorous exploits

Several amorous themes were exploited by the French poets as a means of suggesting a parallel with their own experiences and emotions. Some poems concentrate on the suffering that love brings; others see its more light-hearted aspects. They differ from the ravishment pieces in the way they place more emphasis upon the feelings of the lovers than upon action. The two sorts of composition cannot, however, be completely separated from each other: Ronsard, for instance, uses La Defloration de Lede as a means of suggesting to Cassandra the ardour he himself feels.

(i) Venus and Adonis

The ill-starred love of Venus and Adonis was a favourite theme of the sixteenth-century writers. For some it represented the tragedy of love, the ephemerality of human life. Others seized upon its more burlesque aspects. The poems may be subdivided according to the ancient sources employed.

Bion's Lament for Adonis inspired many renderings. It was utilized by Alamanni in his tenth eclogue (see Chapter 3, pages 136 to 137). It was also imitated by L'Amomo, who attributed it to Theocritus. His Epitaphio di Adone di Theocrito transposes Bion's first idyl into an even more mannered setting, and focuses on the tragedy of Venus. It was probably remembered by Ronsard. Melin de Saint-Gelais's Elegie ou chanson lamentable de Venus sur la mort du bel Adonis achieved great popularity, being reprinted by Antoine du Moulin under the title Deploration de Venuis svr la mort dv bel Adonis in 1545, 1547, 1548, and 1554, and translated into Latin verse by J. Salmon Macrin.

Other poems were inspired by pseudo-Theocritus, Idyl XXX. They include Pernette Du Guillet's Conde claros de Adonis, which

was printed in Du Moulin's collection of songs after Saint-Gelais's Deploration with the heading 'Suite à ladicte fable prise de l'espagnol' (although if there is indeed a Spanish source for the poem, it is not known).¹ Du Guillet introduces a note of gaiety into the tale. Salmon Macrin's Adonis Theocriti, ex Gallico Sangelasij, has been influenced by the thirtieth idyl, as well as by Saint-Gelais's song. The idyl is, again, fairly faithfully rendered by Jean de Vitel, in his 'Autre imitation du 31. Idylle de Theocrite'.

Ovid's rendering of the legend (Metamorphoses X, 11.503-739) was also influential. It inspired Jean Passerat's Adonis, ou la Chasse du Sanglier, published in 1606, the conclusion of which brings the reader back to the poet's own plight as a lover. Ovid is blended with Bion in Baïf's Pan, where the eponymous demigod sings, amongst other things, of Venus' love for Adonis (11.65-136, M-L. III, pp.53-5). Contamination of sources likewise characterizes Ronsard's L'Adonis: mythographers such as Conti and Giraldis have led Ronsard to introduce the slightly burlesque figure, Mars.²

The tableau of the dead Adonis, surrounded by 'mille et mille Amoureux', figures on the quiver described by Bellin in the eclogue first published in 1560 as the Chant Pastoral sur la mort de Ioachim dv Bellay Angevin and later incorporated in the Premiere Journee de la Bergerie (M-L. I, pp.294-6). This evocation was perhaps inspired by some contemporary painting, such as

1. V.L. Saulnier has suggested that Conde claros de Adonis is an incomplete title, and that the full version would perhaps have been Conde claros de Adonis morte versus ('Etude sur Pernette du Guillet et ses Rymes', p.51).

2. See J.C. Lapp, 'Ronsard and La Fontaine: Two Versions of Adonis'; and D. Stone, Jr., 'Ronsard, Rhetoric, and Adonis'.

Rosso's fresco in the Galerie François Premier at Fontainebleau, as well as by literary sources.¹

Some poems depart altogether from the classical models. Habert in Les Visions fantastiques du Banni de Liesse imagines Venus mistaking him for Adonis, whom she has been pursuing. In his twelfth Foresterie, Le Chêne creus de Perrin, Vauquelin de la Fresnaie treats the myth in humorous, familiar tone. Again the subject is, not Venus' lament, but the pursuit of Adonis by the goddess. The pathos of the relationship is forgotten.

(ii) Venus and Anchises

Mythology had linked Venus with another human being: Anchises. The love-affair between the two lies on the verge of the Aeneid, as Venus, after her encounter with Anchises, gave birth to Aeneas. The third Homeric hymn told of the meeting. It inspired two renderings in the sixteenth century. First, Baïf's Hymne de Venus follows the source closely, whilst emphasizing the notion of personal fame. Claude Turrin's De l'Amour et du Despit, published in 1572, presents the tale as a lesson for his beloved, as proof of the way love can be corrupted under the influence of jealousy. In general, however, Venus' passion for Anchises does not seem to have impressed the French writers as being as full of poetic potential as her love for Adonis.

(iii) Polyphemus

Whereas the passion of Venus for a mortal lent itself to tragic interpretation, the love of the hideous Cyclops Polyphemus

1. See D. Delacourcelle, Le Sentiment de l'art dans la 'Bergerie' de Remy Belleau, pp.51-4.

for Galatea was overtly comic, and had already been presented in humorous light by Theocritus in his eleventh idyl (see above, Chapter 1, p.38), and by Ovid in his Metamorphoses, XIII, ll.750-869. It provided the sixteenth-century poets with the opportunity to view their own amorous adventures in detached fashion.

Pontano wrote two poems concerning the Cyclops: Polyphemvs ad Galateam, and Polyphemvs à Galatea spretvs conqueritvr in litore. Polyphemus is seen in elegiac vein, as a solitary soul, with only his faithful flocks for companions. Luigi Alamanni, although usually an eager imitator of Ovid, preferred Theocritus' version for his sixth eclogue, Poliphemo. Much later in the century, Antoine de Cotel produced his Bergerie 2. Thenot à M., which is a coarsened adaptation of the Polyphemus fable. But most important are the poems written on this subject by Ronsard, Magny, and Baïf. These were composed around the same date (1560), and must, like the Medanis poems, have been the result of some arrangement between the poets.¹ All blend Theocritus with Ovid. Ronsard's protagonist is decidedly Petrarchan in his protestations of love.² Magny's Cyclops consciously adopts an anti-Petrarchan stance, and provides his author with the chance to display his rhetorical ingenuity. Baïf's Polyphemus expends much energy on pleading his cause. Both Ronsard and Magny finally suggest a parallel between the Cyclops and themselves.

1. See Demerson, La Mythologie classique ..., pp.561-2.

2. I.D. McFarlane likens Ronsard's Cyclops to an artist ('Ronsard's Poems to Jean Brinon', pp.61-2).

(d) Myths exploring the situation of the poet

(i) The battle between the giants and the gods

As well as finding in myth a reflection of their own amorous exploits, the French poets were led to see in it images both of their problems as writers and of their moments of inspiration. Thus when the Pléiade poets were striving to prove the worth of their own type of poetry, they sought in legend symbols of the opposition they encountered. The Gigantomachy and the Titanomachy (which they repeatedly confused) came to represent the battle of the poets against the forces of Ignorance.¹ This struggle is depicted in Du Bellay's Mvsagnoeomachie and Ronsard's Ode à Michel de l'Hospital, as well as in Tahureau's ode, 'A Madame Marguerite', and Turrin's second ode, dedicated to Chrestienne de Baissey, and influenced by the Ode à Michel de l'Hospital. The poets express through fable the hope that arrogance will meet a sorry end and that true inspiration will prevail. The Gigantomachy figures too in L'Hippocrene - in the evocation of the engravings on Perseus' corselet - and, briefly, in Vitel's Hymne de Pallas. In these two poems, the allegorical overtones are less evident. Again, the battle is used (to burlesque ends) in Ronsard's Hymne de l'Hyver, a re-formulation of the Hesiodic tradition which B.R. Leslie terms an epyllion.²

1. See F. Joukovsky-Micha, 'La Guerre des dieux et des géants chez les poètes français du XVIe siècle (1500-1585)'.

2. See Leslie, pp. 85-90, 92-103, 107-14. Leslie draws a dubious parallel between the Hymne de l'Hyver and the Book of Revelation.

(ii) The prisci poetae

The sixteenth-century writers were at the same time anxious to celebrate the glory of their vocation. They displayed great interest in the tales of the ancient poets and vates, because they found there reflections of their own aspirations.¹ Some of the works they produced were of considerable length – in particular those in Latin. Orpheus above all attracted their attention; but as he is connected with the Argonautic cycle, he will be discussed in the second section of this chapter.

The other main ancient poet celebrated in this period is Arion. He is the subject of a poem that appeared in or around 1522: Nicolai Parvi Bellosanensis sylva cvi titvlvs Arion. De laudibvs eivsdem.² Petit does not focus on Arion alone, but rather divides his attention between Orpheus, Bacchus, and Arion. Arion appears only when the poem is already two thirds of the way through, and is almost overshadowed by the evocation of Bacchic inspiration. Although the Pléiade poets were doubtless familiar with Petit's composition, they made little use of the Arion myth. It is found only in Scève's Arion. Eglogue sus le trespas de feu Monsieur le Dauphin (1536) and in an eight-line epigram by Forcadel, 'De Arione et Delphino' (1554), although it was employed in court festivities.³ .

1. See D.P. Walker, 'The Prisca Theologia in France', and 'Orpheus the Theologian and Renaissance Platonists'. See also F. Joukovsky, Orphée et ses disciples

2. See Joukovsky, *ibid.*, pp.124-6.

3. See F.A. Yates, The Valois Tapestries, p.57 and p.84.

(iii) Additional representatives of poetic creativity

Orpheus and Arion had already been made by legend into representatives of poetic creativity. Yet the sixteenth-century poets also endowed other figures with a new artistic status. Ronsard's use of Bacchus as a symbol of inspiration has been examined by critics, notably T.C. Cave.¹ What has received relatively little attention, however, is the way Belleau also incorporates in his work figures representing creativity. In 'L'Amour ambitieux d'Ixion' from the Seconde Journée de la Bergerie, one has an example of sterile creation: Jupiter makes out of clouds the shapes of Juno and Iris (ll.136-49, M-L. II, pp.22-3). He moulds them with the care that a poet might devote to polishing his work; but he intends them to deceive Ixion. Belleau also explores the figure of the genuine artist. He sees Prometheus in particular as a creator comparable to the poet.² In the 'Complainte de Prométhée', from the Seconde Journée ..., he presents Prometheus as a virtuous character, justly proud of his creation of man, but under attack from the vulture which, like the Harpies in Ronsard's Hymne de Calais, et de Zetes, may represent the opposition the artist encounters from people devoid of talent, who try to live off the reputation earned by the veritable poet.³ It is again as a

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1. See 'The Triumph of Bacchus and its Interpretation in the French Renaissance: Ronsard's Hymne de Bacus', and 'Ronsard's Bacchic Poetry: from the Bacchanales to the Hymne de l'Autonne'. Ronsard's conception of the god of wine reminds one of that of Petit.

2. Belleau's treatment of the Prometheus myth is briefly discussed by R. Trousson, Le Thème de Prométhée dans la littérature européenne, I, pp.120-1, and n.110.

3. A. Eckhardt suggests that this poem may be an allegory of the civil wars; that Prometheus, whose liver is constantly being eaten, may represent France, under attack from her own children (Remy Belleau, sa vie, sa 'Bergerie', p.96).

creator that Prometheus is seen in the introductory poem of the Pierres precieuses. Belleau hails him as the founder of the art of fashioning jewellery out of precious stones (Verdier's edition, p.35, ll.67-8).

Belleau and Ronsard devote much attention to the figure of the artist - more, perhaps, than any other contemporary poet. One might mention, however, Scévole de Sainte-Marthe's La Statue de Pygmalion (1579). The last three stanzas stress that Pygmalion is the solitary artist seeking, like the poet, to imitate reality.

The sixteenth-century writers hence produce fragments that may be divided into four main sections - although, as suggested at the outset, any such division is inevitably arbitrary. They turn to myths of metamorphosis and ravishment for the sheer pleasure of story-telling. They also produce tales that reflect curiosity about the phenomena surrounding them, such as gems, or rivers: tales which are not always based on specific classical sources. Their inventiveness here comes to the fore. They compose pieces containing parallels, whether implicit or explicit, with their own experience as lovers. Fourthly, they seek in fable an enhanced image of their own poetic powers.¹ However, the poems they write on these subjects are not linked to any larger context: they are fragments that seem content to remain such (although some of their techniques, as Chapters 3 and 4 will indicate, do tend to widen the poetic horizon). Whilst several of the pieces are designed for insertion into collections - such as Belleau's Pierres precieuses -

1. See F. Joukovsky, Poésie et mythologie au XVIe siècle: Quelques mythes de l'inspiration chez les poètes de la Renaissance, pp.180-1.

they are not informed by a dominant epic purpose; they do not express nationalistic aspirations; they are satisfied with the treatment of individual mythological episodes, and do not try to organize them into a coherent poetic universe. It is with the Argonautic cycle that the picture changes, that epic aims come to the fore.

(2) THE ARGONAUTIC CYCLE: THE HEROIC QUEST

The connection between the poems just surveyed and the Argonautic cycle is provided by the figure of Orpheus. As will be seen, the sixteenth-century writers often suggest that the vates is capable of joining in the heroic life by showing him in the company of Jason's crew, usually sailing over the ocean in the Argo. The legend of the Golden Fleece undoubtedly appeals to the writers of the period, and is the basis for many epic fragments. This prompts one to pose several questions. The first is why episodes from the Argonautic legend in particular should be selected for imitation. To which needs and fancies of the sixteenth-century mind do they appeal? The second is the problem of sources. Do the Renaissance poets always use writers of Antiquity as their models, or do they sometimes imitate their contemporaries? Thirdly, there is the question of whether, once faced with a whole corpus of epic material, the writers of sixteenth-century France are capable only of close imitation. Are they filled with the feeling - expressed by Ronsard at the beginning of the Hymne de la Mort (Lm. VIII, pp.161-3) - that no new paths lie open for them, or do they contrive to overcome this impression, and to imbue the ancient myth with new meaning and purpose?

Turning first to the possible reasons for the popularity of the Argonautic legend in this period, one wonders why this myth should have been chosen above all others to represent a virile, heroic spirit: for there are literary indications that this is indeed how the sixteenth century conceived of the fable. In 1560, for instance, Ronsard included in the fifth book of his odes (number XXI) a poem dedicated, significantly, to the traveller and cosmographer André Thevet - a piece which will be mentioned again below in connection with the Orpheus-poems. Ronsard opened the ode with a depiction of the Argo and its crew sailing over uncharted waters and attracting the astonished attention of the sea-deities (Lm. X, pp.265-71). The link between the Argonautic legend and the taste for heroic exploits of Ronsard's own age is made clear. And indeed, Jason's quest for the Golden Fleece becomes for many writers of this period an incorporation of their personal aspirations. Yet other fables could well have been interpreted in similar fashion.

Several clues as to why precisely this legend should have assumed such importance are to be discovered by looking back to the fifteenth century. In the realm of chivalry, one finds that the memory of the legend had been perpetuated by the creation, in 1430, of the Order of the Golden Fleece, by Philippe le Bon. Jason was the symbolic patron of this institution, along with Gideon.¹ Philippe le Bon also asked various writers, notably

1. See G. Doutrepont, La Littérature française à la cour des Ducs de Bourgogne; and Kervyn de Lettenhove, La Toison d'Or: Notes sur l'institution et l'histoire de l'ordre (depuis l'année 1429 jusqu'à l'année 1559)

Raoul Lefèvre, to compose a history of Jason's exploits. Banquets were held; scenes from Jason's life were enacted during them.¹

Jason came to represent the great conquistador; his deeds were also the subject of various allegorical interpretations. All of which must have served to draw the attention of the court to the Argonautic legend, and to preserve the latter as a living corpus of material.

One feels that the esteem in which the fifteenth century held Jason and his crew was likely to be intensified in the following century, in an age when the boundaries of the known world were being rapidly expanded by geographical exploration. But there is a more important factor that contributed to the survival of the Argonautic legend: the sixteenth-century taste for mythological fêtes, for pressing mythology into the service of national aspirations. Poets, musicians, and artists collaborated in the production of these celebrations. The Argonauts figured large, especially in the royal entrées; Orpheus and Jason were seen as representatives of the Prince, the Hero.² Thus the entry of Charles the Fifth into Paris, in 1540, was marked by a procession and a banquet, during which there were constant reminders, in the form of statues and plays, of the tale of the Golden Fleece.³

1. See Doutrepont, p.158.

2. See A. Huon, 'Le Thème du Prince dans les entrées parisiennes au XVI^e siècle'.

3. See L'Ordre tenu et gardé à l'entrée de tres hault et tres puissant prince Charles empereur toujours auguste, en la ville de Paris ... La description des arcz triumphans, magnificences; theatres et misteres faictz en icelle ville pour la reception dudit seigneur.

The legend played an even more important part in the entrée of Henri II in 1549, which was master-minded by Jean Martin (a friend of Ronsard) and, on the literary side, by Thomas Sebillet. A triumphal arch on the Pont Notre-Dame, for instance, represented Typhis, the captain of the Argo, flanked by Castor and Pollux.¹ In the niches were Argonauts, four on either side (Telamon, Peleus, Hercules, Hylas; Theseus, Pirithous, Zetes, Calais). There were also two paintings on the arch, one depicting Phryxus dedicating the Golden Fleece to Mars, and the other portraying Jason seizing the Fleece and abducting Medea. A second arc de triomphe on the same bridge represented four more Argonauts: Calisto, Arcas, Croton, and Pandarus.

Jodelle also utilized the Argonautic legend for the ill-fated celebrations he organized in 1558, for the reception of the king at the Hôtel de Ville in Paris, five weeks after the taking of Calais.² He created a scene representing rocks being moved to song by the sound of Orpheus' music. He suggested that the king was a new Jason, who would win back the Fleece from the Hapsburgs. He established a parallel between the Argo - which the Argonauts in his mascarade carried on their shoulders - and the destiny of the town of Paris. He implied that the king, the new Jason, should protect the people by defeating Amycus, and save the afflicted just as Calais and Zetes saved Phineus. In his mascarade, he listed the 'Argonauts' upon whom the king could rely. They included Castor and Pollux de Navarre, Hercule and Tiphys de Guise with their brothers Calais and Zetes. The

1. See Huon, p.26; and V.L. Saulnier, 'L'Entrée de Henri II à Paris et la révolution poétique de 1550', especially pp.50-1.

2. See Demerson, La Mythologie classique ..., pp.514-34.

Argonautic legend was thus employed by Jodelle to celebrate a French victory and to mark out a path of duty for the monarch.

The Argonautic cycle was therefore closely linked with national aspirations. In this respect, it anticipates the Franciade, written in order to glorify the monarchs of Ronsard's own time, to inspire the French nation with pride in its origins. Both the Argonautic poems and the Franciade are informed by a specific epic purpose. And it is interesting to note that the subject-matter of the Franciade was also represented in visual and literary form in the royal entrées. The Trojan origin of the kings of France was an important theme in Henri II's entry into Rouen of 1550.¹ More significantly, Ronsard, working in collaboration with Dorat, was to choose as a subject for one of the triumphal arches used in the entry of Charles IX into Paris on 6 March 1571 the tale of Francus and Pharamond.² His interest in the Francus legend found visual expression in this entrée, just as the Argonautic legend had done. Moreover, Trojan and Argonautic materials were juxtaposed in this fête: another arc de triomphe in the celebrations of 1571 depicted the king with his brother, Henri, in the guise of Castor and Pollux. Argonautic and Trojan myths were closely linked in Ronsard's mind.

It is hence apparent that contemporary fêtes played an important role in disseminating knowledge of the Argonautic tradition. There are naturally also literary grounds for the

1. See J. Chartrou, Les Entrées solonnelles et triomphales à la Renaissance (1484-1551), p.50, p.138.

2. See F.A. Yates, 'Poètes et artistes dans les entrées de Charles IX et de sa reine à Paris en 1571'; and V.E. Graham and W. McAllister Johnson, The Paris Entries of Charles IX and Elisabeth of Austria, 1571. The arch was at the Porte Saint-Denis.

popularity of the Golden Fleece motif: many details concerning the fable were to be found in the mythographers regularly consulted by the sixteenth-century poets. Boccaccio mentions the Argonauts' adventures at several points in the Genealogia deorum gentilium (for instance in IV. 2; X. 32; and XIII. 26). Natale Conti gives a detailed account of Jason's deeds, drawing his inspiration from Apollonius. He ranks Jason alongside Hercules and Theseus as symbols of the tireless warrior (Mythologiae siue explicationis fabularum libri decem, VI. 8).¹ Thus both courtiers and men of letters were made familiar with the legend.

Men of letters, however, were not content simply to learn through an intermediary about Jason's quest. They also consulted the writers of Antiquity for further details. The Alexandrian poets too, as suggested in the previous chapter, showed great interest in the Argonautic legend; and perhaps an understanding of the aspirations of the Alexandrians led the sixteenth-century poets to exploit the same basic material. However that may be, the French writers certainly frequently turned to Apollonius of Rhodes and his Argonautica. They were also acquainted with Valerius Flaccus' interpretations; and they used Theocritus' Idyls for isolated episodes.

Reasons both worldly and literary therefore contributed to the popularity of the Argonautic cycle. It should be noted that the recourse of the sixteenth-century artists to the Argonautic material as a source of inspiration was not as novel as they might have thought: for mediaeval poetry, which the Pléiade took pleasure in condemning, had already exploited the legend, linking it with the start of the Trojan War. Benoît de Sainte-More's

1. See Joukovsky, La Gloire ..., pp.221-2.

Roman de Troyes, of the mid twelfth century, for example, demonstrates this fusion.¹ What was new in the sixteenth century was not so much the subject-matter as the way in which it was treated, and the meanings for which it became a vehicle.

(a) The Argonautic legend as a source of amatory interest

Lest the foregoing remarks should create the impression that the Argonauts were, for the writers of the Renaissance, representatives solely of the tough, enterprising aspects of human nature, the focus of this first subdivision will be on lyrical poems featuring love-affairs between the various characters. These pieces are not all informed by an epic purpose; indeed, some owe more to Ovid than to Apollonius and Valerius Flaccus, and are reminiscent of works examined in the first section of this chapter.

(i) Medea

A cluster of lyrical poems formed around Medea, whose characterization had provided perhaps the most appealing facet of Apollonius' work. Two poets chose the theme of Medea being abandoned by the Jason for whom she had sacrificed everything. Melin de Saint-Gelais presented the episode rather as he did Venus' deploration, in the form of an elegiac song. His Chant triste, de Medée, abandonnée de son aymé Iason, published by Forcadel in 1548, includes references to various episodes of the Argonauts' expedition, such as the brazen-footed bulls (1.64,

1. See H. Dunger, Die Sage vom trojanischen Kriege in den Bearbeitungen des Mittelalters und ihren antiken Quellen.

fol. 13 recto) and the defeat of the dragon (ll.65-6, fol. 13 recto - 13 verso). The emphasis here is not on the magic arts and the wicked intentions of Medea, but on the way she suffers for her love, being reduced by her hopeless passion to the same level as any other mortal. Mythology is seen in familiar terms, stripped of much of its prestige. A similar conception of the subject lies behind Hestean's Reproches de Medée à Iazon, published in 1578, and inspired in part by the Heroides. Retrospective in nature, looking right back to the day when Jason's father helped to prepare the Argo (ll.43-6, fol. 81 recto), this poem resembles Ronsard's Les Parolles que dist Calypson ..., and relies on the opposition between two groups of epithets (denoting perfidy, with reference to Jason, and inexperienced youth, with reference to Medea) for its emotive appeal.¹ Baïf chose a different stage in Medea's life for his L'Amour de Medee, which, as he indicates in lines 11 to 12 (M-L. II, p.299), is likewise inspired by Ovid (Metamorphoses VII, ll.5-99). Baïf follows the Latin poet closely. Interest in the Metamorphoses, already commented upon earlier in the present chapter, and interest in the Argonautic cycle are here fused.

For these poets, therefore, the most appealing aspect of the Argonautic legend was the love-interest, the pathetic element. However, none of these works can be said to have had a decisive influence upon the development of the epic miniature. Much more important is another myth from the cycle: that of Hylas, already selected by Theocritus and Propertius for separate treatment.

1. For epithets denoting treachery, see l.1; l.188; l.219; l.338; l.387. For the opposing group of adjectives, see l.183; ll.191-6 (fol. 83 verso); l.353.

(ii) Hylas

The tale of Hercules and Hylas, which attracted considerable attention in the sixteenth century, combines the lyrical (represented by the affection between Hercules and Hylas, and by the passion of the nymph for Hylas) with the heroic (embodied in the figure of Hercules). It also provides a good example of how the French poets often draw inspiration from the Neo-Latins. For to the influence of Theocritus (Idyl XIII), Apollonius (Argonautica I, ll.1153-1279) and Valerius Flaccus (Argonautica III, ll.459-610) has to be added that of Pontano and Flaminio.

In Book Five of Pontano's Vrania (1533) is a section entitled 'De fvriis et dolore Hercvliis rapto Hyla'. The poet focuses attention first of all on Hercules' grief, as the hero, 'Immemor ipse sui, clauaeque oblitus', wanders about calling Hylas' name. Pontano then goes back in time to explain the cause of Hercules' laments, beginning with a picture of the Argo being driven to the shore of Mysia. This temporal perspective will not be reproduced by any other poet in the period under consideration.

The poem is important in relation to the French writers, primarily by virtue of its picturesque qualities. Pontano evokes the spring by which Hercules lies down to sleep. He describes the movement of its waters and the colours of the stone and sand over which they flow. Then, in a passage constructed around repetition, he evokes the play of light and shade:

In summo natat umbra, natant ramique, comaeque
Frondentes Sol per tenues uaga lumina rimas
Irradiat. Variant umbrae uariantibus auris.

(fol. 102 recto)

This passage will be remembered by Bereau and, especially, by Ronsard. Both Ronsard and Pontano are aware of the powers of reprise as a means of expressing movement. Thus an essentially

stylistic feature is relevant to the survey of themes, as it suggests that the French poets had recourse to a Neo-Latin version of the Hylas story.

The Neo-Latin poet lengthens the conclusion of the episode, in a manner that anticipates Ronsard, once again. As Hercules leaps into the stream (an example of Pontano's partly dramatic, partly comical treatment of the myth), he hears Hylas' voice coming from beneath the waters. The youth proclaims that he is tired of the hard work required of a companion of Hercules. It is now his lot to rest and to marry under the waters.

However, Pontano's version differs from later ones, first in the sentimentality with which it surrounds Hylas. Pontano shows Hercules going hunting with the youth, and catching seven deer. Hylas fondles the deer and ties chains around their necks. Just before the tragedy, Pontano depicts Hylas with the deer once again. He provides an idyllic picture highlighting Hylas' youthfulness:

Interea catulis puer ad praesepe ligatis,
Ludebat, pexosque manu mulcebat, et herbas
Selectas dabat, et misto inter cornua flore
Intexens, uiridi caput insignibat acantho.

(fol. 103 recto)

The disaster is caused by the baby deer leaping into the spring, and dragging Hylas underwater, where he is seized by a nymph. The poet has rendered the action more mignard than in his classical models; he has even altered its course. Similarly, he embroiders more than his sources on the ravishment of Hylas, showing the nymph taking Hylas to her cave, whilst her companions melt away with jealousy. And he portrays Hylas holding out his face from beneath the waters for a farewell kiss, which is blown away by the wind. Then, having sadly expressed his envy of

the nymph, Hercules carries out funeral rites in Hylas' honour: he erects a mound, builds an altar, adorns it with flowers, and burns his bow and quiver upon it (fol. 104 recto). Hylas receives a hero's rites.

Secondly, Pontano's presentation of the myth does not exclude comic elements.¹ For instance, as he sleeps by the fountain, Hercules snores loudly, startling the nymphs nearby:

Ipse autem somno grauior, uictusque sopore
Horrentemque animam late de pectore anhelus
Efflabat. Nymphae insolito de fonte fragore
Excitae liquidis caput exeruere sub undis,
Vtque uirum uidere per herbida prata iacentem,
Tendentemque artus, mento, setisque rigentem,
Claudentemque supercilijs caua lumina, risum
Ingeminant. laetis interstrepit unda cachinnis.
(fol. 102 verso)

The laughter of the nymphs is hardly the reception one would expect a great hero to receive. Thus although he does, by inserting his account into the Argonautic legend, deal with the heroic facets of Hercules' life, Pontano also emphasizes his frailty in other respects: his infatuation with Hylas; his succumbing to fatigue. It is Hercules' need for sleep that will bring some relief from his grief:

Solantur tamen in tenebris insomnia, et umbra
Obuersans oculis, et Hylae amplexantis imago.
(fol. 104 recto)

Sleep accords to him a solace his active life cannot provide.

Pontano has shaped material provided by his models into a poem at once picturesque, mignard, and mock-heroic. His was not

1. One recalls that the mock-heroic was an important feature in classical epyllia. Compare Ovid's Fasti and Ronsard's Le Satyre (Lm. XV, pp.67-76).

the only Neo-Latin version of the tale; for one also has 'De Hercule et Hyla', published by Flaminio in Book Three of his Carmina (1522). The main source is Theocritus. Flaminio follows the latter closely, opening, for instance, with the observation that Cupid is a pernicious force for the gods as well as for men (ll.1-4, p.244), and reproducing Theocritus' image of the shooting star (ll.46-52, p.246).

However, the poem anticipates Ronsard's in a significant departure from Theocritus; for whereas the latter compares Hercules ranging through the countryside to a hungry lion rushing forth from its lair to seize a fawn, Flaminio's image is more sentimental: a heifer is led to the altar for sacrifice whilst its mother, unaware of the fate of her offspring, at first grazes in a grove, then hastens away in search of her heifer.¹ This simile suggests how tenderly Hercules loved Hylas. Flaminio has combined imitation with invention and contamination.

Flaminio then prefigures Bereau by returning, at the close of his poem, to the theme of the powers of love. What is important for him is the way the legend explores the nature of passion. He also states that just as the labours of Hercules at last forced the hero to think of things other than the death of his favourite boy, so patient work will overcome passion in other people. He turns round the usual proverb, omnia vincit amor, to produce: 'Omnis amor longo vincitur obsequio' (l.76, p.247). The poem, like many of the Carmina, ends with a punning maxim.

Jacques Bereau seems to have remembered these Neo-Latin versions, as well as Theocritus' thirteenth idyl, Apollonius and Valerius Flaccus, and Ronsard, when composing Le Ravissement

1. See Lucretius, De rerum natura, II, ll.353-66; and Euripides, Hecuba, l.205. For Ronsard's image, see below, Chapter 4, p.202.

d'Hyllas (probably written in the early 1560s). Like the poet of Syracuse and like Flaminio, Bereau starts by stressing that love can extend to the gods. Again, like Theocritus, Flaccus, and the two Neo-Latins, Bereau places his narrative in the context of the Argonautic expedition (ll.65-109, pp.153-4), taking his reader back to a time of heroic deeds. Like Ronsard in the Hymne de Calais, et de Zetes, he emphasizes the Argonauts' thirst for glory. Jason is 'plain de hautain courage' (l.67); his crew

ne demandoit rien
Que s'aquerir par un brave moyen
De cueur vaillant bruit, honneur et estime.
(ll.73-5, p.153)

The Argonauts are 'chevaliers d'honneur ambitieux' (l.93) and 'princes nez de la race des dieux' (l.94). Like Ronsard's sailors, these heroes are close to the gods; they dedicate their lives to the ideal of fame. In his list of Argonauts, Bereau in fact mentions Castor (l.76), Pollux (l.77), and Calais and Zetes (l.78). These references make plausible the theory that Bereau was recalling Ronsard here.

Thus Bereau seems to have used contemporary sources. Yet he also leans - more heavily than the other poets - on Valerius Flaccus. He reproduces the angry words of Juno, anxious to punish Hercules (ll.146-60, p.155; compare the Argonautica III, ll.510-20). He depicts Juno's encounter with a group of nymphs out hunting, and describes these lovely creatures (ll.168-72, pp.155-6) whilst adding a cynegetic comparison to illustrate the way they flee at the sound of Hercules' approach (ll.179-84, p.156). The nymphs who were out hunting themselves become the prey. Bereau also reproduces Juno's speech telling Dryope to spy on Hylas at the fountain (ll.185-206, pp.156-7; compare the Argonautica, III, ll.535-44). Again, whereas Ronsard will simply mention as a

possible version of the legend, as an ornament that the reader may adopt or reject as he wishes, the deer that enticed Hylas to the spring (Lm. XV, p.243, ll.205-10), Bereau portrays Hylas chasing this animal, which has been sent by Juno, until he can no longer be seen by Hercules (ll.207-17, p.157). He follows Flaccus by evoking in the pool, not the shadow of trees on water found in Pontano and Ronsard, but the reflection of Hylas, which is compared to that of the moon or sun on a river (ll.243-6, p.158; from the Argonautica III, ll.558-60). For the aftermath of the abduction, too, he imitates Valerius Flaccus.

However, Bereau does display certain affinities with the Neo-Latins. Like Pontano, he includes in his evocation of the fountain a mention of the narcissus (ll.236-7, p.157), reminding the reader that this is an environment in which the unexpected may happen and in which youths may even change shape. Like Flaminio, Bereau uses the tale to demonstrate the extremes to which love can lead (ll.296-309, p.159). This sententious note (detected also, for example, in lines 63 and 64) distinguishes Bereau's poem from that of Ronsard.

On the other hand, just as Pontano portrayed Hercules in a humorous light, so Bereau adopts a light-hearted tone. The scope of his poem is more limited than that of Ronsard's. The myth is reduced to a lesson on love; but even this, and the personal tragedy Hercules undergoes, do not exclude the occasional pun.¹

1. For instance, on a stylistic level, Bereau indulges in annominatio:

Amour par tout où il luy plaist le meine,
 Et le menant si fort il le promeine ...
 (ll.329-30, p.160; italics mine)

Moreover, whereas Ronsard's narrative proper will end with a prophecy, the disappearance of the shade, and with a solitary hero who faces only the prospect of further tribulations, Bereau's hero finally rejoins the Argonauts. Ronsard's poem will be elegiac in its conclusion; Bereau's ends on a note of happiness:

il a retrouvé
Ses compagnons, cette fleur de la Grece,
Qui l'ont reveu avecq' grand' allegresse.
(ll.332-4, p.160)

One returns to the sunnier aspects of this heroic world. Hercules dispels his grief by seeking out comradeship and activity. Indeed, when compared with Ronsard's rendering, all the previous versions of the fable display a tendency to dilute the dark ingredients.

Bereau differs from Ronsard in another important respect: he does not hesitate to cast aspersions on Hercules. He follows Apollonius in mentioning the way Hercules abducted Hylas from his father, Theiodamus; Ronsard, on the other hand, will defend Hercules' actions in this episode. Similarly, Bereau departs from Theocritus in his exclamation concerning the paradox that Hercules, who strangled snakes in his cradle and carried out the twelve labours, should fall prey to Cupid and be 'veincu des beaux yeux d'un enfant' (ll.47-58, p.152). For the mention of the serpents, he probably recalled another idyl of Theocritus, the twenty-fourth, The Infant Heracles. Bereau sketches in Hercules' valiant background, but immediately undermines this by stressing the hero's humbleness vis-à-vis Cupid. Again, having mentioned briefly the episode from Apollonius (Argonautica I, ll.1164-71) and Valerius Flaccus (Argonautica III, ll.476-80) which Ronsard will depict in full - Hercules breaking his oar - Bereau shows Hercules going with Hylas into the woods in search of something with which to

fashion a new oar (ll.132-7, pp.154-5). Ronsard will portray Hercules going off alone, as a character in need of occasional solitude; Bereau presents his hero as a weaker person who never leaves Hylas' side. Bereau then apostrophizes Hercules (ll.138-45, p.155), underlining the familiarity of the relationship between hero and narrator, and telling Hercules that it would be wiser to remain with the other Argonauts. Bereau's protagonist is someone whom the poet may chide from a position of moral superiority; he is implicitly placed on the same level as Hylas, with whom the poet also remonstrates (ll.217-22, p.157). Ronsard's protagonist will be more distant, awe-inspiring (the other members of the crew are afraid of him, l.141, XV, p.240), and heroic.

So far, three poems have been considered which use the same sources and have perhaps also influenced one another, and which are nonetheless different in their treatment of the Hylas legend. Ronsard's version, published later than the others, in 1569, presents a further variation on the theme; it also reveals the poet's great talent for blending a number of sources. Again, the work reflects the way a well-worn theme may still be treated in original manner.¹ Ronsard's models include those already mentioned: Apollonius, Theocritus, Valerius Flaccus; Pontano and Flaminio; but the poet has also had recourse to Virgil; Georgics IV, and Propertius, I. 20. The poem Ronsard produces with this material illustrates, more clearly than any of the other Argonautic pieces so far considered, the way the epic and the lyrical or decorative may be intertwined.

1. On this poem in general, see P. Moreau, 'Les Trois Hylas'; and I. Silver, Ronsard and the Greek Epic, pp.382-9.

Ronsard does not begin his process of contamination until line 91. Surprisingly, he opens the poem with praise of Hercules, perhaps aware that the title would immediately summon up in the minds of readers notions of ravishment and homosexual love. So the prelude concerns Hercules' exploits in France.¹ Throughout, Ronsard is anxious to defend Hercules' reputation and portray him as a founder of civilization in France, rather similar to Orpheus (see especially lines 1 to 20, pp.234-5).² He wants to restore to Hercules the honours that are his due (l.5). With this aim in mind, Ronsard interprets anew certain episodes of the hero's life, notably his treatment of Theiodamus' family (ll.65-90, pp.237-8). Ronsard considers the belief that Hercules ravished Theiodamus' wife, abducted his son, and slaughtered and ate his cattle; and he explicitly dismisses it for its failure to conform to the mental image he has of Hercules: 'Ce sont des faits que croire je ne veux ...' (l.68). Accusing the rhapsodes of Hercules' day of lying, he displays an unusual aversion for the poets he generally sees as prophets clothing profound truths in fable. He justifies Hercules' abandonment of his wife, Galatea, by the use of an agricultural comparison (ll.47-50, p.236), suggesting that Hercules' behaviour is a necessary part of a natural cycle. In love, too, Hercules' conduct is judged upright. No mention is

1. Lucian was the chief writer of Antiquity to discuss these exploits. See R.E. Hallmark, 'Ronsard et la légende d'Hercule'; R.E. Hallowell, 'Ronsard and the Gallic Hercules Myth', and 'L'Hercule gallique: Expression et image politique'; M-R. Jung, Hercule dans la littérature française du XVI^e siècle: De l'Hercule courtois à l'Hercule baroque'; and R. Trousson, 'Ronsard et la légende d'Hercule'.

2. Ronsard was perhaps influenced by Peletier du Mans's wish to write an epic based on Hercules. See above, Chapter 1, pp.57-8.

made of any relationships with other women - still less of homosexual liaisons. The hero is also seen as a strong master having the dominant role in personal relationships. This anticipates his position vis-à-vis Hylas.

Ronsard's introduction aims to create a picture of a strong, virtuous Hercules. It is not only here that Ronsard devotes attention to the hero: for in lines 101 to 180 (pp.239-42), he leaves Hylas, and shows Hercules rowing with the rest of the Argonauts, breaking his oar, and falling over. This potentially comic incident (which would doubtless have been treated with humour by Pontano) is presented in a way that emphasizes Hercules' power: for although Hercules smiles, the crew is too afraid to laugh or make any remark (ll.140-1, p.240). The fact that Hercules, although at first angry (l.131, l.135), does eventually see the humorous aspects of his fall again reflects Ronsard's desire to paint a flattering picture: for Apollonius merely depicts Hercules sitting up speechless and glaring (Argonautica I, ll.1170-1). Yet Ronsard's demigod falls further and more heavily (ll.138-40). He is, Ronsard implies, mighty enough to treat physical pain with a smile. Moreover, Hercules falls down just as Hylas will be described as 'falling' into the water (ll.304-5). The motif of Hercules losing something (his oar) to the waves, also prefigures his loss of Hylas; his initial reaction is the same: one of anger. There is in fact a verbal parallel between line 135 and line 331, denoting his rage. Hence this episode both shows Hercules in a favourable light, and anticipates what is to come.

The poet then provides another picturesque scene concerning the hero: having quickly evoked the arrival at a port and the passing of night (ll.144-5, p.240), he depicts Hercules going to look for a tree with which to make a new oar. Here too he follows

Apollonius; but whereas the latter, writing a diffuse epic, is at liberty to provide a great number of episodes, Ronsard's inclusion of the scene in a poem supposedly about Hylas is far more striking. Once again, he emphasizes Hercules' strength, his ability to uproot a whole tree at his first attempt.

Before proceeding to his account of Hylas' fate, Ronsard thus establishes that Hercules is intensely virile. Of the 430 lines in the poem, 252 are devoted to Hercules. Clearly, Ronsard intends to create a contrast between Hercules and Hylas. At the latter's first appearance, Ronsard stresses the difference in height of the pair by focusing on the diminutive size of Hylas' feet:

Car, ô bon Roy, le moindre de tes pas
En valloit cinq des petitz piedz d'Hylas.
(11.99-100, p.239)

In this relationship, Hylas is subservient, almost assuming the traits of a wife. In line 182, Ronsard highlights Hylas' white hands, and his long hair; in lines 187 to 189, his 'chair blanche' attracts the loving attention of Calais and Zetes (compare Propertius, I. 20. 25-30). In every way, he is the antithesis to Hercules (whose Greek epithet Ronsard translates in line 370 as 'aux fesses noires'). Indeed, Ronsard touches upon the myth of the androgyne (11.199-200, p.243). A traditional theme becomes a vehicle for the poet's own preoccupations: for it is perhaps not too fanciful to see Hylas as representing those gifts of artistry and sensitivity without which even the man of action is incomplete.¹ Ultimately, the union of action and contemplation

1. See Cave, 'Mythes de l'abondance et de la privation chez Ronsard'. - One might compare the Hercules-Hylas relationship with the notion of the double aesthetic principle developed in 'Le Thyrses', from Baudelaire's Le Spleen de Paris (XXXII).

founders: Hylas does not wish to return to Hercules, whose life he deems excessively strenuous. But Hercules is left in a state of despair implying that he needed the side of his nature symbolized by Hylas. This necessarily speculative excursion into the field of allegory suggests how Ronsard has re-shaped traditional materials.

The way attention is divided between Hercules and Hylas also has other implications. For Hercules can be seen to represent the epic side of Ronsard's talents, and Hylas the decorative side. Just as Hercules is presented as a valiant character, so Hylas is seen against an aesthetically pleasing backcloth. Ronsard devotes much space to a description of the fountain (ll.211-48, pp.243-5), developing indications in Theocritus but also emphasizing that the flowers around the spring were once human beings (ll.212-14). The setting for the abduction is enriched by reference to other myths.¹ A suitably elegiac and precariously lovely background is provided for Hylas. Ronsard also evokes the movements of the shadows of oak trees, perhaps recalling a single line from Virgil, but at the same time echoing Pontano (ll.237-40, p.244).² Ronsard adds colour to colour, anticipating the notion of copia elaborated in the concluding lines (see especially lines

1. Compare lines 265 to 272 (pp.245-6), which, with their allusion to Jupiter with Leda and Europa, continue the notion of metamorphosis through or for love.

2. Compare Virgil, Ecloga V, l.5, 'sive sub incertas Zephyris motantibus umbras ...'; and Flaccus, Argonautica III, ll.558-9.

In Ronsard's lines, one notes the anadiplosis and repetition ('ombre' is, for example, picked up in 'ombreuse'), the interweaving of s sounds and nasals. See O. de Mourgues, 'Ronsard's Later Poetry', p.289; and Raymond, 'Quelques aspects de la poésie de Ronsard', p.93. In lines 291 to 292, anadiplosis creates an impression of the sound made by the water in Hylas' pitcher.

241 to 244, pp.244-5). The flowers there visited by the bee recall those growing around the spring. The notion of decorative beauty finally prevails; but it cannot resolve the tension created by the initial celebration of brute force. The poem as a whole reflects the difficulties Ronsard encountered when he was trying to write in epic vein: he was constantly being drawn towards areas of lyrical description, in which the epic purpose would temporarily be lost from sight. A full elucidation of this point will be found in Chapter 5 (pp.270-300).

The attempt to rehabilitate Hercules, the implicit parallel with problems faced by the poet, the blending of the heroic and the decorative: all contribute to the novelty of this piece. Ronsard chooses a subject treated by many others, but inserts it into a framework of his own, reflecting preoccupations of his own. Accordingly, answers may be suggested to questions posed in the introduction to this section (p.80). Ronsard seems to have used, not only classical sources, but also contemporary Neo-Latin poems (although it is impossible to prove conclusively the direct influence of the latter). Again, Ronsard has imbued a well-known theme with a new meaning. The final affirmation of faith in the copiousness of his poetic materials does not eradicate the fact that Ronsard portrays in this poem a sense of loss, the division into two of elements he yearns to see fused. Traditional subject-matter has come to reflect the doubts impinging upon Ronsard's belief in poetry during his later years.

(b) The Argonautic legend as a symbol of heroism

Around the tale of Hylas was formed a constellation of poems, each casting a different light upon the fable. Material elaborated

by the Neo-Latins became part of the poetic tradition, and was absorbed by writers such as Boreau and Ronsard. Similar remarks might be made about the legend of Orpheus.

(1) Orpheus

For the sixteenth-century poets, Orpheus was the supreme representative of the prisca theologia. They seized upon him as a figure who would enable them to turn lyricism into a poetic theme. Perhaps they were particularly attracted to him because he was an incarnation of the great lover as well as of the supremely talented musician. They also acquired knowledge of aspects of his life thanks to the fact that Orpheus and his lyre featured in many of the scenes enacted for the royal entrées.¹ Literary reasons too played a part in the vogue enjoyed by the vates; for the sixteenth-century writers were familiar with works attributed to Orpheus. Many new editions and translations were published from 1500 onwards.² But whatever the causes of his popularity, it is certain that, by linking the vates with the Argonautic legend, the Neo-Latin and French poets were suggesting - like Ronsard in Hylas - that the artist and the hero were capable of forming an effective team.

The longest and earliest in date of the sixteenth-century poems on Orpheus was composed by an Italian, Quinziano Stoa, and published in 1510, under the title Orpheos libri tres.³ Book One concentrates on Orpheus as a founder of learning and civilization. Stoa tells of the journeys Orpheus undertakes in the quest for knowledge, and depicts him joining the Argonauts in the adventure

1. See Joukovsky, Orphée . . ., p.24.

2. See *ibid.*, pp.18-19.

3. See *ibid.*, pp.48-54.

of the Golden Fleece (ll.482-544, fol. B4 recto - B5 recto). It is in this section of the legend that Ronsard and Baïf will show particular interest. Orpheus' song is endowed with the power to refresh and encourage the crew of the Argo: for Jason asks Orpheus to join his men in order to help them to forget the difficulties of rowing over the sea (ll.503-7, fol. B4 verso). The man of action and the poet work side by side. However, the account given at this point by Stoa of the voyage of the Argonauts is very brief. The book closes with Orpheus' song (ll.514-42, fol. B4 verso - B5 recto), which places emphasis on the divine origin of his music and of the lyre on which he plays. The book as a whole focuses upon Orpheus' vast knowledge rather than upon his connection with great heroes.

In Book Two, having continued his travels, Orpheus meets Eurydice. There follows the most famous part of the legend, for the rendering of which Stoa is largely indebted to the fourth book of the Georgics. He achieves originality, however, thanks to the detail with which he surrounds the marriage of Orpheus and Eurydice, Aristaeus' pursuit of Eurydice, and the funeral rites.¹ In Book Three, Stoa evokes Orpheus' descent to the Underworld, utilizing Book Six of the Aeneid and Book Ten of the Metamorphoses. Stoa's Orpheus sings a song in an attempt to move Pluto to pity, thus anticipating L'Orphée of Ronsard. Although based on Ovid, the hymn is expanded by means of mythological allusions and by increased emphasis on the omnipotence of love.²

1. Stoa's pursuit scene is inspired by the Apollo and Daphne episode in Metamorphoses I, ll.533-9. For Eurydice's funeral rites, Stoa amplifies a few lines from the Georgics: IV, ll.460-3.

2. Note the fourfold repetition of the maxim 'Omnia vincit amor'.

In Book One, Stoa began rather as Ronsard does in Hylas: in epic vein. However, he soon moves to a lyrical presentation of his material. His treatment of the Underworld episode indicates that, for him, Orpheus' role as a lover is as important as his link with the Argonauts. For he aims throughout to create emotional intensity. Thus, unlike his sources, he gives a touching evocation of Eurydice's reaction on seeing Orpheus in Hades (ll.210-14, fol. D4 verso). Stoa's Eurydice is a slightly less shadowy figure than in his sources. Similarly, Stoa, unlike his models, sketches in the scene in which Proserpine revives Orpheus, who has fainted whilst trying to embrace his wife (ll.214-34, fol. D4 recto - D5 verso). And, in the final adieu, Stoa anticipates Ronsard by preferring Virgil, Georgics IV, ll.494-8, to Ovid's account, although he does replace Virgil's visual conception of the scene with verbal dexterity. Eurydice cries:

proh quanta miserrime coniux
Te ruit impietas? reuocasti a sede tremenda:
Atque iterum infernas oculo detrudis ad umbras.
Rapta ego bis: uixique semel: bis rapta: semelque
Contigit aeriis uesci foeliciter auris.
Chare uale coniux: nec erit tibi copia nostri
Amplius. (ll.264-70, fol. D5 verso)

A stylistic feature here is important in relation to Stoa's treatment of theme: the rejet in lines 269 to 270, emphasizing the word 'Amplius', allows hope and life to flourish for a brief moment, before the meaning of the sentence destroys them. This negation of life is made all the more poignant for the brief respite.

And indeed, the structure of Books Two and Three builds up a vision of idyllic love only to sweep it away. The whole of Eurydice's and Orpheus' life is shown in retrospect as having been overshadowed by the decree of fate: 'Nec erit ...'. For, whereas Ovid fills the rest of Book Ten with songs that Orpheus sings,

Stoa moves straight on to a violent account of the circumstances of the musician's death.¹ His poem, which seemed in Book One to be leading to a depiction of Orpheus' role in the quest for the Golden Fleece, becomes in Book Three an account of a personal tragedy. In the latter stages of Book One, the focus was on the crew of the Argo and then on the immensity of the ocean; in Book Three, Stoa concentrates on the solitary death of his hero. He does not, however, end with the finality of death, but with prophecies uttered by Orpheus' head. The significance of this conclusion will be discussed in Chapter 3 (pages 163 to 165).

Pontano, in a piece published in 1518: De Orpheo navigante, et post ad inferos pro uxore descendente, seized on two sections of the Orpheus myth.² These were Orpheus' link with the Argonauts, and his attempt to win back Eurydice. The poem opens with a picture of the Argo, which has left Thessaly, and of the open sea foaming under the oars (ll.1-4, fol. 89 recto - actually numbered fol. 97). Pontano stresses the connection between Orpheus' music and heroism: he portrays Orpheus standing on the lofty prow, rousing the Argonauts to noble deeds (ll.19-20, fol. 89 recto) and encouraging them to look forward to a magnificent death and eternal glory (ll.25-8, fol. 89 verso). Pontano suggests that there is a link between poetry (and the fame it can bring) and valiant deeds. In line 95, he calls Orpheus 'heroum genus'. He places greater emphasis than Stoa on the powers of Orpheus as a poet.

The second section also celebrates the power of poetry, as it

1. Stoa gives an extended evocation of the frenzied Bacchants (ll.318-34, fol. D6 verso - E1 recto), which has no equivalent in Ovid, and which is recalled by Petit in his work on Arion.

2. This is probably the work Demerson mistakenly attributes to Marullus (La Mythologie classique ..., p.181, note 51).

depicts Orpheus causing the tortures of Hades temporarily to stop. Since Pontano's aim is to stress the connection between poet and hero, he omits the more sentimental aspects of the legend. Content merely to suggest the catastrophe in the last stanza, he dispenses with Eurydice's farewell and Orpheus' despair, and is in this respect very different from Stoa.

In 'De Lyra, et Orpheo', from Book Three of the Vrania, Pontano, whilst dealing with the way Orpheus looked back (fol. 69 verso), again emphasizes the power of poetry: for Orpheus finally welcomes dismemberment, knowing that death will destroy his human form, but not his music.

There is no conclusive evidence for the specific influence of these Neo-Latin poems on the French writers; but they must certainly have served to promote interest in the prisci poetae, and to draw attention to both the heroic and poetic facets of Orpheus' life on the one hand, and the amatory aspects on the other. These two angles are represented in mid sixteenth-century poetry.

Jean-Antoine de Baïf, like Pontano, concentrates upon Orpheus as a poet and musician in Les Muses, probably composed between 1556 and 1560. He establishes a bond between poetry and heroism: for Chiron tells Jason that Orpheus will guarantee the immortality of the Argonauts (ll.103-7, M-L. II, p.74). Poetry secures the glory that cannot otherwise be promised even to valiant heroes (see also lines 116 to 123, page 74). Only when Jason seeks out the vates is the latter seen as a musician with the power to charm nymphs, fauns, animals, and trees (ll.156-93, pp.75-6). For Baïf, Orpheus' connection with valorous deeds is important enough to be mentioned before his capacity to move nature. Baïf illustrates the link between heroism and poetry by means of a scene reminiscent of the Argonautica published in 1500 (widely thought in

the sixteenth century to be a work of Orpheus): Orpheus and his lyre encourage the Argonauts to pass between the Cyanean Rocks, which stand still on hearing the music. When the courage of the crew proves inadequate, it is supplemented by the powers of the musician (ll.488-98, p.84; compare the Argonautica, ll.704 ff.).

But Orpheus also provides Baïf with the opportunity to indicate the difference between the Golden Age of the prisci poetae and his own times, in which men have become materialistic and brutal (ll.583-6, p.86). The rest of the poem develops this melancholy theme of decadence. Indeed, even in the initial presentation of Orpheus, one detects a sad tone foreshadowing the later stages of the poem. For, whereas the Orpheus of the anonymous Argonautica feels young in comparison with Chiron, Baïf's protagonist is careworn.¹ He expresses the anxieties of an old man (ll.380-5, p.81), although finally he does agree 'de coeur et d'alegresse' to follow the Argonauts (l.416). Baïf's depiction of Orpheus and of his connection with the Argonautic cycle is not entirely idealistic: it is coloured by his pessimism concerning the status of the poet in the France of his own time.²

Ronsard too is interested in Orpheus.³ He describes him as a member of the crew of the Argo in the Hymne de Calais, et de Zetes (ll.57-72, VIII, pp.258-9), and gives him a similar role in the ode of 1560, 'A André Thevet' (ll.31-6, X, p.267). The vates, standing 'dessus la proüe' (l.31), is virtually seen as a figurehead of the ship. The poet provides the inspiration, and

1. Argonautica, ll.409-10; see Joukovsky, Orphée ..., p.90, n.59.

2. Baïf's continuing interest in Orpheus is indicated by his publishing in 1567 the Presages d'Orpheus sur les tremblemens de terre, a work supposed to be by the vates (M-L. II, pp.33-6).

3. See E. Kushner, 'Le Personnage d'Orphée chez Ronsard'.

the man of action contributes the physical strength.

In L'Orphée of 1563, Orpheus again figures as a musician. He replies to Chiron with a song (ll.209-344, pp.135-42); and the reaction of the whole of nature to his music is evoked in the concluding lines (ll.345-50), albeit much more briefly than in Les Muses. The last two lines, reminiscent of Pontano's Vrania with their mention of how Orpheus' lyre became a constellation, introduce the theme of the ability of music to conquer death. And the descent of Orpheus to the Underworld, whilst motivated by his wish to win back Eurydice, also represents the power of poetry to overcome death.

Nevertheless, as in Book Three of Stoa's poem, the emphasis lies on Orpheus' role as a lover. The work opens with the whole group of the Argonauts (ll.1-4, XII, pp.126-7); but Orpheus' position amidst the crew is seen in a light rather different from that of the two earlier Ronsardian compositions. What is thrown into relief is not the encouragement Orpheus gives to the others, but the solace he himself derives from engaging in the life of action: in a striking alteration to the legend, the vates is said to have been advised by his mother Calliope to lessen 'le soucy qui vient de trop aymer' (l.336) by joining Jason's crew. The remainder of the poem highlights the problems Orpheus faced as a lover. Chiron's hymn about Yphis offers a series of parallels and contrasts with that of Orpheus. For although Orpheus' love was pure, it too became a 'fureur': it so blinded him that it made him forget his oath to Pluto (see line 298, and compare Virgil, Georgics IV, ll.494-5). Having finally lost Eurydice, Orpheus is overcome with grief; but Calliope's advice makes a new man of him, just as Yphis was filled with 'masle vigueur' when she was transformed. Both hymns concern a love that sins by excess.

F. Joukovsky sees the poem as an indication that Ronsard intended to write a whole epic based on Orpheus, with poetry as its main theme.¹ (This would have distinguished it from the Franciade, which is rare amongst Ronsard's works in that it contains few reflections on poetic creativity.²). Certainly, the vates was very important in Ronsard's eyes. In the Abbregé de l'Art poétique françois of 1565, Ronsard includes Orpheus in his list of prisci poetae who revealed profound truths by means of colourful fables; he calls the vates one of the 'Poëttes divins' (XIV, p.4). For Ronsard, Orpheus represents the fusion of poet and prophet. The vates reappears in Hylas, where he sits 'au plus haut de la poupe' in the Argo (l.109, XV, p.239), encouraging the crew with the sound of his lyre; once again, Ronsard suggests that music can inspire heroism. In L'Orphée itself, however, one finds several reasons for disputing Joukovsky's theory. In the first place, although Ronsard does initially deal with Orpheus in epic vein, he is soon attracted to the more lyrical and decorative aspects of the musician's life. Secondly, the introduction of the poem suggests that, if Ronsard did have an epic in mind, he intended it to focus on the Argonauts as a whole. The mention of Orpheus: 'Je veux en les chantant me souvenir d'Orphée' (l.5), is a little too casual to be a statement of the wish to write an epic centred on the vates alone. And if this was, nevertheless, Ronsard's aim, he soon digressed from it.

(ii) Ronsard's Hymne de Calais, et de Zetes

The opinion that Ronsard's primary interest lay with the

1. Orphée ..., page 77.

2. A point made by Leslie, page 102.

Argonauts receives greater weight from the fact that Ronsard wrote two hymns devoted to the Argonautic material. His Hymne de Calais, et de Zetes, published in 1556, features the sons of Boreas, and draws much of its subject-matter from Apollonius and Flaccus.¹ It is hence closely attached to the Argonautic cycle, as the introduction to the narrative proper indicates (ll.43-168, VIII, pp.257-65). Following Apollonius (Argonautica I, ll.23 ff.), Ronsard lists some of the members of Jason's crew. The prestige of these men enhances that of Calais and Zetes, who are the last to be introduced.² The presence of the crew as an admiring audience is felt while the winged brothers chase after the Harpies (ll.383-6, p.276); and it is Jason who asks Phineus to predict the adventures the Argonauts will encounter (ll.473 ff.).

The conclusion of this hymn differs from that of most of Ronsard's other hymns in that it contains neither a salutation in the style of Callimachus and Marullus, nor a prayer. Compared with the final **verses** of the other hymns, it is long, embracing several themes. As in Hylas, a traditional myth is interpreted in a novel

1. Although there seem to be no other original poems on this subject, Ronsard's hymn was translated into Latin, by Jacques Grenier: Hymnus Calaidis et Zethae, e gallico Petri Ronsardi Latine expressus This version, indicative of a continuing demand for works in Neo-Latin, was published in 1586.

As Silver points out (Ronsard and the Greek Epic, p.351), Ronsard's interest in Calais and Zetes is seen as early as the Cassandra-cycle of 1552: the poet's thought, inspired by love, is compared to the winged Zetes (xv, ll.9-14, ed. Weber, p.12). 2. The catalogue-technique enables Ronsard on occasion to point forward to events he will not narrate in full. Thus lines 123 to 128 (p.262) foreshadow the death of Mopsus, the prophet who failed to foresee his own end. (The motif of prophecy and blindness recurs later.) As will be seen in ensuing chapters of the present study, such strategies widen the vistas of the fragment.

manner. Having said farewell to Calais and Zetes (ll.707-8, p.291), Ronsard indicates two possible readings of the fable: the moral and the physical. The moral interpretation, drawing a parallel between the brothers and those 'philosophes constans' who chase flatterers away from the king's table, brings one back to the world of the court, which was glimpsed in the introductory praise of Marguerite; the mention of 'les flateurs' reminds one of Marguerite's dislike of excessive praise.¹ The interpretation suggests that Ronsard's concern is with the status of the poet at court; although, as always when Ronsard proposes such an allegorical exegesis, the myth that he recreates assumes a vividness independent of hidden meanings. Phineus, as the prophet who relies upon a good relationship with the gods for his inspiration, can clearly be considered as a symbol of the poet; the Harpies, according to this view, would stand for the people who, as it were, steal the goods of the poet: flatterers, versificateurs devoid of originality. Phineus has offended the gods by arrogating to himself excessive authority, and has been deprived of 'le don de la clarté' (ll.177-80, p.265). This reminds one of Ronsard's remark to Marguerite, in which he is speaking specifically of poets:

Mais l'homme est malheureux qui ne voit le soleil,
Et malheureux celluy qui ne dresse son oeil
Devers vostre clarté, et qui de mille plumes
N'esmaille voz vertus en autant de volumes.

(ll.27-30, p.256)²

1. Compare Ronsard's warning to Henri II about the dangers that sycophants present: Ode de la Paix, ll.430-40, III, p.31. See Demerson, La Mythologie classique ..., p.446, n.182, for other occasions on which Ronsard employs the Harpy motif. One of the most important is in the Remonstrance au peuple de France of 1563, ll.415-20, XI, p.85.

2. The word 'plumes' prefigures the theme of flight in the hymn.

The implication is that the poet too may be blind: the motif of cecity links both poet and prophet. Again, in line 42, Ronsard informs Marguerite that he will always praise her, even if he should thereby encounter her 'mauvaise grace'. It is precisely from the 'mauvaise grace' of the gods that Phineus has been suffering. The poet, Ronsard hints, should be aware of the wishes both of the gods who inspire him, and of his patrons. This survey of allegorical overtones adds to one's appreciation of the way the Argonautic theme has been handled: the myth is made to lend concrete form to some of Ronsard's own preoccupations.

Yet as usual, Ronsard has achieved such originality by means of imitation and contamination. He has blended passages from other poets with his main sources. Thus lines 1 to 8 are taken from Ovid, Metamorphoses VI, ll.712-18, where the Latin poet deals with the sons of Boreas and Orithyia. However, Ronsard adds the detail of the colour of their wings, a subtle interplay of gold and blue. These colours are often found in Ronsard's descriptions.¹ But they also remind one of Apollonius' evocation of Calais and Zetes (Argonautica I, ll.219-23). Again, in presenting some of the members of Jason's crew, Ronsard has combined Apollonius' account with other versions. He has filled out the figure of Orpheus: he states that the musician was spared from rowing - a detail taken from Valerius Flaccus, Argonautica I, ll.470-2; he has transferred to Orpheus what Flaccus says of Iphicles, namely that, too old to join in the hard work, he encourages the heroes by telling of the exploits of their ancestors. One remembers the close relationship

1. Compare lines 165 to 168 of the same hymn. In evoking the streaming hair of Calais and Zetes, Ronsard has substituted gold for Apollonius' dark tresses. For a similar impression of colour and a wave image, see Les Amours (1552-3), xc, ll.1-4, ed. Weber, p.56.

between the prisci poetae and the Argonautic themes. As in Hylas, Ronsard shows the artist side by side with the man of action. He also seems anxious to highlight the nobility, youth, handsomeness and prowess of these crew-members.¹ His blending of Apollonius with Flaccus for the evocation of Lynceus contributes to what Demerson terms the 'grandissement épique' of the protagonists.² Apollonius says of Lynceus that he was keen-sighted enough to be able to see things underground (Argonautica I, ll.153-5), whereas Flaccus adds that he could point out stars to the pilot, and be the only one to see them when Jupiter covered the heavens with darkness (Argonautica I, ll.465-7). These passages give, in Ronsard, the following sketch:

Lyncée,
 Qui souvent de ses yeus la terre avoit percée,
 De ses yeus qui voyoyent, tant ils furent aigus,
 Les Manes des enfers et les Dieux de lassus.
 (ll.81-4, p.260)

It is significant that the quality singled out here should be precisely that of clear sight: it is the faculty which Phineus has lost and longs to recover. Lyncée enjoys that communication with the secrets of the gods which both poet and prophet yearn to obtain.

More contamination is found in the description of how Iris intervenes to prevent Calais and Zetes from slaughtering the Harpies. For the general outline, Ronsard follows Apollonius. However, he inserts various parenthetical statements from Flaccus:

1. See Joukovsky, La Gloire ..., p.222. For remarks on the figure of the conqueror in the Renaissance, see G. Poulet, Les Métamorphoses du cercle, p.11.

2. La Mythologie classique ..., p.450.

thus lines 437 to 439 are derived from the Argonautica, IV, lines 520 to 521; and his statement that the Harpies may leave their cave in Crete only in order to punish truly vicious men is from the Argonautica, IV, lines 525 to 526.

There are, in addition, many examples of Ronsard's enamelling his poem with little details derived from Homer and Virgil. Some of these apply to the sea: thus line 234 is taken from the Iliad (XIV, 1.273) or from the Aeneid (VII, 1.28). In his description of both the landing and the departure of the Argo, Ronsard echoes Virgil.¹ Then in lines 49 to 50, one reads:

D'un ancre bien-mordant la navire arresterent,
Et joieus de la proüe au rivage sauterent.
(pp.257-8)

This is taken from the Aeneid (VI, 11.3-6). Later, as the Argo moves off, Ronsard writes 'le rivage s'en fuit' (1.705), which, Laumonier suggests, recalls Virgil's 'terraeque urbesque recedunt' (Aeneid, III, 1.72). These stylistic details reflect in miniature the process of contamination which is at work in the poem as a whole.

Also interesting is the way Ronsard has combined or changed his sources to create certain structural effects. Further structural aspects will be discussed later in this chapter, and in Chapter 3; but one feature should be mentioned at the outset, as it influences the whole presentation of the theme. This is the use Ronsard makes of repetition and symmetry. The attacks of the Harpies on Phineus are referred to four times, becoming a focal point of the narrative. They are alluded to twice before being

1. See A.P. Kouidis, 'The Function of Mythology in Les Hymnes of Ronsard', p.117.

witnessed by the Argonauts, and twice as they occur before the very eyes of the crew. First, before the reader meets Phineus, he hears of the way the Harpies render everything unfit for the seer to eat (ll.176-204, pp.265-6). Secondly, Phineus begs the Argonauts to deliver him from the Harpies, and tells them what these monstrous creatures do to him (ll.248-72, pp.268-70). On the third occasion, after Phineus' vow that Calais and Zetes will not be harmed, the table is set for a meal; but the Harpies come down at once. Lastly and strikingly, the table is laid again. Neither Apollonius nor Flaccus mentions the table being laid twice; perhaps Ronsard took this detail from the Aeneid, III, ll.229-34, or from Ariosto's Orlando Furioso, XXXIII. 102-28.¹ However that may be, Ronsard's structure here provides a good example of his taste for repetition. It will be seen that this duality has an importance transcending even the limits of the hymn; for Ronsard's poem on Calais and Zetes was placed next to another derived from the legend of the Golden Fleece.²

1. Cameron suggests this parallel with the Italian poet (p.46).

2. The dual structure enables Ronsard, on a stylistic level, to create echoes between episodes. For example, the meal during which the Argonauts witness the Harpies stealing Phineus' food is contrasted with the repast spread before the prophet after the Harpies have been chased away (ll.456-64, p.280). There is even a verbal echo, which implicitly contrasts the present state of the seer with his past misery. The image employed when one first sees Phineus, in a pitiful condition: 'Il s'esleva du lict, ainsy qu'un songe vain ...' (l.207, p.267), is recalled by the word 'songeant' in lines 459 to 460:

Et mordoit golument, comme un homme en songeant
Resve apres la viande, et s'engoue en mangeant.

(p.280)

(iii) Ronsard's Hymne de Pollux et de Castor

The poem Ronsard placed after the Hymne de Calaïs, et de Zetes was the Hymne de Pollux et de Castor, likewise concerned with members of Jason's crew. The story of Pollux is introduced by a depiction of the activities of the Argonauts on reaching the 'port Bebrycien' (l.88), and by Timante's account of Amycus' brutality (ll.87-250, VIII, pp.297-304); the arrival of Amycus is accompanied by an evocation of the Argonauts pitching camp (ll.265-72, p.305), and his menacing first speech by the furious reactions of Jason's men (ll.317-23, p.307).¹ The second part of the poem, however (from line 575 onwards), is not embedded in the Argonautic legend.

Once again, an old myth is endowed with new significance. In the Hymne de Calaïs, et de Zetes, it was clearly possible to see the winged brothers as legendary counterparts of the cardinal de Lorraine, from whom Ronsard endeavoured to gain support, and of François duc de Guise, who had already - like Boreas' sons - proved his valour in battle.² But the hymn was not dedicated to them. In the Hymne de Pollux et de Castor, on the other hand, the parallel with patrons becomes explicit. The introduction suggests that Gaspard de Coligny and his brother Odet (who is mentioned in line 28) are like Castor and Pollux.³ Ronsard expresses affection

1. In 1587, four lines interpolated after line 320 emphasize the nobility of the members of the crew whom Ronsard has mentioned. The entourage of Castor and Pollux is further thrown into relief.

2. Compare the Harangue que fit Monseigneur le Duc de Guise ..., Lm. V, pp.203-19.

3. On Ronsard's affection for Odet, see J.J. Jusserand, Ronsard, p.97. The parallel between the two pairs of brothers is also suggested in lines 783 to 784.

for the latter pair in terms stressing their affinities with Odet and Gaspard:

O tous deux le secours, ô tous deus le support
De ceulx, qui dans les flotz n'attendent que la mort,
Chantres victorieux, Chevaliers et Poètes,
Touts deux également mes chers amys vous estes.

(11.79-82, p.297)

Castor and Pollux, saving soldiers in the midst of battle, and ships in danger of shipwreck, are allegories of Odet and Gaspard, and more generally of those who protect poets and men of letters.¹ They also form a contrast with Amycus and his people, who keep watch for ships in distress in order to capture and sacrifice their crew (11.129-44, p.299), and who perhaps represent factions hostile to poets.² One might compare the present hymn with the Epistre à Charles, Cardinal de Lorraine, where the twins are again connected with the help given by a patron:

1. Compare the Hymne de Charles Cardinal de Lorraine, 11.775-82, Lm. IX, p.71, where Ronsard in fact likens François de Guise and his brother the Cardinal to Castor and Pollux, and says that he has intentionally celebrated them together in the hymn. (This reinforces the notion that a similar parallelism lies behind the Calais and Zetes hymn.) L'Hydre deffaict of 1569 again uses the Dioscuri-myth to justify the praising of two brothers (XV-2, p.385, 11.162-70).

For references to Castor and Pollux in Ronsard's earlier poetry, see G. Lafeuille, Cinq Hymnes de Ronsard, p.175.

Ronsard showed interest in the Dioscuri throughout his life. In 1581, for instance, he composed a Cartel pour les chevaliers celestes, où Dioscures, where the two heroes of Antiquity are seen as supreme examples of valour (XVIII, pp.112-13).

2. Demerson suggests that behind the apparent objectivity of the Argonautic hymns lie personal preoccupations (La Mythologie classique ..., p.446).

Ainsy tout esbranlé dedans la court j'estois,
Maintenant asseuré, maintenant je doutois
Lesquelz des grandz seigneurs me tiendroient la
main forte,
Quant je vous vy sortir tout rouge d'une porte,
Flambant pour mon secours, comme les deux jumeaux
En un temps orageux flambent de sur les naux,
Pour sauver du peril les hommes qui de crainte
Et de palle frayeur ont la face despainte.

(11.285-92, VIII, p.340)

One sees that Ronsard is employing this episode from the Argonautic legend in order to explore the position of the poet, and especially his relationship with patrons and his status at court. This is reminiscent of the way other poets exploited the fables of the prisci poetae.¹

The hymn is not attached to the Argonautic cycle alone. In the introduction, Ronsard provides a résumé of the birth of Castor and Pollux to Jupiter and Leda (ll.36-42, p.295). In the conclusion, the implications of this are made clear; for Ronsard salutes the twins as

 enfans de Leda, qui receut
Un Cygne pour mary, quand elle vous conceut:
Nobles freres jumeaux d'Helene la tresbelle ...

(11.751-3, p.326)

He says that Castor and his brother were celebrated by Homer (ll.763-4). He mentions the siege of Troy, the main subject of the Iliad. Through this reference, and through the naming of Helen, one rejoins the mainstream of epic. Moreover, a link is established with Ronsard's early mythological poem, La Defloration de Lede. Out of well-known myths, Ronsard creates a new fabulous

1. See Rabelais's prologue to the Tiers Livre, for a similar example of a writer questioning the role he should play, and presenting the problem in mythical terms.

world in which there are cross-references between one poem and another. In this case, he can be seen to have written two hymns which stand on the verge of the most famous epic tradition of all.¹

As in the Hymne de Calais et de Zetes, an examination of this poem reveals that Ronsard is an eclectic user of sources. The division of the hymn into two is derived from Theocritus' twenty-second Idyl, which at several points Ronsard follows closely.² In the first part, however, Ronsard makes extensive use of Apollonius, Valerius Flaccus (Book Four of the Argonautica) and Virgil (the Aeneid, III and V). Silver suggests that Ronsard chose not to follow Theocritus' narrative for part one, as 'it was relatively brief, not extending beyond some fifty verses, and it was not enmeshed (...) to a sufficient extent in the setting of the Argonautic expedition'.³ Although Ronsard takes part of his introduction (ll.45-86, pp.295-7) from Theocritus (ll.1-28), he turns to Valerius Flaccus for his depiction of the Argo landing and the despatch of the herald. Thus he returns to a source, Flaccus' Argonautica, which he had already exploited in the

1. Chapter 3 will demonstrate that Ronsard also places Le Ravissement de Cephele on the brink of the Iliad. See pp.166-7.

2. See Otis, Virgil ..., p.15. Otis's comments on Theocritus' Idyls XIII and XXII as treatments of two isolated episodes from Apollonius are relevant to Ronsard's technique. Otis shows how the poet takes merely one portion of a legend, which he is able to treat in a new way thanks to the very brevity of his poem, which is not embedded in an ambient narrative. The epic has been reduced to a striking vignette. Apollonius' narrative is diffused, full of accessory details: Theocritus' is concentrated.

3. Ronsard and the Greek Epic, p.371. See pages 370 and 371 for remarks on the duel, and on Ronsard's technique of amplification.

Hymne de Calais, et de Zetes.

As in the latter hymn, Ronsard is concerned with the amplification of his models. For example, Apollonius' account of the duel between Pollux and Amycus occupies only one hundred lines in Book Two – obviously not enough to provide Ronsard with a miniature epic. So Ronsard gathers material from many sources at once. Amycus' threats are a good instance of expansion. Requiring only five lines in Apollonius (Argonautica II, ll.55–9), and sixteen in Flaccus (Argonautica IV, ll.206–21), they extend in Ronsard's hymn to thirty-eight lines. This fact reflects the importance of direct speech for the writer of an epic fragment; unlike the author of a complete epic, who can provide clues as to characterization elsewhere in his work, he has to provide glimpses of the nature of his protagonists as quickly as possible, and frequently finds it convenient to allow his characters to reveal themselves in their own words. And indeed, Ronsard here displays a preference for the dramatic effectiveness of sermocinatio as opposed to a simple summary by the narrator. Lines 361 to 364 are significant in this respect. Amycus announces:

Icy lon ne combat pour le pris d'une femme,
D'un trepied, d'un cheval, mais pour la vie et l'ame,
Pour respandre le sang, et pour faire secher
La teste des vaincus au feste d'Un plancher.

(p.309)

These lines are derived from Valerius Flaccus (IV, ll.227–31); but in the Latin poet, they are uttered by the narrator. Ronsard employs them to suggest Amycus' cruel irony, his contempt for Pollux, whom he regards as effeminate.

For the combat itself, Ronsard takes four times as many lines as Apollonius. Again, he exploits Valerius Flaccus, as well as Virgil's evocation of the duel between Entellus and Dares (Aeneid

v, 11.421-60).¹ Laumonier points to a striking example of contamination in the description of the bout. Lines 496 to 497 focus on Pollux, who

Evitoit mille mortz, qui bruyoient à lentour
De sa douteuse oreille ... (p.315)

The 'mille mortz' are taken from Statius, Thebais, VI, 1.793; and the 'douteuse oreille' is from Flaccus, Argonautica IV, 1.272 (the line-reference in Laumonier is wrongly printed as 471). Such a blending of materials suggests that Ronsard may have used the copia technique and kept notes of interesting passages.

In eschewing Theocritus' text in the first part of his hymn, Ronsard seems to be trying to render his protagonists as fierce as possible. Thus he follows Flaccus in making Pollux taunt the dying Amycus (11.544-6, p.317). In Theocritus, on the other hand, Amycus does not die, but swears to be kinder to strangers, and is pardoned by Polydeuces.

The second part of Ronsard's hymn is a much closer imitation of Theocritus, but does contain original details.² For instance,

1. See Kouidis, pp.144-7, for an examination of the way Ronsard elaborates on Flaccus' presentation of Amycus in order to increase the dramatic intensity.

2. Leslie, using the Loeb edition of the Greek Bucolic Poets, which states that the beginning of Castor's reply has been lost (p.271), points out that in Theocritus, it is Castor who proposes that only Lynceus and he should fight, lest one family have to mourn both its sons. But he has overlooked the fact that in the vulgate, it is Lynceus who makes the suggestion, just as in Ronsard. (The translation published in 1906 by A. Lang maintains this arrangement.) This tends to undermine Leslie's argument that Ronsard changes the tone drastically (pp.105-6). It was Wilamowitz-Moellendorff who suggested that there was a lacuna after line 170 of Idyl XXII, and that the start of Castor's reply was lost. See A.S.F. Gow, Theocritus, II, p.402, notes to lines 171 ff..

the speech of Lynceus, accusing the Dioscuri of abducting the girls, is much longer in Ronsard (ll.595-650, pp.319-22). Again, one finds Ronsard exploiting sermocinatio as a means of revealing as much as possible about character and situation. He makes his Lynceus move from justified anger to flattery (ll.633-6, p.321). In lines 637 to 640, not found in Theocritus, Lynceus says that he and Idas would actually defend the Dioscuri against anyone opposed to their courting other girls. Lines 601 to 608 are another development peculiar to Ronsard. They clarify Lynceus' position, by stressing first that the girls do not want Castor and Pollux as husbands; and secondly that, far from depriving Lynceus and Idas of their fiancées, the Dioscuri, being their cousins, should defend them against anybody threatening to run away with the girls. This elaboration blackens the case of Castor and Pollux: their conduct is the exact opposite of what Lynceus claims he would do, if the roles were reversed. By showing Lynceus in an especially favourable light, Ronsard casts aspersions on the twins. He appears to be making Castor in particular into an anti-hero, a protagonist whose grandeur is measured in terms of his crimes rather than his virtues.¹ The process of epic magnification is undoubtedly applied to Castor and Pollux: there are many references to their being sons of Jupiter.² Jupiter, indeed, intervenes to save Castor, by striking Idas dead with a thunderbolt. Yet Castor's triumph has a bitter taste to it; after all, had Jupiter not stepped in, Idas might well have killed Castor.

1. See Leslie, p.73 and pp.105-6.

2. See ll.36-40, p.295; ll.323-5, p.307; ll.408-10, p.311; ll.544-6, p.317; l.568, p.318; ll.739-50, p.326. See also Demerson, La Mythologie classique ..., pp.448-9.

Castor's victory is by no means to be attributed to his own prowess.¹ Idas and Lynceus were perfectly justified in challenging the twins; and Idas, having manifested superhuman force in attempting to avenge his brother's death (ll.736-7, p.325), dies like a martyr. Castor and Pollux behave like sons of Jupiter only in the sense that they share his passion for women.

Witnessing this blackening of the protagonists, one wonders how it can be reconciled with the original parallel between the Dioscuri and the Coligny brothers. As often in Ronsard (as in Le Pin, for instance), there is a tension between the fable and the allegorical interpretation suggested for it. Perhaps the most one can say is that Ronsard did not intend his patrons to connect every detail of the myth with themselves. Indeed, one of the features of the epic miniature is that any process of allegorization must remain incomplete.

Leaving behind for a moment the domain of allegory, one may anticipate the contents of Chapter 3 by glancing at the way some of the structural features of Ronsard's hymn contribute to its originality: for theme and structure cannot be entirely separated. Ronsard takes care to delay Amycus' entrance until line 255, thus departing from Theocritus, who has Polydeuces encounter Amycus immediately, whilst out walking with Castor. As in the Hymne de Calaïs, et de Zetes, where Phineus tells of the Harpies' attacks on him, one hears of the atrocities Amycus performs before one

1. Ronsard, unlike Theocritus, stresses that Castor defeats Lynceus by means of a feint, tricking him into a false move (ll.712-24, p.325). He has perhaps remembered the duel between Rinaldo and Sacripante in Orlando Furioso, II. 9. 3-8. He will transfer this passage to the Franciade. See Leslie, p.106.

sees any. Ronsard is able to anticipate the action in this way by introducing the figure of Timante, who bears a certain resemblance to Phineus.¹ Timante tells the crew how Amycus forces the strongest of those who land on his shores into single combat with him. The king of the Bebryces leads his opponent into a field 'Où d'un grand coup de coeste il leur froisse les os' (1.152, p.300). This constitutes the first mention of the cestus, about which one learns more in Timante's description of Amycus' cave (11.207-8, p.302). The cestus will figure large in the evocation of the preparations for battle (11.393-8, p.310). The use of the character of Timante focuses attention on the tyrant, establishing that he is a cruel bully, and throws into relief the size and efficiency of Amycus' weapons, which then become the basis for repetition.

Many aspects of the structure of the poem as a whole are determined by the fact that it is a fragment. Ronsard allows his hymn to retain the asymmetrical quality that one finds in Theocritus; if anything, indeed, he reinforces it, by expanding the section featuring Pollux. An epic poem must give an impression of coherence; but a poetic miniature may licitly create an effect of imbalance, darting its shafts of light where it chooses. Ronsard has, it is true, carefully constructed a framework for the poem, which begins and ends with the theme of a storm, and in which he suggests that the twins represent Gaspard and Odet de Coligny. However, as often in the miniature epic, the allegory is incomplete.

1. Compare the suggestion that Timante is more like a ghost than a man (1.99, p.298) with the description of Phineus as a 'songe vain'; see also Timante's starved appearance and filthy hair (11.101-103, p.298; compare the Aeneid, III, 11.590-4).

The opponents of the Dioscuri: Amycus, Lynceus, Idas, do not seem to correspond to any specific figures. The violence of the two episodes narrated – especially of the second part, with its moral ambivalence – spills over into the framework surrounding them, and refuses to be entirely dispelled. The full implications of such structural features will be examined in Chapter 3.

(iv) Ronsard's Argonautic hymns as a diptych

In this section, too, thematic and structural considerations will intermingle; for the way Ronsard has shaped his two hymns reveals that he has taken isolated episodes from a classical author and re-formed them in order to produce a new poetic micro-cosm, in which one episode is related to the other. The structure again highlights the original treatment of the themes.

There are many signs that Ronsard intended his Hymne de Calaïs, et de Zetes, and his Hymne de Pollux et de Castor to be considered together. In the conclusion of the former, for instance, Ronsard dismisses Calais and Zetes, and looks forward to his next hymn:

Vostre Hymne est achevé, je ne vous loüray plus,
Je me veux souvenir de Castor et Pollux,
Enfans de Juppiter: je veux randre leur gloire
Comme j'ay faict la vostre à tout[•] jamais notoire ...

(ll.719-22, p.292)

Castor and Pollux are, Ronsard states, worthy of his poetry, unlike contemporary noblemen, who prefer to build palaces rather than to cherish the Muses. This assertion anticipates the parallel to be drawn in the second hymn between the Dioscuri and patrons.

Again, Castor and Pollux feature large amongst the crew-members of the Argo described in the Hymne de Calaïs, et de Zetes (ll.129-62, pp.263-4). The motif of their birth, so important in

the latter hymn as a means of opening up epic vistas, is already thrown into relief in the representation of their egg-shaped helmets (ll.137-40). Some twenty lines (ll.141-62) are devoted to an evocation of the robes they wear as they leave the ship; and again, as will be seen in the next chapter (pp.153-5), the circumstances of their birth are recalled.

Both poems are derived, in part at least, from the same sources, notably Apollonius of Rhodes and Valerius Flaccus; and this community of models suggests that the two hymns were composed with similar purposes in mind. Moreover, the end result of Ronsard's imitation in both cases is a structure that can be described as dual. The most obvious feature of this duality is the fact that both poems are about two brothers. The evocation of the Dioscuri in the Hymne de Calaïs, et de Zetes already prefigures the split structure of the Hymne de Pollux et de Castor:

L'un qui eut mieux piqué un beau cheval guerrier
Es champs Laconiens que d'estre marinier,
L'autre mieus escrimé que de tirer la rame ...
(ll.131-3, p.263)

Their inclusion here testifies to Ronsard's interest in pairs of protagonists. One thinks also of L'Orphée, where Orpheus' song is preceded by one sung by Chiron; or of Hylas, where Ronsard does not focus on Hylas alone, but first depicts the mighty Hercules. As Chapter 5 indicates, duality plays an important role in the Franciade as well (see especially p.259).

The binary structure of the Hymne de Pollux et de Castor is particularly pronounced. The birth of the twins from the egg, described in the foregoing hymn, with Castor and Pollux emerging from opposite ends, would in some respects aptly represent the form of the Dioscuri hymn, enclosed on either side by Ronsard's introductory and concluding remarks. There is a clear parallelism

between the two parts of the hymn: in each, a son of Jupiter defeats an opponent or opponents seemingly stronger than himself. When Pollux offers to fight Amycus, he knows that he, as a son of Jupiter, will inevitably vanquish the tyrant, the offspring of a lesser god, Neptune (11.323-5, p.307). This theme, that those of lower status will certainly be overcome by their superiors, anticipates the moral drawn by Ronsard (and Theocritus) at the end of part two, when Idas is killed by Jove's thunderbolt:

ainsi en prent à ceulx
Qui veullent quereler à gens plus vaillans qu'eulx ...
(11.747-8, p.326)

This parallelism, which holds together the two apparently disparate sections, is carried over into smaller details not present in Theocritus. Thus in the first part, Amycus starts by threatening and challenging the crew; and Pollux replies, offering battle. In the second part, Lynceus challenges the two brothers, and is killed by Castor. In the duel with Lynceus, Castor strikes the first blow, just as Pollux did when fighting with Amycus. Castor is wounded in the left arm, making the spectators think he will lose; likewise, Pollux is the first to be thrown, causing Amycus' subjects to rejoice prematurely. The stock epic combat is here presented from two different angles.

Duality, although less obvious, is also found in the Hymne de Calaïs, et de Zetes. The theme of sacrifice, for instance, occurs twice. The first occasion is when Phineus performs a sacrifice in confirmation of his vow that the brothers will not be harmed if they help him (11.313-24, pp.271-2). This rite, underlining the epic solemnity and religious significance of the action, is found in neither Apollonius nor Flaccus; Ronsard has taken it from the Iliad, II, 11.402-18 - Agamemnon's prayer and sacrifice

to Zeus. Ronsard presents a second immolation in lines 491 to 493 (p.281), before Phineus agrees to prophesy for the Argonauts. Once again, Ronsard found this rite in neither Apollonius nor Flaccus; as Laumonier points out, he probably remembered passages in which Virgil speaks of white and black sacrificial victims (black victims are mentioned for instance in the Aeneid VI, 11.243-4, 11.249-51). The fact that Ronsard did not simply follow his main sources for either sacrifice suggests that he consciously established a parallel between them. With a typical taste for duplication, he included not one sacrifice, but two.¹

The juxtaposition of the two hymns in the first edition also implies that Ronsard meant them to be seen as a diptych. In later editions, however, the links between the two poems are blurred.² In 1560 and 1567, although the hymns are placed in different books, a pattern is still found, underscoring the points of contact. Each

1. Ronsard probably regarded sacrifices as a vital part of the epic, for he included several in the Franciade. See C.R. Fortescue, 'Classical Mythology in French Sixteenth-Century Poetry, With Special Reference to the Works of Ronsard', p.193. The author points out that the notion of pagan ritual fascinated Ronsard. See also the 'Preface svr la Franciade', Lm. XVI-2, p.345:

Tu n'oublieras jamais de rendre le devoir
qu'on doit à la divinité, oraisons, prieres,
et sacrifices, commençant et finissant
toutes tes actions par Dieu, auquel les
hommes attribuent autant de noms qu'il
a de puissances et de vertus, imitateur
d'Homere et de Virgile qui n'y ont
jamais failli.

2. See R. Lebègue, 'Remarques sur la structure des recueils de Ronsard', for the possible reasons behind the curious structure of the two original books of hymns.

comes third in the book it occupies: the Hymne de Calais, et de Zetes in Book One, and the Hymne de Pollux et de Castor in Book Two. The former still anticipates the latter through its position. The poems follow a hymn of philosophical import: the Hymne de l'Eternité in Book One, and the Hymne de la Philosophie in Book Two; they also come after a hymn celebrating a great personage: the Hymne du Roy de France Henry II (Book One), and Le Temple du Connestable et des Chastillons (Book Two). But in 1584, the context of the Dioscuri hymn has changed completely. It is flanked on one side by a Christian allegory, the Hercule chrestien, and on the other by the Seasonal Hymns. In 1587 the hymns are, nevertheless, once more placed side by side, as if in recognition of their affinities.

Ronsard has thus selected two episodes from the Argonautic legend that are separate in his sources, and has been led by his taste for duality to suggest connections between them. The traditional substance of myth has been cast in an original mould. Jason fades in significance besides the two pairs of brothers, who present the poet with the opportunity to try his hand at parallelism and variation, and also to explore his relationship with his dedicatees. Eulogistic aims come to the fore, just as they will in the Franciade. .

The first section of this chapter analysed the dominant themes of epic and mythological narratives in the sixteenth century, dividing them into four main groups, the last of which contained representatives of poetic creativity. The figure of Orpheus provided a transition to the second section (the

Argonautic material), since he was at once one of the prisci poetae and someone who had been connected with the quest for the Golden Fleece. Certain poets stand out above the others in each phase of the survey: thus Baïf is important in the realm of the transformation fable; he and Ronsard tend to dominate the field of amorous poems; Belleau immediately attracts one's attention in the domain of the aetiological myth; and the Neo-Latins play a vital role in the growth of legends about the prisci poetae, encouraging Ronsard and Belleau to produce their studies of the artist. As for the Argonautic pieces, there it is Ronsard who produces the most important works.

The initial stages of this examination suggested that the sixteenth-century poets are attracted to descriptive elements, to poems recounting an action, such as a metamorphosis, but also offering scope for colourful evocations. In Baïf, this predilection leads to passages of near-stasis, as a careful study of Le Laurier indicates.¹ Not all the little poems are epic in nature; some writers are only too pleased to be diverted from a serious purpose, in order to occupy themselves with story-telling. This absence of an epic aim is perfectly legitimate when the material they are treating is purely mythological; but it poses more problems when the subject-matter is essentially heroic. The tension between the heroic and the descriptive or lyrical, which will form a dominant theme of Chapter 5, is clearly felt in many of the Argonautic poems. Those on Orpheus, for instance, seem torn between focusing on Orpheus as the poet-hero, and presenting him solely as a tragic lover. And Ronsard's Hylas illustrates

1. See Demerson's edition of Le Premier Livre des poemes, pp.41-3.

the difficulties the poet encounters when writing in epic vein: the descriptive potential of Hylas' idyllic world - with its fountain and flowers - is constantly pulling him away from the sterner figure of the demigod.

The two Argonautic hymns of Ronsard seem the most truly epic of the works considered here. As will be seen, they contain passages of description that appear to constitute digressions from the heroic purpose; but they tell of conflicts between the hero and his antagonists. They concern figures endowed with nationalistic significance by contemporary fêtes. Moreover, they represent a complete re-shaping of traditional material, as was suggested by the analysis of their structure and interconnection. Two episodes, separated from one another in Apollonius of Rhodes and Valerius Flaccus, are, it is true, presented as fragments; but one is made to anticipate the other, and novel meanings are conveyed by virtue of this very fact. Ronsard pours into these works his musings on the status of the poet. They contain personal preoccupations moulded in original fashion; they lead one to think that the ancient heroic poem was indeed capable of being revived in the sixteenth century.

The form of the Argonautic hymns contributes much to their effect. Structure is, in fact, a vital tool for the sixteenth-century writer of miniature epics. It enables him to borrow a myth from another author, but then to endow the fable with a sense of novelty. The manner in which the poets of the period exploit the possibilities afforded by structure will be the subject of the next chapter.

CHAPTER THREE

THE STRUCTURE OF THE FRAGMENT: CONTRACTION AND EXPANSION

It was seen in the previous chapter that Ronsard's two Argonautic hymns consist of epic narratives introduced and concluded by means of non-epic material provided by the poet. They are good examples of the way the sixteenth-century writer tried, in structural terms, to expand the scope of his fragments or to endow them with a sense of completeness. They represent a fusion of the two structural features that will be considered in this chapter: the careful encompassing and delineation of a legend, on the one hand, and the expansion of its limits, on the other.

(1) CONTRACTION

If one takes first the urge to circumscribe the epic material, one finds that many poets are concerned to provide a framework for their fable. They seem anxious to allow the piece to stand on its own, freed from the constraints of dependence upon other texts. Rather like Ovid in the Metamorphoses, whilst operating on a much smaller scale, they try to provide a context in which tales derived from other authors may achieve their own coherence. This approach to the materials finds expression in several types of structure, and might conveniently be termed the vignette-technique.

(a) Two mythological narratives intertwined

One sort of structure characteristic of the vignette-technique

intertwines two mythological narratives, and has as its starting-point the legendary past. Ronsard employs this mode of presentation in Le Ravissement de Cephalé, written around 1546, and divided into three 'poses'.¹ The first 'pose' concerns the Nereids, who are weaving a mantle for Neptune. Perhaps recalling how Ovid reproduced tales told by the daughters of Minyas whilst they were spinning (Metamorphoses IV, ll.36-388), Ronsard depicts one of the Nereids narrating a story, the subject of which provides the title for the poem.² This tale fills the second 'pose'. The third 'pose' returns to the figure of Neptune, who dons his new cloak in order to attend the wedding of Peleus and Thetis.³

The two mythological pieces are linked by parallels. Both begin with an aubade: in the Cephalus-tale, this is addressed

1. The 'pose' structure is found also in La Defloration de Lede, which is probably an earlier poem than Le Ravissement. The Defloration is divided into four 'poses'. Perhaps Ronsard was imitating the form of the longest psalms translated by Marot, as published in the first editions. However that may be, the subdivision focuses attention upon the picturesque nature of the myth. The resulting poems resemble certain contemporary works of art, such as the series of mythological scenes covering the walls of Fontainebleau and other châteaux, or the sort of painting purportedly described in Ronsard's Des Peintures contenues dedans un tableau (Lm. I, pp.259-64). See Cave, 'Ronsard's Mythological Universe', p.162. Rosso, in an imitation of Michelangelo, depicted the ravishment of Leda; so in this way too one detects a possible link between Ronsard's work and the visual arts. See M. Roy, 'La Léda de Michel-Ange et celle du Rosso'.

La Péruse seems to have copied Ronsard's structure in his Ode à I. Boiceau, which is divided into 'pauses' varying in length from 16 to 72 lines.

2. See P. Laumonier, Ronsard, poète lyrique, pp.390-3.

3. Ronsard presents Thetis as daughter of Neptune; tradition made her a child of Nereus.

to Dawn herself (ll.81-8, *Lm.* II, p.137); in the prelude, one nymph arouses her sisters. The subject of the interpolated tale is the love between the goddess Aurora and the human being, Cephalus. This recalls the relationship forming the background to the tale: the wedding of the goddess Thetis to the mortal Peleus. It fills in some details not revealed in the framework, such as the shame a goddess feels on falling in love with a man (compare line 165).¹ In general, it hints at the possibility of such a love surviving. To achieve such optimism, Ronsard has considerably altered Ovid, who portrayed Aurora abducting Cephalus whilst the latter's wife, Procris, was still alive, and then sending him back to his wife when he continued to pine for her.² By contrast, Ronsard closes the interpolated fable on a note of gentle humour: Aurora, with Cephalus besides her in the heavens,

bien peu se soucie ores
De nous allumer le jour. (ll.247-8, p.145)

The gaiety of the second legend spills over into the framework: the way in which one views the wedding of Peleus and Thetis is different from one's reaction to the poem of Catullus, who sees the episode nostalgically as belonging to a golden age long since gone.³

In this poem, one legend is enched within another; parallels between the two are implied, but not made explicit. The technique will be further developed in the Ode à Michel de l'Hospital, the

1. The implicit parallel between the two relationships is deepened by frequent echoes of Dido's love for Aeneas in the depiction of Aurora's suffering. See Laumonier II, notes to pages 142 and 143; and W.H. Storer, Virgil and Ronsard, pp.44-8.

2. Metamorphoses VII, ll.698-713. See D. Stone, 'The Sixteenth Century and Antiquity ...', pp.42-4, and note 14.

3. See Morrison, 'Ronsard and Catullus ...', pp.244-5.

complexity of which stems from a combination of several of the structural features to be discussed here. Various mythological time-scales - such as the Muses' seeking out of Jupiter, and the Gigantomachy - are juxtaposed. Parallels are, once again, adumbrated: the attack of Ignorance on the Muses is similar to the onslaught of the Giants on the gods.

(b) Narratives with a prelude

In another sort of vignette-structure, the fable is introduced by a prelude linking it with the poet's own situation, or making a point that the fable will illustrate. But then the mythological narrative gathers momentum, and is allowed to unfold with no further comment.

The pattern of introduction-plus-fable seems first to have been represented by Ronsard's Defloration de Lede. Ronsard opens his poem in Petrarchan tone, with an expression of his obsession amoureuse (ll.1-24, Lm. II, pp.67-9).¹ He then introduces the tale of Leda as an example of how Jupiter too was seized 'De telle amoureuse rage' (l.26). After this, the framework has fulfilled its purpose; it does not reappear at the end. Just as the 'pose' structure allows different scenes to co-exist, so introduction and mythological tale are juxtaposed without full commentary: the reader is left to deduce the parallels between the poet and Jupiter.

A similar pattern is found in Amymone, which Baïf probably composed in 1556. He dedicated it to Ronsard (perhaps, one speculates, in recognition of what the structure of the poem owed

1. Compare Petrarch's fifth sonnet, and Virgil's evocation of Orpheus mourning Eurydice, Georgics IV, ll.464-6.

to Ronsard). The piece opens with a lengthy evocation of winter, which is seen largely in terms of the absence of spring.¹ The poet, having described the coldness that makes one stay at home, apostrophizes Ronsard, whose love for Marie has caused him to stay away from Paris; he draws from Ronsard's case conclusions about the power of love, which he then illustrates in his fable.

There are more links between prelude and fable than in the poem by Ronsard. The introduction contains motifs (apart from the explicit one of the potency of passion) which will be picked up in the main narrative. Analogies are suggested, though once again they are not formulated directly. One stanza contains the metaphor of the honour of the flowers being drowned: an anticipation of the fate of Aymone, who will be robbed of her honour, and who will have a spring named after her. The verb ravir is used:

Mais les debordez ruisseaux
 Sur les détruites prairies
 Noyent sous leurs troubles eaux
 L'honneur des herbes fanies,
 Et ravissent à nos yeux
 Leur regard solacieux. (ll.19-24, M-L. II, p.128)

Again, the metaphor of lines 31 to 33 is connected with the main body of the narrative: it introduces, with its personification, distinct sexual overtones:

Plus la vendange ne geint
 Sous l'abrier, qui de sa charge
 Criant enroué l'estreint ... (p.129)²

This anticipates lines 599 to 600:

1. This presentation of winter in terms of something else is in many ways comparable with Baïf's fondness for preterition, which will be discussed in Chapter 4 (see pages 228 to 230).

2. Compare the evocation of autumn in Baïf's sixth eclogue, Les Amoureux, ll.31-2 (in Poems, ed. by M. Quainton, p.58).

La vierge rebelle geint

Sous le grand Dieu qui l'estreint. (p.144)

Furthermore, lines 25 to 30, in which Baïf discusses one of the implications of winter, the fact that maidens are unable to gather flowers, prefigure the metaphor employed when Neptune ravishes Aymone. He

Cueult le fleuron verdissant

Sur le verdoyant riuage ... (ll.609-10, p.144)¹

Such verbal echoes indicate the care with which Baïf has connected his introduction to the main body of the poem. Moreover, the enjoyment of sexual love is implicitly connected with the natural cycle: Aymone is destined to be ravished, just as the grapes are to be pressed; like a flower, she is ready for picking. The rape also acquires a picturesque character, indicative of Baïf's ability to subdue elements of violence and blend them into an aesthetically pleasing whole.² Although the poem recounts the loss of a maiden's virginity, it is far from tragic in tone.

(c) Narratives with both prelude and conclusion

Another type of structure supplies the fable with a conclusion as well as an introduction, constructing a framework that is non-mythological in content. Just as, in the survey of themes, it was seen that poets of the mid sixteenth century often imitated Neo-Latins who had composed pieces several decades previously, so here one finds two non-Pléiade poems in particular that seem to foreshadow techniques developed later.

1. Compare lines 43 to 45, which depict the 'laboureur' who 'Cueult le fruict de son labeur'.

2. Compare 'son joly pucelage' (l.608), and Love's 'ébas' (l.612).

The first is Luigi Alamanni's tenth eclogue: Adone. Daphni e Menalca, in which the threnody for Adonis is placed in an Italian setting. Two shepherds, Daphni and Dameta, utter the lament on the banks of the Arno. They are introduced in lines 1 to 8 (p.155). After the first part of the dirge, Alamanni returns to the framework, having Dameta say that he likes Daphni's account, but recalls other words (l.68, ll.70-4, p.157).¹ Dameta then continues the imitation of Bion. In line 129, Alamanni once more returns to the context of his narrative: Daphni sings the praise of the 'sicilian Poeta' (l.130), 'Per cui Sicilia eternamente ha vita' (l.133). The poem ends on a calm, homely note contrasting with the intensity of Venus' passion:

Cosi parlando il ciel gia bruno intorno
 Fece al fin segno al buon Dameta e Daphni
 Che tempo era à trouar l'albergo homai.
 (ll.139-41, p.160)

Suffering is erased along with the colour of the sky. The shepherds are returning home to the oblivion of sleep: for Venus there can be no forgetting. The legend narrated deals with the plight of a goddess who cannot die; the framework, on the other hand, is firmly rooted in ordinary pastoral life.

Alamanni thus provides a prelude and a postscript that contrast with his mythological account. He also reminds the reader in the course of the poem that the tale is being told by two shepherds. A similar framework - although it does not have the central section - is found in Scève's Saulsaye: another eclogue. Like

1. Dameta refers here and in line 130 to a Sicilian from whom he first heard the dirge. This is Theocritus, to whom the sixteenth century generally attributed the lament for Adonis (see Chapter 1, pp.39-40, and p.43). Alamanni is acknowledging his debt to his source.

Alamanni, Scève has evolved a technique that the Pléiade will later exploit.

The full title of Scève's poem: Saulsaye: Eglogue de la vie solitaire, at once indicates that the transformation of nymphs is not its sole subject. And indeed, the account of the metamorphosis is inserted into a discussion between Antire and Philerme on the merits of the solitary life. Antire favours the wealth and activity that town life can bring; Philerme, who has retired to the country to escape from an unhappy love-affair, prefers to be close to nature and to live from day to day, free from the worries attached to riches.¹

The fable narrated here has been seen as a largely irrelevant digression, interrupting a coherent debate on town and country life.² It is certainly true that the framework attracts the reader's attention and constitutes a major part of the poem. Yet the transformation-episode does have links with the framework. In combination with the prelude and conclusion, it suggests how the same thing may be interpreted in different ways by different people. Antire sees the fable in a pessimistic light. This accords with his description of the place to which Philerme has fled as a gloomy, brooding region. He refers to it as

ce champestre,
Lieu solitaire, ou la Saulsaye espaisse
Soubs doulce horreur est de mort une espee,
Ou nul (fors toy, et tout desespoir) vient.
(11.12-15, p.88)

The oxymoron, 'doulce horreur', already suggests that Antire's

1. One hears in his ideas an echo of Virgil's 'O fortunatos nimium ...' (Georgics II, 11.458-540). Compare also Délie, CDXIV.

2. See pages 166 to 167 of Françon's edition.

view of the scene is open to a completely different interpretation. His evocation of the landscape around him, in which the mention of the 'Saulsaye' prefigures the fable proper, prepares the reader for his assessment of the transformation as something negative. Having told his tale, Antire expresses his distress at hearing of this flight from the demands of life:

Finablement feirent ceste Saulsaye,
Dont par pitié il fault que dueil j'en aye.
(11.411-12, p.100)

He does not make his ideas on the metamorphosis explicit; but he clearly thinks that it might have been averted by leading an active life; for him, it represents the perils awaiting the recluse.¹ In his opinion, the nymphs failed: they were unable to anticipate or to meet the demands of love. The satyrs were tempted because they led a solitary existence, with little to distract them from the demands of the flesh.

Evangelical, anti-monastic allegory - as found in Rabelais, and in Marguerite de Navarre's Heptameron - seems near the surface here. Yet it is soon submerged again; for, just as the willow-filled scene has different connotations for Philerme, who relishes the very shadows of 'ce val tenebreux' (1.714), so his interpretation of the legend would be opposed to that of Antire. He would see the nymphs' flight as a valid abnegation of the love whose cruelty he deplores (11.32-89, pp.89-90). He would deem their transformation an exemplary choice of solitude, of contact with nature. For Philerme, the willows are a harmonious part of the scene, not symbols of mourning.

1. See lines 453 to 468, p.101. Marguerite de Navarre stresses the importance of activity in her Fable du faulx cuyder (11.141-2, 11.155-62). Perhaps Scève found the germ of his argument in her poem.

The poem closes with Philerme's invitation to Antire to spend one night with him in the country, and with a veritable rhapsody on the pleasures of rustic life (ll.625-730, pp.107-10). The willows come to represent stillness and introspection; the theme of metamorphosis seems to reflect a yearning for order and peace.

The prelude, in which Philerme tells Antire of his suffering, caused by love, and in which Antire expresses his distaste for the solitary life, occupies the first 244 lines of this 730-line poem. Line 413 sees the resumption of the conversation, with Antire pointing a moral:

Et certain est, comme chose facile,
Que qui vit seul il luy est difficile
Qu'avec le temps en desespoir ne meure.
(ll.421-3, p.100)

The narrative is thus followed by 318 lines of discussion. Dialogue is neatly balanced with description of events. The fable is no mere appendage: true, it is but loosely linked to the debate that precedes and follows it; yet this fact ensures that the tale may assume a symbolic value free from the demands of didacticism, and that it may suggest how a phenomenon (the solitude of nature, or the change from one form of life to another) can be interpreted in widely differing ways. Like the framework, it testifies to the subjectivity of human perception: love may be cruel or sweet, the countryside idyllic or frightening, according to the gaze that is fixed upon them. The moral of the tale is not developed, its real import not fully discussed by the characters, since this would imply that events can be reduced to a clear-cut statement of fact.

Scève provides for his fable a setting that throws light upon it whilst not limiting its scope by explicit allegorization. Both he and Alamanni antedate the Pléiade poets in their presentation

of the mythological fragment. The framework they use anticipates the way Ronsard will provide both a prelude and a conclusion to his Argonautic hymns, whilst developing the technique in order to incorporate remarks on his own poetic methods. The parallels with the main fable which are implicit in the framework of Scève's and Alamanni's compositions may be compared in particular with the Hymne de Calais, et de Zetes, where the analogy between Phineus and the inspired poet is adumbrated, but not plainly formulated.

In Le Narssis of 1554, Ronsard is already moving towards the sort of structure found in his Argonautic hymns. He begins the poem with an invitation to François Charbonnier to accompany him into the country and enjoy the first signs of spring. The climate is one of optimism (ll.1-40, VI, pp.73-6): the repeated ja creates a sense of expectancy. The prologue also introduces the world of mythology: for lines 15 to 20 portray Venus, the Graces, wood deities, and Vulcan; lines 21 to 24 mention Bacchus and Ceres; in lines 35 to 36, Procne and Philomela appear, ushering in the theme of metamorphosis.¹ Most significantly, one has a reference to the Argonautic expedition, proving that Jason's crew is already in Ronsard's mind as a potential subject:

Ceste belle saison me remet en memoire
Le printans que Jason épointonné de gloire
Esleut la fleur de Grece, et de son aviron
Baloya le premier de Tethys le gyron ...

(ll.37-40, pp.75-6)

The Narcissus legend is then introduced as another episode redolent of spring. By means of this prologue, the mythological

1. The Philomela myth recurs in Le Houx, ll.75-8, VI, p.138, where it introduces a sombre note into the description of the cave and its surroundings.

world is presented as one of youth and pristine beauty: one not excluding suffering, however, as the reference to Philomela indicates, and as the tale of Narcissus will make clear.

The framework reappears at the end of the poem, where the possible reasons for this optimism are adumbrated. Ronsard has been saved from his enemies by Michel de l'Hospital and D'Avanson; his mention of the voyage he undertook in stormy seas reminds one of the allusion to Jason (ll.185-90, pp.82-3). Just as Ronsard's mood must have been one of renewed hope, so his attitude to myth contains fewer shadows than in some of his other poems. Le Narssis is a good example of the way a prelude and conclusion can control the reader's reactions to the myth and also introduce reflections on the poet's own situation. In the two Argonautic hymns, these reflections will in fact suggest an allegorical interpretation for the fable narrated (as indicated in Chapter 2, pages 109 to 111, and 115 to 117). Ronsard can be seen to be moving towards a structure that will lend a sense of completeness to the fragment, by providing keys to exegesis, as well as a simple prologue and conclusion. As will be suggested, however, Ronsard will also employ in the Argonautic hymns techniques that have more to do with deviation than with the careful rounding off of material.

One cannot infer that, in the development of structures for the epic fragment, Ronsard was influenced by Alamanni and Scève; but another poet, a member of the Pléiade, can be identified with greater certainty as his precursor. This poet is Baïf, whose Le Laurier, composed in 1553, is a vignette-type poem with a specific counterpart in a work of Ronsard.

Baïf first portrays himself walking in the shade of bay trees to escape from the heat, and then deciding to sing of the laurel in the hope that so doing might enable him to forget

la rage
 Qui de Mastin me vengea,
 Quand mon forcené courage
 Contre luy se degorgea ... (ll.12-15, p.43)

He thus starts by providing a glimpse of his personal situation, before moving to a blason of the laurel. The mythological narrative begins in line 46. The fact that Baïf focuses first on the tree, before moving on to the maiden, means that the transformation is anticipated.¹

Having related how Daphne is changed into a bay tree and then apostrophized by Apollo, Baïf returns to his framework. The poet tells the bay that it has lost almost all the beauty it possessed in female form (ll.441-50, pp.54-5). He places his own interpretation on the legend: the metamorphosis is an abnegation of life, not a triumph. He then comes back to the blason, with the characteristic 'Dieu gard'' formula (ll.451-5, p.55). The last stanza becomes an encomium of the dedicatee, Monsieur de Fizes.

By inserting his mythological material into such a setting, Baïf is establishing a particular form of epyllion, in which a blason is illustrated by a legend and a fable is embraced by the praise of an object. Ronsard's Le Houx, composed a year later, closely resembles Le Laurier, and clearly suggests that Ronsard has borrowed from the Baïf whose role in French poetry is so often limited by critics to that of a mere translator. In this field, Baïf was the innovator, the inventor of a blend of Marotic blason and mythological poem.²

1. Baïf's representation of the qualities of the tree recalls the first two stanzas of Flaminio's 'De laudibus lauri'.

2. See Raymond, L'Influence de Ronsard ..., I, pp.153-4; and the notes to Le Laurier in Demerson's edition of the Premier Livre des poemes, pp.124-8.

Ronsard adopts a 'stille doux' (l.15, VI, p.136) and a heptasyllabic line reminiscent of Baïf's poem. Like Baïf, he indulges in rhetorical hesitations concerning the subject he is about to select for praise (ll.1-16, pp.135-6). One of the themes Ronsard mentions as being susceptible of poetic treatment is in fact the fable of Daphne (ll.6-8, p.135). He also finally chooses an object serving to protect the dedicatee from the hot summer sun (ll.194-8, p.143; compare Le Laurier, ll.26-30, M-L. II, pp.43-4). Then, again like Baïf, Ronsard tells of the metamorphosis of one of Diana's maidens. His evocation of the nymph asleep near a fountain, on a carpet of moss (ll.88-9, p.139), recalls that of Baïf, particularly in the mention of the heat of the day, of 'Un vieil Coudrier racoursi' (l.68; compare Le Laurier, ll.96-8, M-L. II, p.45), and of the way the nymph drops her bow and arrows as she falls asleep.¹ However, only Ronsard evokes the cave in which the nymph hides from the sun (ll.61-6, p.138); on the other hand, Baïf is alone in lingering over the picture of the nymph drinking at the stream (ll.111-15, p.46), and in presenting the pursuit scene. Indeed, Ronsard's nymph is actually ravished (ll.123-4, p.140): the metamorphosis consequently has a different signification in the two poems: in Baïf's, it is a means whereby Daphne saves her virginity; in Ronsard's, it is at once a punishment and an escape from the torment of shame.

Ronsard has imitated the form of Baïf's poem, but used it to convey different implications. Having presented the scenes of confrontation and transformation in a manner very unlike that of

1. 'L'ardent chien de Jupiter' (l.60) reminds one of lines 7 to 8 of Baïf's composition.

Baïf, Ronsard rejoins the latter in his final wish: he hopes that Brinon's holly will enjoy immortality, the company of birds, clement weather, and a swarm of industrious bees at its base (11.239-64, p.146).¹ The poem ends on the motif of fame:

Jamais le tems rigoureux
Ne te livre à la vieillesse,
Mais, Houx, puisse tu sans cesse
Vivre en autant de renom
Que ton possesseur Brinon. (11.260-4, p.146)

These lines recall lines 281 to 285 of Le Laurier (p.50). Both Ronsard and Baïf reveal their concern for the lasting nature of poetic creations. Both find in the world of evergreens an image for the immortality of poetry.

In this way, Ronsard derives from Baïf a structure that enables the poet to use a mythological narrative for encomiastic ends. This prefigures the Hymne de Pollux et de Castor in particular; there, Ronsard's aim is to praise the twins and, through them, his patrons. Though Ronsard treats the Argonautic material in original manner, he is not alone in placing his legends in a setting that endows them with a sense of completeness.

(2) EXPANSION

The structural features so far discussed may be attributed to the poet's desire to present his fable as a neatly fashioned whole. Others, however, seem to reflect an opposing aim: that of

1. Compare Vauquelin de la Fresnaye's Le Chêne creus de Perrin, 11.62-94, pp.83-5. The Foresteries were published in 1555; the proximity in date to Ronsard's poem, and Vauquelin's specific mention of bees, make it seem likely that he knew Le Houx.

showing how the fragment presented might be integrated into a larger epic structure. One encounters yet again the interplay of episodic and encyclopaedic urges (urges discussed in Chapters 1 and 2). In the poems grouped here under the 'expansion' category, the emphasis is on incompleteness; the fragment points beyond itself to episodes it is unable to treat in full. The poet finds a way of compensating for the fragmentary nature and limited scope of his piece. It is interesting to see this second type of structural characteristic coming to the fore in the two Argonautic hymns of Ronsard, at a time when the desire to write an epic is uppermost in the poet's mind. The fragment is something that the writer cultivates whilst ever-conscious that he must transcend it if he is to create a magnum opus.

The second type of structural feature is found in the myth proper, rather than in any prefatory material, and embraces devices that may be divided into two groups. First, one has descriptive passages, which expand the work in a spatial sense, constituting an additional perspective; they make one think of an artist, widening the vistas of his picture by portraying, not only a room, but also a window and the view beyond. Secondly, one finds devices that enlarge the temporal range of reference in the work.

(a) Extension in spatial terms

In including in their compositions detailed descriptions of decorated objects, the sixteenth-century writers were using a device hallowed by time; for several ancient poets took delight in evoking scenes embroidered on garments, or depicted on domestic articles; or works of art (employing the rhetorical technique known as ekphrasis); or ornate weapons and armour, such

as shields.¹ Thus in Book One of the Argonautica, Apollonius represents the cloak that Pallas wove for Jason (ll.721-67); Virgil depicts a mantle offered by Aeneas to Cloanthus (Aeneid V, ll.250-7); in his sixty-fourth hymn, Catullus portrays the scene on the coverlet of the bridal bed; and in Book Six of his Metamorphoses, Ovid describes the tapestries woven by Pallas and Arachne. Again, it was a tradition of pastoral poetry (and one that the Pléiade was to adopt) to evoke in detail an object offered as a prize by one shepherd to another in some impromptu poetry contest. The ivy-wood bowl offered by the goatherd to Thyrsis in Theocritus' first idyl is a good example; it was to be recalled by Ronsard in two of his pastoral poems (Lm. XII, pp.148-9; and XIII, pp.85-7). And in Virgil's third eclogue, Menalcas and Damoetas describe the cups they are presenting as prizes (ll.35-48). Some ancient works were entirely devoted to the evocation of paintings; thus Philostratus Lemnius produced a collection - the Eikones - of seventy-four descriptions of paintings representing historical and mythological scenes. He was imitated by his grandson, Philostratus the Younger, who wrote seventeen such examples of ekphrasis. As for armour descriptions, the most famous was that of Achilles' shield, evoked by Homer in the Iliad, XVIII, ll.478-609, and by Hesiod in The Shield, ll.139-320, and imitated by Virgil in the Aeneid, VIII, ll.626-728. In the fourth Dialogue of Le Caron, 'Ronsard, Ov, de la Poësie' (fol.127 recto - 149 verso), the speaker designated as Ronsard discusses the passage from the Iliad, and proposes an allegorical interpretation (fol. 141 verso - 142 verso). This is proof of a

1. See Delacourcelle, Chapter 3, pp.61-97; and Demerson, La Mythologie classique ..., p.570.

close study of the Homeric description; but there is no direct imitation of the text in Ronsard's work, nor, it seems - if one ignores translations - in any other French poet of the period.

Mediaeval writers, too, loved to portray ornate objects.¹ The Roman de Thèbes depicts Amphiareus' chariot, made by Vulcan (ll.4713-78, I, pp.230-3 of L. Constans's edition).² Amongst its elaborate descriptions, this represents the attack on Olympus. A more likely model for the object-descriptions of the Pléiade poets, however, and one nearer to them in time, is Sannazaro. Various mythological scenes adorn the temple to Pales in Arcadia: satyrs pursuing some nymphs; Mercury, about to steal Apollo's cattle, or, in another scene, playing his pipes as he watches Argus guarding the white heifer.³

Writers of theoretical works also showed interest in the composition of detailed descriptions. Erasmus, for instance, was concerned with the problem of rendering vividly, not only primary events, but also artistic creations, such as sculptures and paintings. In the second part of his De utraque verborum ac rerum copia, he explores the rhetorical technique of enargeia, demonstrating how both real and imaginary things can be illustrated by elaborate verbal representation.⁴

Of greater relevance in relation to the Pléiade is the fact that Neo-Latins composing mythological and epic fragments also

1. See Delacourcelle, pp.61-5.

2. See Fortescue, Chapter 4, especially page 104.

3. See M. Scherillo's edition, pp.36-41. - A French translation of Sannazaro's Arcadia, by Jean Martin, was published in 1544.

4. Omnia opera, Basle, Froben, 1540, I, pp.67-8. See Cave, 'Enargeia: Erasmus and the Rhetoric of Presence in the Sixteenth Century', and The Cornucopian Text, I. i, pages 27 to 33.

included in their works detailed descriptions. For example, Stoa, in his Orpheos libri tres (a work which, by virtue of its length, perhaps merits more than the appellation 'fragment'), gives an extended evocation of the marble temple in which Apollo places the severed head of Orpheus (III, ll.439-49, fol. E2 verso - E3 recto).¹ Nearly synonymous words convey an impression of the variety and grandeur of the objects inside the temple, and of the way the light shines upon them.² An atmosphere of decorative richness is established, and wider vistas are opened up; for whereas Orpheus but a few lines before was being torn apart by frenzied Bacchants and likened to a hunted animal, he is now seen in a setting that prepares the reader for his apotheosis. Although the description of the temple contains no reference to other sections of mythology, it does pave the way to a completely different view of the vates. It anticipates Ronsard's introduction of decorated objects as a means of filling in the background to his heroes.

(i) Descriptions of domestic articles and of garments

All these influences must have contributed to the taste of the mid sixteenth-century poets for inserting vivid descriptions into their work. Taking everyday objects and clothes first, one finds several poets, from Ronsard onwards, portraying them at length.

1. There is perhaps an echo here of Ovid's description of the Palace of the Sun, Metamorphoses II, ll.1-18 - also imitated by Alamanni, in his Favola di Phetonte, ll.251-80, pp.117-18.

2. 'centum', l.439; 'uariis', l.440; 'multis', l.442; 'uariarum', l.445; 'cauernoso', l.447, are epithets suggesting grandeur; 'micat', l.440; 'praefulgent', l.441; 'clara', l.443; 'igniuomi', 'lucent', l.444; 'accenso', 'fulgerent', 'igne', l.445; 'nitet', 'coruscat', l.448; 'rutilans auri', l.449, are all words suggesting the play of light.

Ronsard's Defloration de Lede, which M. Raymond placed in his collection of Mannerist poems, contains an extended evocation of Leda's basket, on to which many scenes are crowded. The basket reflects in microcosm the structure of the poem as a whole, with its use of 'poses' as a means of accumulating visually striking episodes. Ronsard begins by depicting

Une Aurore qui couvroit
Le ciel de fleurs colorées ... (ll.75-6, p.72)

He then evokes a wolf stalking sheep, one satyr taking milk from another, in jest, and two rams butting each other. Ronsard also represents Aurora's hair blowing in the wind caused by the panting breath of the horses (ll.77-80). And, whilst remembering Ovid (for example Metamorphoses II, ll.153-60) in his depiction of the Sun's chariot, he gives a detail not found in the Latin author, which succinctly evokes the fatigue of the horses:

Les nerfs s'enflent aus chevaus
Et leur puissance indontée
Se lasse sous les travaux
De la pénible montée. (ll.85-8, p.72)¹

The emphasis is on physical effort. The scene seems to prefigure the ravishment, with the expenditure of strength that the conquest demands from both Jupiter and Leda.

A movement that is, by contrast, slow is evoked in the tableau in which - with a reminiscence of Theocritus' first idyl - Ronsard portrays a shepherd intently watching a slug,

Qui lentement monte en haut
D'un lis, au bas de la prée. (ll.103-4, p.73)

Whilst the shepherd is absorbed in contemplation, a wolf creeps

1. The verb s'enfler anticipates the final line of the poem:

Et ja de peu à peu sent
Haute élever sa ceinture. (ll.231-2, p.79)

up on his flock.

This summary indicates the exuberance and the shifts in focus, from small creatures to cosmic events, which characterize the Ronsardian description. The evocation of the basket is, moreover, distinctly humorous, as the foregoing example and the depiction of the two satyrs (in which the dominant epithet is 'follet') indicate. Just as there is little connection between the various scenes depicted, so little attempt is made to establish a parallel between the basket and the description of Leda. Although the comic aspects ensure that the ravishment will not be seen in tragic light, and although the motif of exertion seems to prefigure the rape, the digression is to a large extent enjoyed in its own right. It allows the poet to include in his piece figures other than Jupiter, Leda, and her companions.

This evocation was probably remembered by Baïf in Le Ravissement d'Europe, where one finds a similar sketch of a 'panier d'or' (ll.119-58, M-L. II, pp.424-5). Baïf has, however, gone back to Moschus, producing a closer paraphrase than Ronsard. Baïf's basket represents fewer figures: he mentions only Io and Jupiter (ll.129-46, pp.424-5), and Hermes, slaughterer of Argus (ll.147-58). His intentions appear more serious than Ronsard's.¹ He suggests specific parallels between the scenes on the basket and the fable proper. The fate of Io anticipates that of Europa; and the evocation of the sea foreshadows the way

1. There is an interesting verbal echo between the two French poems, involving annominatio. Ronsard states that the sun 'tourne tout à l'entour / De l'anse ...' (ll.83-4); and Baïf writes that Argus' blood 'Va tournoyant l'entour de sa couronne' (l.152). Again, lines 67 to 72 of Baïf's composition (p.423) recall lines 75 to 80 of Ronsard's.

Europa herself will be borne over the waves on the back of the bull (ll.129-35, pp.424-5). The description introduces into the evocation of the carefree maidens a world of myth, in which animal and human forms are virtually interchangeable. Moreover, it hints by contrast at Europa's good fortune: she is able, unlike Io, to retain her usual shape. This piece of secondary narrative does, therefore, have a purpose in the economy of the plot: one of prefiguring and of suggesting comparisons.

At an early date, Ronsard thus showed interest in object-descriptions and was imitated by Baïf. But another of Ronsard's early evocations prefigures the Argonautic hymns more closely: for in Le Ravissement de Cephale, the poet depicts the Nereids embroidering a blue cloak for Neptune, and examines the scenes they weave into the garment. The earth, surrounded by a storm-tossed ocean, is first depicted, in lines inspired by the Aeneid, I, ll.81-156. Then one moves closer to the scene, with an evocation of the sailors in a ship at the mercy of wind and waves (ll.25-40, II, pp.134-5). One focuses next on the sound and movement of the sea, and on the pattern and colour of the storm-clouds (ll.41-56, p.135).¹ Line 45 reminds one that this is not a real happening, but a piece of embroidery: it states that the effect of the sky was obtained 'D'une soie et noire, et perse'. In the same way, one is told that Neptune is 'brodé d'or' (l.58). The depiction of Neptune represents a later stage in the tempest: for the sea-god calms the waters, allowing the episode to close with a representation of the rainbow (ll.73-6, p.136). On the cloak, therefore, the passage of a certain amount of time is suggested

1. These lines are omitted from the edition of 1587.

by the juxtaposition of scenes each taken from a different moment in the action, and mirroring, as in La Defloration de Lede, the 'pose' structure of the poem as a whole. With its depiction of Neptune, the cloak indicates how a digression can serve to deepen the reader's knowledge of characters from the main action. The prestige of Neptune is enhanced by the demonstration of his power to quieten the sea. More important still is the implication that Ronsard is already trying his hand at epic motifs: for the theme of the storm at sea will be developed in the Hymne de Pollux et de Castor (and indeed Neptune rescuing 'Le marinier blême' - line 59 - anticipates the role of Castor and Pollux), and in Book Two of the Franciade.

Le Ravissement de Cephale prefigures Ronsard's other Argonautic hymn, too; for in the Hymne de Calaïs, et de Zetes, Ronsard evokes another garment: the robe Castor and Pollux are wearing as they leave the Argo (ll.141-62, VIII, pp.263-4). This description illustrates even more clearly the way glimpses may be provided of other mythological episodes; but it also contains implicit reflections on Ronsard's own techniques. The garment was given to the twins by Leda, their mother,

Ouvriere, entrelassant d'une segrette voye
De petits fillets d'or aux fillets de la soye.
(ll.145-6)

The notion of creativity is stressed by the position of the epithet 'Ouvriere' at the beginning of the line, and anticipates passages in the Seasonal Hymns that suggest an allegory of the poet.¹ The way gold is woven into the silk of the garments reminds one of the

1. Compare the spider's web in the Hymne de l'Autonne, ll.289-99, XII, p.59; and see Stone, Ronsard's Sonnet Cycles, pp.108-12.

colours on Calais' and Zetes' wings, and also centres attention upon the notion of artistic creation.¹ In fact the cloak, with its depiction of flowers, silver rivers, and children playing 'par belles façons' (l.151), becomes a metaphor for the way art seizes upon reality and makes it into something beautiful. The robe bears a design representing the egg out of which the twins were born (ll.153-6): an event becomes a decorative motif in the realm of art. This is comparable with the manner in which the Dioscuri are to be recreated and praised by Ronsard himself in the Hymne de Pollux et de Castor. The last lines of the evocation, indeed, touch upon the problem of mimesis; the robe depicts a swan:

Ayant le col si beau et le regard si doux,
Que chascun eut pensé que Juppiter dessous
Encore aymoît caché, tant l'image portaitte
Du Cygne et de Leda, estoit vivement faicte.

(ll.159-62, p.264)

Phrases such as 'la peinture vive' (l.154) and 'au naturel' (l.158) also stress the notion of mimesis.

The cloak contributes to the process of epic magnification, by representing the splendid world that the Dioscuri inhabit, and by emphasizing the relationship of the twins to the gods.² It allows one to perceive the circumstances of their birth. But even more striking is the way the digression becomes an image of art, of how art creates an imitation of reality that could often almost be substituted for the genuine article. This examination of mimesis was adumbrated in Le Ravissement de Cephale, which focused on the materials used to produce the depiction of the tempest. As often

1. For a similar combination of materials, see Le Ravissement de Cephale, ll.17-20, II, p.134; and the Franciade, I, ll.1017-18, XVI-1, p.80. See below, p.277, and p.277, note 2.

2. See Cave, 'Ronsard's Mythological Universe', pp.160-1.

in Ronsard, myth is inextricably bound up with an exploration of the boundaries of the poet's craft.

Perhaps owing to the influence of Ronsard, such evocations of clothes seem to have been considered by later writers as prerequisites for the mythological fragment. For instance, Tagault in Le Ravissement d'Orithye (1558) provides several extended descriptions of this nature. First one has an evocation of the sandals donned by Orithye's nurse (ll.325-30, fol. 8 verso). A poem grouped in Chapter 2 with mythological compositions whose authors take delight in simple story-telling here aligns itself rather with the heroic fragment: for this description contributes to the process of epic magnification by indicating that even Orithye's servant wears garments adorned with gold and silver. Like Ronsard, Tagault stresses that these shoes are examples of consummate artistry (l.330), and portrays a motif they bear (the buckles depict a coiled serpent). The nurse is about to embark upon an important mission; yet the narrative momentarily stands still, allowing the poet to evoke these decorated objects, the stasis of which offsets Aquilon's blustery nature.

Another descriptive passage occurs some fifty lines later. The poet first evokes the dress and belt that Orithye dons (ll.375-81, fol. 9 verso). The belt is fastened 'D'vn noeud Herculéan' (l.377): a reference linking the maiden with the hero Hercules. Like the buckles of the sandals, the belt is embossed with a design, the evocation of which widens the scope of the poem by alluding to an incident from the life of Pallas Athene.¹ The reference also anticipates the part Pallas will play in the work: Orithye later implores the goddess to assist her (ll.963-1011, fol. 19 verso -

1. See R. Graves, The Greek Myths, I. 89. 4, p.302.

20 verso), although to little avail.

Tagault then describes Orithye's 'cotte' (ll.382-5, fol. 9 verso), which is embroidered with 'vn fil d'or enlassé de soye cramoisie' (l.385) - a combination of colours reminiscent of Ronsard's descriptions. He moves on to an evocation of her veil, made of 'vne fine toylle' (l.393) and covering a breast of 'yvoire blanc, polly, embossé' (l.395); and finally he focuses on her leather boots, which resemble those Diana wore when hunting (ll.388-9, fol. 9 verso). Orithye is thus linked with a goddess famous for her repudiation of men. The panoply of mythology is spread out behind the heroine, transferring to her some of its prestige. In total, twenty-six lines (ll.375-400, fol. 9 verso - 10 recto) are devoted to the depiction of the maiden's clothes, suggesting that she is a bride in all respects worthy of the North Wind. Like Ronsard, Tagault utilizes elaborate descriptions in order to enhance the status of his protagonists.

(ii) Descriptions of works of art

Another group of descriptions concerns works of art. To a certain extent, this section encroaches upon that of the domestic articles, as ornate goblets, for instance, might be assigned to either category. Here too, one finds Ronsard and Baïf exploiting the same source in order to depict an aesthetic creation.

In Amymone, Baïf, embroidering on Hyginus' Fable 169, portrays the 'fetis moulinet' that Venus promises her son. A brief evocation in Apollonius of the ball that once belonged to Zeus (Argonautica III, ll.137-41) has become a forty-two-line passage in the French poet (ll.223-64, M-L. II, pp.134-5). The result is an Alexandrian blend of poetry and quasi-scientific observation, which places emphasis on dazzling colour. Whilst serving little purpose

in the development of the action, it does adumbrate a link with the main plot. Venus describes the toy as a 'joyau' (1.265).

Amymone will later compare her own virginity to a jewel:

Las, vn joyau j'ay perdu

Qui ne peut m'estre rendu! (11.635-6, p.145)

Amymone has irretrievably lost something she treasured, as a result of Cupid's hankering after something attractive, but of far less importance to its possessor. What is a jewel to the one is a toy to the other. Love is by implication heartless and self-seeking. Another parallel lies in the fact that Venus' gift to Cupid foreshadows Neptune's granting of Amymone's request - itself a response to her 'amoureux don' (1.708, p.146; compare line 723).¹ In general, however, this secondary narrative assumes an independent status, attracting attention away from the main theme.

The equivalent Ronsardian passage occurs in the Hymne de l'Hyver, where Jupiter offers Night a beautiful plaything (11.247-62, pp.79-80). Ronsard too is inspired by Apollonius; but he omits the evocation of the colour and stitching of the 'beau jouët', as well as the claim that, if thrown, it leaves a meteor-like trail through the sky. Instead, he specifies that seven hoops are in perpetual motion 'à l'entour d'une pomme' (1.251). Moreover, he describes a Cyclops represented on this sphere, who may well be

1. The verb donner figures large in lines 217 to 222 (as in the conclusion of Les Muses). The theme of the gift in Baïf merits attention. One recalls that Europa's basket was originally a gift from Vulcan to Libya (11.123-4, II, p.424); that Daphne's hound was a present from Diana (11.129-30, p.46); that Perseus received from Pallas armour that had been a 'don nopçal' from, once again, Vulcan - compare l'Hippocrène, 1.149, 1.152, 1.157, 1.163. Like Cupid, Perseus thinks his gifts are 'beaux joyaux' (1.158).

an image for the sun: Ronsard places the reader one step further from the primary narrative, by referring to a figurative representation upon what is already an artefact, as lines 260 to 262 indicate. Interestingly, Jupiter, by giving to Night an image of her counterpart, the Sun, seems to allow her symbolical dominion over the day. But this implication is not developed; so, once again, the description constitutes a deviation from the main action.

Ronsard and Baïf thus both provide in their poems descriptions of works of art. Yet it was Belleau who perfected the technique of ekphrasis. For him, detailed description is a means of creating a poetic illusion and, more specifically, of embedding his precious stones in the matrix of the real world.¹

In Belleau's L'Agathe, the work of art is the gem itself: see lines 61 to 63 (p.177). It portrays figures representing the sources of poetic inspiration: Pegasus, the nine Muses on Parnassus, and Apollo. Whilst deriving his description from Pliny, Naturalis Historia 37. 3, Belleau develops the Latin writer's brief indication - 'novem Musae et Apollo citharam tenens spectarentur' - into a long account. He focuses on the hoof of Pegasus (not mentioned by Pliny), and singles out the Muses for individual attention. He highlights small details, such as Apollo's fair hair (l.79), or the laurel wreath he wears (ll.82-3), or the 'double pointe' of Parnassus (l.67). In the midst of a poem celebrating a precious stone, Belleau contrives to express his thanks towards the Muses who have served him so well. Like Ronsard in the Hymne de Calaïs, et de Zetes, he pauses to reflect on his art. A masterpiece of nature prompts ponderings on the aesthetic talents

1. See M. Jeanneret, 'Les Oeuvres d'art dans La Bergerie de Belleau', p.6.

which can also produce marvels.

In L'Agathe, the description stems naturally from the theme; but Belleau's predilection for ekphrasis is revealed in the way he will introduce a description where it is not expected. In L'Améthyste, for example, Belleau devotes attention, not merely to the gem itself, but also to the evocation of Bacchus' chariot.¹ The representation is largely visual, the only precise appeal to another sense being the mention of the fact that the tigers 'ronflent de colère' (1.212). Bacchus' environment is one of plenty: the grapes adorning the vehicle hang on their branches 'à l'envy' (1.225). It is also one of splendour: the cloth that covers the tigers is 'Un fin drap d'or frisé, semé de perles fines' (1.213). The description of the chariot itself begins with the recurrence of the motif of gold, emphasized by anaphora: 'D'or fin est le branquar, d'or la jante et la rouë ...' (1.217). The rest of the construction is 'd'ivoire indien' (1.218). By virtue both of its appeal to the eye rather than to the ear, and of the fact that it constitutes a retarding motif in the narrative, the passage contrasts with the riotous evocation of the Bacchants that has immediately preceded it. In fact, the bestiality of Bacchus' followers, whose cries are referred to in line 176 as 'confus abois', forms a backcloth against which this god may emerge in all his majesty. For a brief moment, the pace of the narrative slows, and the only action evoked is the methodical harnessing of the tigers to the chariot. Bacchus is soon to set off in frenetic pursuit of Améthyste; then, the 'or fin' (1.232), which recalls line 217, will be covered with a sign of haste: foam from the mouths of the tigers. The chase gains in intensity thanks to the few tranquil moments that went before. The description of the

1. See Joukovsky, La Gloire ..., p.458.

chariot enables the poet to introduce a radically different tone and tempo, and to provide a glimpse of the wine-god.

(iii) Descriptions of armour

In Ronsard and Baïf, and to an even greater extent in Belleau, the evocation of a work of art seems to have taken its place besides the description of domestic objects as an ingredient for the mythological poem.¹ Several poets also depict armour. Thus Ronsard devotes much of his Harangue que fit Monseigneur le Duc de Guise ... to a representation of the arms donated by François de Guise.² These include a shield portraying the triple-headed Gorgon, which Baïf was to remember. Ronsard stresses the sheer magnificence of the arms: in lines 34 to 36 (Lm. V, p.205), the motif of gold occurs three times: the Duke's corselet is 'De fils d'or et d'argent par sillons raionné' (l.42); his shield depicts Argus, whose eyes are 'cent étoiles d'or' (l.78).³ The poet then describes the 'riche graveure' on the corselet. The splendour of

1. Alphonse Delbene, in his Premier Livre de l'Amédéide, written between 1580 and 1584, provides several examples of ekphrasis; he seems to think it vital to the epic. He describes the fountain in the courtyard to Princess Orytie's palace (ll.325-48, fol. 7 verso), creating an impression of unintentional confusion by drawing the eye rapidly from one part to another; then he evokes, through the words of the Bishop, the portraits in Orytie's gallery, using them to bring alive sections of history. Lines 413 to 742 (fol. 11 verso - 15 verso: 330 lines of this 932-line book) are devoted to the Bishop's discourse.

2. See Demerson, La Mythologie classique ..., pp.288-92.

3. Arestor's son is a favourite motif of Ronsard in his descriptions. In the Chant pastoral of 1559, for instance, Bellot offers as a prize a basket depicting Argus. From the blood of Argus' severed head is born a peacock, whose wings form the framework to the basket (ll.217-24, Lm. IX, pp.86-7).

the materials is matched by the richness of the decoration.

The passage provides an impression of historical depth. By portraying some of the ancestors of the Guises, such as Godefroy de Bouillon, it suggests the illustrious origins of the protagonist.¹ By depicting scenes linked by the theme of the Crusades (11.45-74, pp.205-7), it connects the Duke's actions with a religious mission. By intermingling mythological and historical references, it widens the scope of the poem and magnifies its central figure. Thus Bellona and Discord mingle with Godefroy's soldiers - at least, until the edition of 1578, when lines 63 to 66 were omitted. Charles and René d'Anjou and their exploits in Naples are described in lines 89 to 92 (p.208), alongside mythological scenes; on the helmet, Hercules' combat with Antaeus, illustrating the defeat of a belligerent enemy, forms a parallel with the main narrative, where the Duc de Guise is anxious to insert his men and himself into a legendary background. He urges his soldiers to remember the heroes of fable:

montrés vous or'
De la race d'Hercule, et de celle d'Hector ...
(11.113-14, p.209)

Finally, the passage is characterized by its shifting focus: on the shield, for instance, one finds juxtaposed Argus' hundred eyes, two snakes, the Gorgon's head, and two princes of the House of Anjou. This copiousness far transcends the immediate demands of the narrative. It is interesting to note that Ronsard perhaps had real pieces of armour in mind when he was composing this passage: for Renaissance weaponry was of an exceptionally

1. The atavistic motif links digression and main plot.

decorative nature.¹

Baïf seems to have seized upon such representations of armour as an appropriate constituent of the miniature epic; for he devotes almost one quarter of his original poem, L'Hippocrene (ll.165-244, M-L. II, pp.66-8), to a description of the events portrayed on Perseus' corselet, notably the battle between the giants and the gods.² The conflict is treated in greater detail than the nominal subject of the poem. It is a good example of how a poet may deviate from his main theme in order to provide views of different sections of mythology. Yet the passage is not purely decorative. Baïf focuses on one Titan after another (ll.173-82, p.66), and manifests a keen awareness of the spatial relationships presented by the scene.³ The impression of height and depth so

1. Henri II owned a shield portraying Medusa's head; and the combat of Hercules with Antaeus was frequently represented. See Demerson, La Mythologie classique ..., p.289, notes 48 and 50; and p.290, note 51. - Once again, therefore, one discovers a possible link between Pléiade poetry and the plastic arts. Various critical statements of the time reveal that contemporary writers were aware of such connections. One thinks, for example, of Ronsard's statement in the chapter called 'De l'Elocution' from the Abbregé:

Elocution n'est autre chose qu'une propriété
et splendeur de paroles bien choisies et ornées
de graves et courtes sentences, qui font reluyre
les vers comme les pierres precieuses bien en-
chassées les doigts de quelque grand Seigneur. (XIV, p.15)

Indeed, this statement provides a good parallel with the whole technique of inserting elaborate descriptions into the narrative.

2. Baïf is inspired here by Ronsard's Ode à Michel de l'Hospital and Claudian's Gigantomachia, 63, for certain details; and by the Theogony of Hesiod, ll.717 ff., and Horace, Carmina, III. 4. 74-5, for the general development. See Chapter 2, p.76, above.

3. 'Par dessus', l.169; 'arriere', l.174; 'derriere', l.177; see lines 183 to 184.

created adds an extra dimension to this poem, in which Perseus' aerial journey is a central motif. The giants' attempt to scale Olympus is implicitly contrasted with the way Perseus actually flies, assisted by the gods. Again, part of Perseus' corselet represents Athens, and the dispute between Neptune and Pallas. Pallas Athene thus figures both on the cuirass and in the narrative proper; this reminds one of her similar double role in Le Ravissement d'Orithye by Tagault. There are hence links between primary and secondary narrative, although the latter tends, by virtue of its very length and vividness, to assume independent status.

(b) Extension of the temporal scope

Vivid descriptions of garments, cups, works of art, armour, deepen the spatial perspective of the fragments. The reader's eye is able to leave the main action and indulge in a period of contemplation, which can sometimes provide a view of the protagonist in different situations, or open up wider mythological vistas. On the other hand, the poets also use techniques enabling them to broaden the temporal range of reference of their poems: techniques that might briefly be termed prophecy and retrospection.

(i) Prophecy

The vatic motif is particularly favoured by the Renaissance writers, who generally use it to provide glimpses of other epic works. As it will play a large part in the Hymne de Calais, et de Zetes, it is interesting to see it being employed also by Stoa, writing on a theme connected with the Argonautic legend.

The prophetic device enables Stoa to conclude his Orpheos

libri tres with a survey of other episodes from mythology and history. Orpheus' head, laid up by Apollo in a temple on Lesbos, utters prophecies (ll.452 ff.) which bring together many of Stoa's main sources. Thus the second proclamation follows Ovid (Metamorphoses XI, ll.67-84) in relating how the Maenads are changed into oak-trees (ll.457-60, fol. E3 recto). The third links up with Stoa's other source for the Orpheus and Eurydice episode - Virgil's fourth Georgic - by telling how Aristaeus too pays a penalty (ll.461-6, fol. E3 recto). The head next briefly evokes the Trojan War, and mentions Homer (ll.467-70, fol. E3 recto - E3 verso). It gives details of the attack on Thebes (ll.472-3), the fall of Rome (ll.482-3), the life of Julius Caesar and of Augustus (ll.484-9, fol. E3 verso). Then the head introduces a Christian dimension, by predicting the birth of Christ, who, three days after His death, will rise again and 'Tartareas herebi perfringet cardine portas' (l.507). Pagan mythology and modern religious creed are directly juxtaposed. Parallels are suggested, but not affirmed: Christ achieves what Orpheus does not do in any definitive sense: He breaks open the doors of Hell. Again, Christ comes back from actual death; Orpheus returns from Hades because his mortal span of life is not yet at an end. Orpheus is the vates who predicts the advent of someone greater than himself.

The prophecies do not end there; the head goes on to proclaim that a time will come when virtue will no longer be rewarded (ll.521-7, fol. E4 recto - E4 verso). The reference in line 521 to the poverty that the learned will experience is a possible allusion to the difficulties facing artists such as Stoa himself. This theme will be sounded in Ronsard's Argonautic hymns, and indeed in much of the Pléiade's verse, as suggested in Chapter 2. Having sung of a poet born in an age when not only human beings,

but also mountains, trees and rocks would flock to hear him, Stoa looks with melancholy upon his own times.

This pessimistic note is not the final one: for Orpheus' head prophesies the return of the Golden Age - another Pléiade theme - and the birth of Stoa, 'qui longa canet miracula rerum' (l.534). Lastly, it announces the future destruction of the world; but implicit in this statement (ll.535-7, fol. E4 verso) is the notion that his poem will live on; the very act of enunciating the ultimate disaster gives the vates power over it; the force that foresees the conflagration is also superior to it.

By means of prophecy, Stoa hence broadens the scope of his poem: he embraces some of the main literary creations of Antiquity (those of Homer, Virgil, Ovid); he scans great sections of Roman history; he predicts the coming of Christ, thus enabling his work to be placed in a religious framework; and finally he even refers to himself and his poetic aims, thereby inviting comparisons between himself and Orpheus (just as Ronsard will suggest parallels between Phineus and the writer). The prediction is for Stoa a means both of echoing other authors and of suggesting interpretations for his own work.

Stoa's poem testifies to the way the Neo-Latins had already experimented with the breaking down of temporal barriers. One cannot prove conclusively that the poets of the mid sixteenth century were influenced by such examples; yet prophecy indisputably became an endemic feature of many of their fragments, notably of those of Ronsard. It is clear too that the technique does not stem simply from an imitation of the Ancients - though admittedly there are classical counterparts, such as the prophetic song intoned by the Parcae in Catullus' sixty-fourth hymn; or the sixth book of the Aeneid, which will be remembered by Ronsard in his

Franciade.¹ However, one usually finds that the French poets, whilst following a certain source, will develop at length a prediction that is simply sketched out in their model.

Prophecy is present in Ronsard's fragments from La Defloration de Lede onwards. The conclusion to this early poem is shaped round Jupiter's attempt to console Leda by referring to the glorious future awaiting the children she will bear (ll.217-28, Lm. II, p.79). The prediction is interesting in two respects. First one has a fact important in relation to the epic hymns: the prognostication is used by Ronsard to sketch out in this poem a subject he will later treat at length: the twins born from one of the two eggs will be the protagonists of the Hymne de Pollux et de Castor; already, the Dioscuri have aroused Ronsard's interest.² Secondly, the prophecy suggests how Ronsard frequently writes as if on the verge of a great epic: the second egg will contain Helen,

Pour qui un jour s'armera
L'Europe contre l'Asie. (ll.227-8)

These two lines suffice to evoke the whole mythological tradition surrounding the Trojan War.

Similarly, Ronsard places Le Ravissement de Cephale on the brink of the Iliad; for at the wedding of Peleus and Thetis, Themis tells the latter how she will give birth to a boy (Achilles),

qui donnera matiere
Aus Poëtes de chanter. (ll.267-8, p.146)

1. See L. Hensel, Weissagungen in der alexandrischen Poesie; C.H. Moore, 'Prophecy in the Ancient Epic'; and below, Chapter 5, pp.259-62 and pp.270-1.

2. There are many examples of such foreshadowing in Les Amours of 1552-3. For instance, in sonnet XX, lines 9 to 11 (Weber's edition, p.15), Ronsard refers to the theme he will treat in Le Narssis. He also mentions Danaë and Europa, who appear in poems by Baïf.

Themis evokes Achilles' military prowess.¹ Just as the presentation of the wedding is more optimistic than in Catullus, as indicated above (p.133), so Ronsard is careful to avoid Themis' prediction of Achilles' death. This forecast was included by Pindar (Isthmian Odes VII, ll.31-60), but not by Ovid. Ronsard's poem, having unfolded for the reader a life devoted to heroic deeds, ends on an affirmation of Achilles' vertu: the only quality that will be allowed to subsist in the representation of general mutability at the close of Book Four of the Franciade.

In these two early poems, Ronsard is already making use of the device of prophecy. In the Hymne de Calais, et de Zetes, the technique assumes even greater prominence thanks to the fact that Phineus is a seer. Prophecy becomes a thematic as well as a structural motif. As suggested in the previous chapter, the hymn is not concerned with the two winged brothers alone, but also with the wider question of Jason's expedition. Vaticination is a means of providing further glimpses of the Argonauts' adventures, and of fitting as many episodes as possible into this poetic miniature. In fact, although Phineus says that he must not divulge too much, for fear of incurring anew the wrath of the gods (ll.579-82, p.285) - a theme that recurs twice in the Franciade (I, l.1093, XVI-1, p.84; IV, ll.585-8, XVI-2, p.270) - he goes into considerable detail. A prediction is found at the corresponding point of Apollonius' text; however, it has been conflated by Ronsard with passages from later parts of Apollonius' own work, and with lines

1. Ronsard is not the sole poet of the mid century to connect his work via prophecy with the most famous epics of Antiquity. One recalls how Venus, in Baïf's Hymne de Venus, foretells the glory of Anchises' son (ll.291-6, M-L. II, p.287; ll.373-418, pp.289-90), thus linking the poem with the Aeneid.

inspired by Valerius Flaccus. The description of the Amazons in lines 541 to 556 (pp.283-4) is taken almost entirely from the Latin author. Indeed, Phineus foretells most of the Argonauts' adventures, except the Jason and Medea episode, which Ronsard was perhaps already reserving for the Franciade, and which is merely alluded to by Phineus in lines 577 to 578 (p.285). The whole idea of this prophecy foreshadows the way Hyante will reveal to Francus a procession of the early French kings. The prediction contributes in addition to the process of epic magnification, suggesting that the Argonauts are faced with a far from ordinary destiny. They are inserted into an illustrious mythological background by references to such famous figures as Prometheus (ll.561-8, pp.284-5). The ultimate success of their quest for the Golden Fleece, and the transformation of the Argo into a constellation, are adumbrated (ll.499-504, pp.281-2). Again, the prophecy adds an extra dimension to Calais' and Zetes' combat with the Harpies: it shows the conflict as simply the first stage in a series of triumphs over evil and opposition. In fact, the battles fought by the leader of the Argonauts will be more decisive, culminating, not just in the chasing away of the opponents, but in the death of the foe. Certain sections of the prophecy, notably the evocation of the Cyanean Rocks (ll.506-40, pp.282-3), that of the soldiers sprung from the teeth of the serpent (ll.605-42, pp.287-8), and that of the dragon guarding the Fleece (ll.643-66, pp.288-9) are rendered vivid by clusters of images which will be examined in Chapter 4. They contribute to the creation of a secondary temporal level, which forms another type of duality in the overall structure of the hymn.

Ronsard seems to have favoured this strategy in connection with the Argonautic legend; for he includes in his Hylas another prophetic utterance, and also an anticipation of the future. The latter

occurs when the Argonauts sail without Hercules, having been deceived by Meleager. Ronsard mentions how Meleager will be punished by being burned alive (ll.365-70, XV, pp.249-50). This reminds one of how, in the Hymne de Calais, et de Zetes, Ronsard sketched in the future awaiting some of the Argonauts (see in particular lines 73 to 75, VIII, p.259). The prophecy that Ronsard also includes is found in lines 377 to 414 (pp.250-2), where Hylas appears in a dream to Hercules. Whilst imitating Valerius Flaccus (Argonautica IV, ll.22-37), Ronsard adds many details. The Ronsardian Hylas explains exactly how he was pulled into the water (l.383), and how he called in vain for Hercules (ll.384-5); he develops the notion of fate (ll.386-8).¹ More importantly, whereas Flaccus' protagonist laments the loss of the quiver he once bore (l.30), the French Hylas shows little regret; on the contrary, he admits that he was tired of war and the pursuit of glory (ll.389-93). He has chosen to live an obscure but peaceful life. He eschews heroic action in favour of a contemplative existence similar to that of the artist. Then, though Flaccus' Hylas simply foretells Hercules' apotheosis (ll.35-6), Ronsard emphasizes the labours lying ahead, and foreshadows the hero's 'mort trescruelle' (l.401). Ronsard's expansion of Flaccus here helps to weight the balance of the poem in favour of Hercules rather than Hylas (at least on a line-to-line basis). And Hylas' abdication of life is immediately contrasted with an acceptance of pain and hardship which, as Hylas stresses, will lead to eternal life (ll.407-14).

1. In an alteration of 1584 to lines 382 to 384, Hylas stresses the power of love. Heterosexual love is implicitly opposed to homosexual inclination. Again, lines 385 to 388 become a reflection on Hylas' apotheosis, which forms a parallel with that of Hercules.

Hylas' prophecy therefore adds to one's understanding of Hercules' character, recalling details familiar to most readers (such as the Centaur's poisoned shirt), and fitting the hero into an epic environment. It also strengthens the implications contained in the work as a whole concerning poetry.¹ One is reminded of how Stoa, early in the century, used his concluding prediction to make observations about the situation of artists.

Other poets were impressed by Ronsard's motif of prophecy. A notable example is Tagault, who gives vaticination a major role in Le Ravissement d'Orithye. The device here connects the poem with the Argonautic legend, and especially with Ronsard's two epic hymns. On its first occurrence, it simply foreshadows events in the poem itself: Mercury appears to the sleeping Orithye, telling her that the gods have ordained she will marry Aquilon (ll.19-76, fol. 3 recto - 4 recto); but the second example of prediction concerns the birth of Calais and Zetes, the heroes of Ronsard's poem. Having indicated that the gods can foresee the future (ll.620-1), Pallas tells Jupiter that Aquilon should be helped to win Orithye and to father

quelque race
Qui sera belliqueuse, et pareille en beauté
Qu'elle, et qui passera d'une legereté
Cet oursal AQUILON ... (ll.617-20, fol. 13 verso)

The final passage of the poem is again prophetic, and likewise concentrates on Calais and Zetes, whilst this time linking the twins more with the Argonautic legend, and indeed with the liberation of Phineus from the Harpies (ll.1127-51, fol. 22 verso). Tagault, like Ronsard, provides glimpses of other episodes from the Argonautic expedition. The whole evocation of this quest for

1. See above, Chapter 2, pp.98-9.

'de Phrixé la Toison' (1.1135) recalls the periphrasis for spring that opened the poem (11.1-5), and establishes a thematic continuity between beginning and conclusion. It also inserts this account of the ravishment of a nymph into the much broader Argonautic tradition, and connects the characters with a heroic background. The composition demonstrates that poets other than Ronsard also saw prophecy as a specifically epic device.

(ii) Retrospection

The technique of retrospection is less commonly used, but is another means of adding an extra temporal stratum to the poems. It had formed the basis of the Odyssey, where the tale of Odysseus' wanderings was told by the hero himself to Alcinous. Once again, it is a device employed by Stoa, and perfected by Ronsard.

In Stoa's Orpheus libri tres, recall serves in particular to incorporate in the poem an outline of Orpheus' adventures with the Argonauts. These were, at the end of Book One, summed up in a mere two lines, after an evocation of the song the vates sings to the crew:

Talibus atque aliis longum breue cantibus actum
Est iter: et tandem Colchos adit acer Iason.
(11.543-4, fol. B5 recto)

Book Two opened with five lines evoking the conquest of the Fleece and the way Medea caused the death of Pelias. Here, emphasis was placed on the less desirable aspects of the expedition. Later in Book Two, however, after Orpheus' return to Thrace, people assemble to listen in awe to the saga of the Golden Fleece (11.413-30, fol. C5 recto - C5 verso), which thus receives its third mention in the poem. Orpheus speaks of Medea (1.421) and the brazen-footed

bulls (11.425-6); the defeat of the dragon (11.426-8); and Medea's slaughter of her young half-brother Apsyrtus (11.429-30). By presenting this panorama of the Argonauts' adventures, Stoa underlines Orpheus' ability to participate in the heroic life. Retrospection enables the poet to telescope various episodes into a short section of his poem.

Baïf, in Les Muses, also fills in Orpheus' character by means of recordatio. Orpheus here recalls his descent to the Underworld (11.383-406, M-L. II, pp.81-2), and accordingly assumes a position of greater prominence than Jason. Orpheus is a man who has felt the pangs of love, and who was the only mortal permitted to go down to and return from Hades, and who has learned from his experience the need to adhere to one's promises to the gods. Now aware of the divine roots of his vocation, he is eager to obey Jason:

'... je ne veu la Priere irriter,
Par ce qu'elle est fille de Iupiter.'
(11.413-14, p.82)

He will carry out his mission with careful attention to the will of the gods. Through this retrospection, Baïf suggests that the vocation of the artist is also a religious one: he both develops the character of Orpheus and creates allegorical implications.

Recall does not occur in Ronsard's Argonautic hymns, although it will be exploited in the Franciade. However, it is found, combined with prophecy, in Les Parolles que dist Calypson ..., published in 1569. The predictions are of Ulysses' death at the hands of his own son (11.11-18, Lm. XV, pp.48-9) and of Ulysses' home-coming (11.155 ff.).¹ They nevertheless fade in importance

1. Ronsard derived the first of these predictions from Hyginus' Fable 127. In the rest of the poem, he blends the presentation of Calypso in the Odyssey, V, with Dido's reproaches, Aeneid IV.

beside the passages of retrospection: indeed, memories are all that Calypso has left. The goddess remembers the hospitality she showed to Ulysses when he was washed up on her shore (ll.19-36, pp.49-50), and recalls the warnings of Proteus, which she unfortunately ignored (ll.37-52, p.50). There follows a passage remarkable for the way Ronsard has brought together indications from various sources. Calypso remembers the tales Ulysses used to tell her (ll.53-88, pp.50-2). She mentions how Ulysses killed the spy, Dolon, and thereby reminds the reader of the Iliad, Book Ten, and the Metamorphoses, XIII, lines 241 to 246; she refers to his entry into Troy disguised as a beggar, and echoes the Odyssey, IV, lines 240 to 264; she speaks of Ulysses' theft of the image of Pallas from the Trojan temple, a detail found in the Aeneid, II, lines 163 to 170, and the Metamorphoses, XIII, lines 337 to 338. However, the notion that Helen aided Ulysses in the theft (ll.72-4) was invented by Ronsard. Calypso then mentions how Ulysses penetrated Achilles' disguise and furnished him with arms, and how he abandoned Philoctetes. The latter allusion opens up the scene to embrace Sophocles' Philoctetes. Ronsard has woven a composite tapestry, in which ancient works add to the colour of his own.

Calypso next recalls - in tones reminiscent of Ovid's Heroides - Ulysses' vows of fidelity (ll.115-23, pp.53-4). Her exploration of this theme blackens the portrait of Ulysses, who is shown as someone prepared to accept or reject Calypso according to his whims. Just as he made Calypso present a surprising view of Penelope, so Ronsard seems here to delight in stripping away the heroic traits in Ulysses. One remembers that the complete title presents the poem as a new version of Homer, perhaps undertaken with a view to establishing greater vraisemblance. Lines 127 to

144 (p.54) contrast Ulysses' triumph over a woman with the infinitely more praiseworthy military heroism described in the Iliad. Then (ll.171-80, p.56), Calypso returns to her consideration of Penelope, casting aspersions upon the latter's past as well as her present life. The epic figures of both Penelope and Ulysses are eroded, through this pinpointing of their faults rather than their great qualities.¹ This is a reversal of the prophecy technique, which, as seen above, enhances the status of the protagonist; it prevents one from making the generalization that additional temporal levels are introduced into the fragments in order to connect the characters with a heroic background. One might term the poem as a whole an anti-epic fragment.

The past - as well as the future and the gloomy present - is hence vital to this re-shaping of the Homeric tradition. At several points, Ronsard uses non-Homeric sources in order to fashion his critique of Penelope and Ulysses. The converging of various temporal strata upon the single moment of utterance of the lament matches this contamination of models.

A late poem of Ronsard deserves mention as an example of a use of retrospection that contrasts with the Franciade: for the Discours de l'équité des vieux Gaulois, published in 1584, depends largely upon recall for its structure.² It opens with the climax, the sacrifice of the unfaithful wife, and does not return to this point until line 287. Ronsard thus obtains the opening in medias

1. J. Hutton connects this piece with the rhetorical technique of ethopoeia, the invention of a suitable speech for a given character ('Rhetorical Doctrine and Some Poems of Ronsard', p.321). - For the pessimistic portrait of Penelope and Ulysses, see C.A. Grouas, 'Les Marginales latines de Ronsard dans l'Odyssée: Portrait en noir du Laertiade et périple odysseén'.

2. See Chamard, IV, p.390, note 1.

res which is absent from the franciade - perhaps because he had not experimented with it in the epic hymns - and for the lack of which he excuses himself in the 'Au Lecteur' of 1572 (XVI-1, p.10).

In the interval that elapses in the Discours between the climax and line 287, one is informed of past events. In lines 23 to 200 (lm. XVIII-1, pp.76-82), one hears the first husband telling of all he sacrificed in order to win back his wife when she was taken to Gaul.¹ This ensures that the reader feels sympathy for him. He provides the poignant detail of his two sons missing their mother (ll.153-60, p.81), and also gives some information purely for the reader's benefit (as it is already known to his interlocutor): for example, the way the Gaul would take only one quarter of his ransom money (ll.180-7, p.82). The Gaul's response (ll.203-308, pp.83-7) enables one to see things from the wife's point of view, as it reproduces her complaints at being expected to leave the new husband she has learned to love. Some of her words remind one of Andromache in the Iliad and the Franciade: a reminiscence that also ennobles her. The claim that it would have been less cruel to kill her at once than to win then betray her affections (ll.253-6) strikes one as valid; although her case is somewhat spoiled by the manner in which she insults her first husband (ll.277-80, pp.85-6).² The way both the Milesian and - through the Gaul's words - his wife are allowed to speak suggests the shift in focus that leads to moral

1. With unconscious irony, he relates how the Milesian women were praying to Ceres for faithful husbands when they were seized.

2. In the original version (MS No. 843, Fonds Dupuy, Bibliothèque Nationale, fol. 116-20), Ronsard makes the Milesian woman much more ferocious: she describes in detail a horrible punishment that she considers appropriate for her first husband. Ronsard's alterations increase the moral ambiguity of the piece.

ambivalence in the poem: one feels for the husband, but then also for the wife. Both light up the past from different angles. And indeed, little space is, by contrast, devoted to the present. The Gaul has but twenty-two lines in which to vindicate the punishment he meted out and to expound the attitude of his people towards justice (ll.287-308, pp.86-7). His advice to the Milesian contains a trace of cruel irony, reinforced by an embryonic pun (l.302):

En-terre si tu veux, ou laisse aux chiens ta femme,
Ou la jette en la mer, ou la donne à la flame:
Un corps tronqué de teste est un fardeau pesant,
Ne remporte en ta ville un si vilain present.

(ll.299-302, p.87)

The Gaul's way of distributing punishment seems to exclude human sympathy. The fact that he is given so few words to speak in his own name lends opacity to his character. What remains in the mind is the carnage with which the poem began: one is left wondering whether it was really merited. The clues and explanations provided by the past fail to counterbalance the savagery of the denouement. Nor do Ronsard's equation of the Gaul with Henri III (ll.309-28, pp.87-8) and his praise of faithfulness towards one's monarch (picking up the motif of fidelity) cancel out this violence. Indeed Henri is very different from the Gaul in the way he combats his foes 'non par le fer, mais par la patience' (l.324): the parallel does not seem to fit. The past, the narrative present (the punishment of the wife) and the future (the state of affairs in the France of Ronsard's own day) are here in an uneasy relationship. Moreover, this treatment of one of the ancestors of the French appears to reflect disillusionment on Ronsard's part with those he set out to praise in the Franciade: one is far from the eagerness with which Ronsard embarked upon his epic voyage. Nevertheless, the vividness of the opening to the Discours prompts one to ask why Ronsard did

not adopt this retrospective technique in the Franciade, where the beginning is slowed by the length of Jupiter's speech: retrospective, it is true, but calling up the past before the present of the narrative has been suggested. Had he been following the methods evolved in the Discours, Ronsard might perhaps have opened instead with the appearance of Mercury, only then proceeding to sketch in past events.

In the Discours, recall does not simply expand the poem by reference to other episodes, but determines the whole shape and dramatic impact of the piece. It also helps to explain the actions of the characters; nevertheless, the areas of motivation left in the shade appear equally important, and contribute to the terse complexity of the composition.¹

The foregoing survey suggests that two essentially contradictory tendencies may be detected in the miniature epics of the

1. The retrospective passage in Belleau's 'L'Amour ambitieux d'Ixion' similarly serves as a revelation of character. The poet addresses Ixion and reminds him of his sinful past (ll.191 ff.). He emphasizes the way Ixion, having agreed to marry the daughter of Eioneus, laid for the latter a pitfall with a great fire underneath, into which the unsuspecting Eioneus fell (ll.205-13, p.24). Belleau increases the vividness of this evocation by using the image of a furnace that melts down metal (ll.214-16). This retrospective section highlights Ixion's lack of human feeling, and strengthens the impression that Jupiter is justified in chastising this arrogant mortal. Ixion is seen as the author of two heinous crimes: of sin against the gods, which the main body of the poem narrates, and of a crime conducted against one of his fellow-men. - There is an interesting contrast between this poem (where retrospection makes the punishment seem fitting) and Ronsard's Discours.

mid sixteenth century in France. On the one hand is the desire to fashion the material into a coherent whole, by providing a framework. This may suggest parallels with the poet's own situation, or possible allegorical interpretations; in this case, one senses the writer's wish to make the fable seem relevant to his own times. The form of the framework varies. Some poems simply interweave two mythological narratives; parallels may exist between them, but they are not commented on by the poet. This sort of structuring by means of juxtaposition invites comparison with the contemporary visual arts. Other pieces provide the legend with a non-mythological introduction, but then refrain from providing a conclusion. The majority of the fragments of this period fall into the latter category, many purely by virtue of the fact that they open with an address to the dedicatee. However, another kind of structure testifies to a more conscious artistry: it supplies the tale with both an introduction and a conclusion, and therefore proves the most successful means of circumscribing the epic material. A non-Pléiade poem, Scève's Saulsaye, is an excellent example, and was perhaps remembered by Ronsard when composing his Argonautic hymns.

On the other hand, there is the wish to widen the limits of the poem, to break down the potential frameworks constituted by time and space. In linear or spatial terms, an extra level may be incorporated by the evocation of an ornate object: a garment, a domestic article, a work of art, or a weapon or piece of armour. One might argue that such descriptions were already found in classical works, and that the French poets are simply indulging in imitation. Yet a poet such as Ronsard seems to have regarded these evocations as a virtually indispensable part of the epic fragment; and indeed, Barthélemy Tagault, who was influenced by Ronsard's approach to mythology, sets in his Ravissement d'Orithye

a cluster of garment-descriptions. Ronsard's Franciade, too, will contain passages in which the action is retarded to allow for the inclusion of such evocations.¹ Ornate objects seem, in other words, to have been exploited by the French poets as a means of inserting into their work different levels of experience, different narrative speeds, different mythological episodes. This, as the next chapter will indicate, has a counterpart in the rhetoric of their poems.

Again, additional temporal strata may be furnished by prophecy and retrospection, the former being the more common. Far from suggesting that the piece is a rounded whole, the poet points to other epics, other events in the lives of his protagonists, as if encouraging the reader to complete his understanding of the action by allowing his eye to leave the work in question and to scan the information he has compiled by acquainting himself with other works. The poet becomes dependent once again upon other texts. As will be seen, Ronsard's awareness of this dependency governs certain features of the Franciade.

One should remember that these devices, whilst testifying to the opposing urges of contraction and expansion, are not mutually exclusive: this is so far from being true that one might view the Hymne de Calais, et de Zetes, of Ronsard, and Jagault's Ravissement d'Orithye as attempts to fuse the two. Both types of technique, indeed, stem from the same basic awareness of the limited scope of the works undertaken when compared with a complete epic.

1. Viennet, a nineteenth-century continuator of Ronsard's epic tradition, deplores in the preface to his Franciade Ronsard's 'descriptions sans fin' (J. Janin's edition, p.24).

CHAPTER FOUR

THE RHETORIC OF THE FRAGMENT:

SIMILE, CIRCUMLOCUTION, AND PRETERITION

The structure of the epic fragment testifies to two opposing urges, as the previous chapter indicated. However, if one turns to rhetorical devices, one finds a greater sense of uniformity: the techniques appear to mirror the encyclopaedic urge, the wish to expand the limits of the fragment. What distinguishes one poet from another in rhetorical terms is not so much his basic aim, as the extent to which he makes manifest his desire to divagate. Some writers revel in the fact that their eye is roving over different sections of mythology or experience; others try to conceal it. This opposition between the explicit and the implicit or hidden will form the hub of the present chapter.

Considering first the way writers take an unconcealed delight in digression, one finds them using two techniques which operate on the level of the individual sentence. These are, on the one hand, the heroic comparison, and, on the other, circumlocution. They enable the poet to focus initially upon one object, but also to provide glimpses of others. Both were exploited by the epic writers of Antiquity. Of the two techniques, simile and periphrasis, the former is by far the more important in the sixteenth-century heroic miniature. Like periphrasis, it is the object of critical awareness; it is employed from the beginning of the century onwards. It allows the poet to include those aspects of life with which he is most familiar, whether as a result of direct experience, or of literary knowledge.

Even more interesting, though less frequently encountered, is a technique that concerns the writer's general approach to his material: preterition. The wish to widen the vistas of the work is concealed by its apparent opposite: the poet pretends not to mention certain events; but the same events are summarized even as they are rejected by the poet as potential themes. Incidental narrative and parenthesis enable the poet to dispense quickly with the strictly extraneous material. Preterition is not openly discussed by the poets themselves, although it figures in rhetorical handbooks.¹ The device will perhaps, therefore, bring one nearer to the mainsprings of their fragments than the techniques the poets employ in imitation of others, or because of the demands of their own theory.

(1) SIMILE

The heroic comparison, the most commonly used of the rhetorical devices to be studied here, plays an important role in both the sixteenth-century examples of voluntary fragmentation, and the Franciade. The French poets like the Homeric simile in particular: they admire the way the author of the Iliad weaves into his description of, say, a battle, the glimpse of a domestic scene

1. Preterition is discussed by P. Fabri, in Le Grand et vrai art de pleine rhétorique of 1521 ('De Couleurs'). See A. Héron's edition, I, p.174. Using the term occupation, Fabri explains: 'c'est quant on fainct vouloir passer oultre et ne voulloir point dire ce que on dict clerement ...'. Having provided examples, he adds: 'Et est ceste maniere moult compendieuse et abregee, et rend les auditeurs suspens a escouter'.

or of everyday occupations. They also appreciate Homer's grouping of images into clusters to mark a significant stage in the action.¹ Ronsard proposes Homer as a model when he advocates in the Abbregé the use of comparisons and hypotyposis ('De l'Elocution', XIV, p.15). The poets derive similes from the Aeneid of Virgil, too. Thus they insert into their fragments a device found in complete epics: such is their desire to expand the small structure with which they are working, that they often fill their works to bursting-point with colourful images. The simile cannot, therefore, be said to appertain exclusively to a specific rhetoric of the fragment; yet when used frequently in a work of modest proportions, it becomes far more prominent than in the full-scale epic. By occupying a relatively large number of lines, it sometimes threatens to obscure the main action. It is an excellent illustration of the desire of the sixteenth-century poets to broaden the scope of their pieces at all costs, to provide in microcosm elements capable of being incorporated in a larger whole.

The comparisons in the sixteenth-century works will be studied here from three angles. First, the focus will be on individual images which, by virtue of their vividness, attract attention to themselves independently of the primary narrative. Secondly, it will be shown that many comparisons are grouped into patterns, as they were in passages of the Iliad, producing a decorative cumulative effect. The third section will study the echoes that the poets contrive to create, by means of their similes, between different parts of their work.

1. On Homer's similes, see Webster, p.225 and p.235.

(a) Individual images

Just as, in the survey of themes (Chapter 2), it was seen that the Neo-Latins frequently antedated the vernacular poets, so one finds a Neo-Latin, Humbert de Montmoret, anticipating both aspects of the use of similes in the mid century: individually and in patterns. He clearly thinks vivid comparisons vital for his historical epics.¹ In his Bellum Rauenne, published in 1513, for instance, he likens the fury that Mars and Pallas create in Ravenna to the heavy rain sent by Juno (I, ll.82-4, fol. A3 verso); he compares the assembly of the French troops to a meeting of the gods (II, ll.18-23, fol. B1 recto), echoing the Aeneid, X, ll.96-9; and he provides two animal similes. The young men taking flight evoke the picture of a stampeding elephant (II, ll.92-5, fol. B2 verso). The death of the Duc de Nemours reminds the poet of the way a crowd can tear a lion to pieces (II, ll.114-15, fol. B3 recto).

The tendency to illustrate the narrative with similes is found also in Montmoret's Herveis. Animal and bird images occur, as in Homer: the treacherous King Henry of England reminds the poet of the way cranes will make for the sunny regions of the Nile (ll.44-7, fol. A2 verso). The simile draws attention to itself thanks to the vivid evocation of the shape the birds form as they fly, and to the appeal to the ear, with the repeated g sound. Again, the English ships are likened to oxen ploughing a field (ll.77-9, fol. A3 recto); and Herveus' men pursuing the Regent are compared to a hunter stabbing with his spear a boar or a

1. See D. Murarasu, La Poésie néo-latine et la Renaissance des lettres antiques en France (1500-1549), pp.51-3.

nimble deer (ll.124-9, fol. A4 recto). The motif of the boar recurs when Herveus sinks on to the deck of the Regent, covered with blood (ll.311-13, fol. B3 verso): the colour of the boar's blood is rendered by means of three words: 'Rubescat', 'purpureus' and 'murex'. Another image anticipates Ronsard's Franciade, as it depicts a traveller treading upon a snake in long grass. It evokes the way rage breaks out anew amidst the English and Bretons (ll.213-15, fol. B1 verso), and is derived from the Iliad, III, ll.33-5, and the Aeneid, II, ll.379-81.¹

A further group of images centres on the uncontrollable aspects of nature. Herveus, wreaking havoc amongst the English with his sword, summons up the image of thunder and lightning sent by an angry Jove, lashing oak-trees (ll.163-6, fol. A4 verso - B1 recto); and the Regent, catching fire, reminds the poet of flames engulfing a forest (ll.334-7, fol. B4 recto): another anticipation of Ronsard, who also favours this simile.

A different thread of comparisons is mythological or historical in nature. Herveus and his men move along the waves with greater speed than any Greek ever did (ll.53-4, fol. A2 verso). Two comparisons involve Scipio (ll.66-8, fol. A3 recto; and ll.287-8, fol. B3 recto). The flames sweeping over the Cordigera provoke a mention of Typhoeus, struck by Jove's lightning and buried under Etna, and of Vulcan's sonorous anvil (ll.267-72, fol. B2 verso - B3 recto).

This summary analysis indicates the extent to which Montmoret's historical epics depend for their style upon similes which often constitute retarding motifs and introduce a further area of experience. Well before the advent of the Pléiade, the Neo-Latins

¹ See the Franciade, III, ll.949-57, Lm. XVI-2, p.217.

had seized upon the detailed comparison as a key feature of heroic poetry. They had also used images as a means of weaving patterns on the secondary narrative level.

Turning to the poets of the mid century, one finds that Ronsard is the chief exponent of a technique relying heavily upon similes. Yet he is far from alone in his venture. Baïf, for instance, also reveals a predilection for detailed images, which he tends to present in isolation. And indeed, he is not always simply imitating Ronsard or classical sources.

It was seen in Chapter 3 that Baïf's Laurier anticipates Le Houx of Ronsard in structural terms. It also foreshadows aspects of Ronsard's style. Evoking the growth of passion in Apollo, Baïf has recourse to Apollonius (Argonautica III, ll.291-8), and produces a simile of fifteen lines (ll.191-205, M-L. II, p.48), full of domestic details.¹ He stresses the poverty of the working woman; he adds the indication that the wood with which she kindles the fire was hidden beneath the embers, and also conveys an impression of the noise it emits as it is consumed. Another addition is the metaphor of the pieces of wood making the logs their subjects, just as a man or god, filled with the fire of passion, seeks to conquer a woman. Finally, Baïf extends the scope of the image to embrace the whole cottage, lit up by the glow. This is the sort of realism at which Baïf excels, and which Augé-Chiquet calls 'familier, probe, minutieux'.² Yet the descriptive detail is devoted to a comparison, not to the main action. The image assumes a life of its own, forming a contrast, by virtue of the

1. Ronsard will condense Apollonius' image to a mere five lines, whilst stressing the notion of secrecy (the Franciade, II, ll.867-71, Lm. XVI-2, p.137).

2. La Vie, les idées et l'oeuvre de Jean-Antoine de Baïf, p.230.

fierceness of the fire it portrays, with the foregoing picture of Daphne asleep.¹ Moreover, although the focus of the similitude should be the spark that becomes a blaze, since it is this that represents the progress of love in Apollo, Baïf begins by concentrating on the working woman, who has no counterpart in the meeting of Daphne and the god. The whole image constitutes a vivid piece of secondary – and not strictly essential – narrative.

Again, Baïf's evocations of hunting, in this and other poems, anticipate the cynegetic images in the Hymne de Calais, et de Zetes. For instance, Baïf likens Jupiter espying Europa to a vulture:

Non autrement qu'un rauissard Vautour
 Le lieure veu fait pardessus maint tour
 Virevoustant, et ne vole point droit,
 Mais coup sur coup tournoye vn mesme endroit.
 Le lieure est là: le pauuret ne s'en doute:
 Qui tôt se montre et tôt apres se boutte
 Sous vn buisson. L'oyseau sa proye guette
 Iusques à tant qu'en prise elle se jette.

(11.213-20, M-L. II, p.427)

Rhetorical techniques here increase the vividness of the image. A sense of obsessive movement is conveyed by the repetition of the v sound in the first three lines. Again, the firm break after the first hemistich in line 217 focuses attention upon the hare, causing the reader to share the anticipation of the vulture. The geminatio ('coup sur coup') and the anaphora ('tôt ... tôt') render more striking the movements described, as does the rejet in line 219, expressing the suddenness with which the hare darts under the bush. Verbal patterns thus lend originality to a

1. For a similar image, taken from the Metamorphoses, VII, 11.79-81, see L'Amour de Medee, 11.167-73, M-L. II, p.303.

comparison derived from Homer and Ovid (Iliad XVII, ll.673-8; Metamorphoses II, ll.716-19); and they enable Baïf to focus on the motif of pursuit, as Ronsard will do. One's eye moves from Jupiter and the maiden to the vulture and its prey: the idea of movement is conveyed on another level.

A further hunting-comparison is found in Amymone, where Neptune, struck by Cupid's arrow, is filled with longing for Amymone, and is likened to a deer (ll.487-92, II, p.141). The image recalls Virgil (Aeneid IV, ll.68-73). Again, verbal con-figurations are of paramount importance. One notes the alliteration involving the letter f; the copulatio, with the repetition of the verb fuire in different forms; and the anadiplosis, which provides a neat balance between the flight of the deer and the fact that it cannot rid itself of the arrow. The image as a whole arouses some pity for Neptune, who is seen in pathetic light. It therefore serves both as an embellishment in the visual and auditory sense, and as a director of the reader's emotions.¹

An image from L'Hippocrene prefigures the Franciade itself, rather than Ronsard's Argonautic hymns: a serpent comes upon some young nightingales and is found at the nest by the mother bird (ll.65-74, II, p.63).² It is presented with a clarity not strictly demanded by the economy of the tale: for though Acrisius represents a threat for Perseus, he does not finally kill either him or his mother. Moreover, there is only one 'baby bird', Perseus; the others have a status transcending the immediate narrative requirements, and are nevertheless evoked in some detail ('ses petis qui

1. The implicit link with Dido slightly ennobles Neptune; but generally in the poem he is portrayed unfavourably.

2. Compare the Franciade, II, ll.1333-40, Lm. XVI-2, p.163.

seulets pepient'; 'ses oiselets qui crient'; 'les petis sans plume'). This expansiveness enables the image to constitute a tributary poetic stratum.¹

Baïf's use of extended similes is comparable with Ronsard's in several respects; yet it was undoubtedly Ronsard who made the lengthy image the very nub of his epic poetry. As has been indicated, his theoretical remarks reveal the importance he attached to comparisons as part of the epic style. His early poems contain similes of the sort that will be deployed in the Franciade.²

Already in La Harangue que fit Monseigneur le Duc de Guise ... (1553), Ronsard is trying his hand at epic similes in a context of war. For instance, the image of a storm-tossed sea suggests the ferocity of the cosmopolitan armies led by Charles the Fifth (ll.11-16, V, p.204). It is more concentrated than some of the later Ronsardian similes, and somewhat impressionistic in its technique; thus whilst recognizing that line 13, '... les vens enpannés de roüés tourbillons', creates an aperçu of shape and movement, one would find it difficult to define the precise meaning. Nevertheless, many details of the image - the evocation of curved shapes, in line 13 and in the words 'courbent' and 'bossus', for instance - have no direct referent in the main body of the poem. The fact that the comparison depicts the ocean anticipates the Hymne de Pollux et de Castor.

1. For other similes involving predators, see Aymone, ll.367-8 and ll.385-8, M-L. II, p.138, where Cupid is likened to a bird of prey and to a sparrow-hawk, respectively; and Le Cyclope, ll.79-80, III, p.47.

2. For remarks on Ronsard's use of lengthy comparisons, see A.E. Creore, 'Ronsard, Du Bartas, and the Homeric Comparison'.

A few lines later, Ronsard is evoking the preparations for the siege of Metz. He speaks of the cannons, which

d'un choquer plus dur
Qu'un éclat foudroiant, ébrecherent son mur
D'autant d'espace ouvert, que l'on voit d'ouverture
Dans les chams porte-blés, quand la faucille dure
A rongé les tuiaus, et que le moissonneur
Ne laisse un seul épi pour la main du glaneur ...
(11.21-6, pp.204-5)

Two images are juxtaposed. The first, that of a thunderbolt, introduces the notion of light as well as of force. The second strengthens the impression of violence, but also forms a contrast with Ronsard's main theme: the sickle may be devastating in its effect, but it operates in rustic surroundings very different from the battlefield. Like many comparisons in the *Iliad*, this simile extends the vista beyond the evocation of war. Significantly, the image of lightning and a rustic similitude are united again in lines 94 to 96 (p.208), to describe the Duke's helmet: they form a network of echoes independent of the central narrative.

Indeed, Ronsard shows particular predilection in this work for comparisons involving nature and the weather: for he likens the colours of two serpents engraved on the Duke's shield to a rainbow (11.81-4, p.208).¹ But as befits the warlike subject-matter, his similes tend to depict the more violent aspects of the elements: in lines 299 to 304 (p.218), for instance, two images evoke the dazzling light cast by the shield and indicate how the motif of lightning and fire runs through the poem (it recurs in the description of the helmet). The Duke and his men are raised in stature by being linked with this powerful facet of nature.

1. The rainbow 'tout courbe' (1.84) provides further evidence of Ronsard's taste for curved outlines.

In the Harangue, one sees Ronsard already using similes to suggest something about the status of his protagonists, and to convey the impression of activity on another plane. One also notes that the images form networks traversing the primary narrative: a feature that will be discussed below. But it is in the two Argonautic hymns that Ronsard's skilful handling of imagery really comes to the fore.

Lines 417 to 424 of the Hymne de Calais, et de Zetes constitute the sort of extended comparison that becomes a cardinal feature of Ronsard's work (Lm. VIII, pp.277-8). On a thematic level, the image reminds one of the sickle comparison in the Harangue (ll.23-6) and suggests that Calais and Zetes are doing what is right: separating the chaff from the grain, the evil Harpies from the good Phineus. The simile concerns both sound: the great noise of the flail and the blows, and sight: the flail and the sword flying through the air. On a rhetorical level, the plosives in lines 417 to 418 help to suggest the rhythmical sound of the blows, as do the polysyndeton in line 422 (breaking the sentence into a series of short statements, and implying that the air is filled with movement) and the internal rhyme and reprise in lines 417 to 419 ('aire ... mere ... aire'). The first part of the comparison is firmly attached to the second through verbal repetition and a form of epistrophe: 'rebondist haultement' (l.420) and 'en haut rebondissait' (l.424). The simile as a whole extends the scene of the action in order to include an agricultural occupation.

Extended comparisons occur also in the Hymne de Pollux et de Castor. Two are found in a cluster of images surrounding the duel between Pollux and Amycus, but merit individual analysis thanks to their length. First, the sound of the blows exchanged by the combatants gives rise to the following simile:

Comme on oyt les marteaux, au bord de la marine,
 Des nerveux charpentiers, redoubler de grandz coups
 Quand ilz coignent à force une suite de cloux,
 Pour enssemble coler les aiz d'une navire:¹
 Un choq sur l'autre choq ne cesse de rebruire
 De sur le creux rivage, et les montz et les boys
 Comme dans un theatre en repoussent la voix:
 Ainsy des coups menus, que ces guerriers se donnent,
 De leurs temples cavéz les deux fosses resonnent ...
 (11.450-8, p.313)

A comparison of the image with the corresponding passage in the Argonautica of Apollonius (II, 11.79-82) reveals to what extent Ronsard has elaborated on his model. He has added a personal detail in referring to the shipwrights as 'nerveux'. He has sketched in the scenery surrounding the shipyard. He suggests the violence with which the planks are hammered ('de grandz coups', 'à force'). Rhetorical devices are important too. Alliteration stresses the force of the blows: 'comme ... coups ... coignent ... cloux ... coler ... creux ... comme ... coups ... cavéz'; repetition in line 454 emphasizes the word 'choq', which is placed each time at a point of stress in the hemistich. The sound of the blows on the primary narrative level is thus suggested; but the details of the landscape, being strictly redundant, create a decorative effect and widen the vistas of the poem: one moves away from the small patch on which the duel is being fought, to the distant shoreline, woods, and hills.²

A second extended comparison occurs when Amycus and Pollux, who have separated in order to draw breath, come together again (11.471-8, p.314). It will be remembered by Ronsard in his variant

1. One recalls how Ronsard in his Abbregé (Lm. XIV, p.10) advised poets to study the technical terms from various occupations.

2. See the conclusion to the present thesis, pp.317-18.

for the 1587 edition to lines 1389 to 1418 of the Franciade, Book Two. Ronsard has amplified Apollonius' brief simile (Argonautica II, 11.88-9) with Virgil's image of two fighting bulls (Aeneid XII, 11.715-22). Virgil, like Ronsard, indicates the attitude of the rest of the herd, which reminds one of the spectators of the combat. However, Ronsard has removed Virgil's precise geographical references, replacing them with the vague 'au meillieu d'un pré' (l.472), and has omitted the allusion to the human element, the herdsman, and to the echo, which would have reduplicated the effect achieved in the preceding lengthy comparison. On the other hand, he has provided the precise mention of the dewlap of the bulls. He has also - unlike Virgil - arranged his image so as to separate the fighting bulls from the heifers, describing the tussle before evoking the reaction of the herd, and thus establishing a contrast between noise and violence on one side, and silence on the other.

Another detailed simile is encountered in the second section, when Castor and Pollux, annoyed by Lynceus' challenge, mumble between their teeth, and are, somewhat strangely, compared to the wind rising and moving the rigging of a ship (11.653-8, p.322). As usual, much of the detail of the image is not strictly relevant. Thus one sees the wind making 'l'eau chenüe' 'cresper' (l.658). However, the comparison is attached to the storm-motif in the hymn, for, as Castor and Pollux seize their arms, the wind becomes a tempest (11.660-6, p.322). Assonance, especially in lines 665 to 666, helps to recreate the noise of the tempest:

onde dessus onde

Renverse jusqu'au Ciel la grande Mer profonde.

The sound of the storm has as its counterpart in the main narrative the threatening noises made by the twins. The visual details of the image, on the other hand, have no such equivalent: they are purely

decorative.¹ Castor and Pollux do not yet cause a disaster comparable with that evoked (although the image does prefigure their destruction of Lynceus and Idas). It is intriguing that the Dioscuri should here be creating a tempest, whereas in the introduction and conclusion of the hymn, their mission is to calm storms. Such is the vividness of the extended comparisons, in fact, that the framework does not quite cancel out the impression of savage violence created by the narrative, notably in the second part.² What remains in the mind is such an image of the twins devastating all that lies in their path, or the comparison of Pollux to a wild bull, fighting Amycus on the latter's own bestial terms. A similar sense of imbalance is, indeed, often created by the extended comparisons in these poems.³

In Ronsard's Hylas, too, one finds a long simile, likening Hercules uprooting the fir tree to the wind tearing down the mast of a ship (ll.169-80, Lm. XV, pp.241-2) - another occurrence of the storm motif. For the image of the wind, Ronsard had recourse to Apollonius' evocation of Hercules pulling up a pine (Argonautica I, ll.1201-5); but remarkably, he has built another simile into this comparison: the mast is itself likened to an octopus

1. This storm motif anticipates the tempest in Book Two of the Franciade.

2. Compare the suggestions made in Chapter 2, p.122 and pp.123-4, about the implications this fact has for the allegorical meaning of the poem.

3. On other occasions, the effect may be one of a distortion of perspective. In L'Adonis, ll.15-18, XII, p.110, the poet suddenly comes very near to what he is describing. Momentarily one loses sight of the overall evocation of Adonis' appearance, and one peers instead with the poet at these tiny manifestations of nature: the down 'Qui croist dessus les coings', or the silk on a caterpillar. See Raymond, 'La Pléiade et le Maniérisme', p.407.

clinging to a rock. The tenacity of the creature is suggested by alliteration in line 174: 'se grimpe et se gripe'. Then the focus shifts to the fisherman, patiently pulling away the tentacles of the octopus. A brief parenthesis also provides one with a glimpse of the rest of the fisherman's haul. Whilst beginning with the image from Apollonius, then, which suggests the perils connected with water and thus links up with Hylas' fate, Ronsard moves on to give a completely different slant to the similitude. What one remembers is not the mast (which retained some similarity with the tree), but the scene depicting the octopus and the fisherman – both rather different from the tree and Hercules. Once again, this exuberance is not strictly demanded by the narrative. Nevertheless, the octopus-image does cast some light upon the main tale: it implies that the fir did not want to be pulled up, and reminds one of Ronsard's idea, expressed in Le Pin and the 1584 elegy inspired by the Forêt de Gastine, that trees, once living creatures, are still sentient beings. It also conveys – as the image of the mast alone would not – Hercules' sense of triumph on uprooting the tree. This conquest of the tree replaces the ravishments of which ancient fable accused Hercules. The implicit parallel between Hercules and the fisherman reminds one, in addition, of the connection of heroes in this poem with everyday pursuits. In conclusion, the simile draws attention to itself at the expense of the progression of the narrative; however, it does shed shafts of light on to the latter, and echoes other comparisons, or other Ronsardian works.

Ronsard's cult of the comparison seems to have inspired other poets to incorporate lengthy examples in their works. Once again, Tagault provides a good illustration: many images in his Ravissement d'Orithye occur in clusters, recalling the Hymne de Calais, et de Zetes. This is true in particular of the comparisons

featuring birds.¹ But others occur in isolation. Thus a long simile is found when Aquilon, having been released by Aeolus, rushes around the countryside (ll.638-45, fol. 14 recto). Appropriately enough for a description of the North Wind, this image involves the elements: 'vne seche vapeur' (l.639) which eventually breaks free from the moist clouds that held it. In line 641, 'grunde' conveys both the rumbling noise emanating from the clouds, and Aquilon's anger. This double reference is reinforced by 'cuide' (see line 641 again), which, being generally used of a person, suggests the plans of Aquilon, as well as those of the 'vapeur'. There is hence a close link between Aquilon and the thing to which he is compared. But the poet takes care to develop every detail of his simile. 'Tout ainsy que l'on voit' (l.638), the eye-witness formula that will play an important role in the Franciade, at once suggests a wealth of visual detail. Accordingly, Tagault indicates the location of the 'vapeur'; he makes clear its intentions; he describes the route it takes once it has escaped. Whilst the violence adumbrated here prefigures the force used to abduct Orithye, it is part of a tableau transcending such straightforward functions in terms of plot.

Belleau is another poet whose use of similes bears resemblances to that of Ronsard. As has been suggested, Ronsard likes images depicting storms at sea; and Belleau employs such an image in his 'Complainte de Prométhée', dedicated to Ronsard. Prometheus here

1. Note ll.768-79, fol. 16 recto - 16 verso, and ll.804-12, fol. 16 verso - 17 recto. Aquilon is first likened to a swallow, then (with ominous implications) to a falcon and a kite. The 'doux vol' of the swallow (l.776) becomes the 'plein vol' of the kite (l.809). The last two images are reminiscent of Ronsard's hymn.

laments the way he has been bound to a rock,

Lié, pris, garrotté, ainsi que le nocher
 Espiant mont sur mont la tempeste approcher,
 Garrotte son navire, et d'ancre et de cordage,
 Pour defier le vent, et les coups de l'orage,
 Qui va poussant les flots iusques au ciel profond,
 Puis les va recreusant du ciel iusques au fond,
 Renuersant vn grand mont de vagues entassees,
 Battant et rebattant les costes empoissees,
 Et les flancs entrouuers de son courbe vaisseau,
 Qui tremble à la mercy et du vent et de l'eau.

(11.31-40, M-L. II, p.13)

Belleau strikingly represents various types of movement: the stealthy approach of the storm, 'mont sur mont'; the motion of the waves, expressed by means of 'va' and the present participle; the relentless beating of the breakers against the side of the ship, conveyed by repetition and a frequentative: 'Battant et rebattant'. The image manages to depict three different activities: first the sailor preparing the ship for the tempest; secondly the remorseless onslaught of the sea; and thirdly the quivering of the ship with its wounded flanks, exposed to wind and waves. The 'flancs entrouuers' of the ship do correspond to Prometheus' raw flesh, which is constantly being pecked by the vulture; Prometheus is bound to the rock as a ship to its anchor-chain; and he doubtless dreads the approach of the vulture just as the ship fears the attack of the storm-tossed sea; but there are no further links between the comparison and the situation of Prometheus; the image is developed in its own right, and the motif of the sea is allowed to create an impression of a type of violence different from that of the vulture.

(b) Clusters of images

Extended similes thus act as retarding motifs, drawing the reader's eye away from the main action, whilst perhaps intensifying the notion of activity on another level. Yet many poets of the sixteenth century are not content simply to present one image to illustrate a stage in the plot; rather, they indulge in the accumulation of similes. Baïf and Ronsard may be selected as representative of this brand of virtuosity.

A predilection for copiousness in the use of similes is found in Baïf's early poem, Le Meurier. For example, to convey an impression of Thisbe's grief on finding Pyramus dying, he juxtaposes two comparisons, the first depicting a lioness angry at finding that her cubs have been taken out of their den, and the second portraying a turtle-dove mourning her mate (ll.493-500, M-L. II, p.178). The former links up with the main part of the narrative, since it was a lion that caused Thisbe to flee. Likewise, the second comparison recalls the dove-image used by Pyramus in lines 141 to 144 (p.169), to show that physical love is permissible. Pyramus' argument can thus be said tragically to have foreshadowed the fate that befalls his beloved. However that may be, the passage is a good example of how various sources may be blended to produce an impression of decorative richness. The defiant mood of the lioness recalls several of the lion-similes in the Iliad, especially XVIII, lines 318 to 322, where Achilles, like Thisbe, mourns a dead friend (in both Homer and Baïf, the animals have lost their cubs); and XX, lines 164 to 173, where Achilles meets Aeneas for combat like a lion roused to anger. Baïf seems to have fused the details from such images, in order to produce a simile which, whilst linked to the fable proper, also stands out from it like an adornment.

The tendency to group comparisons together virtually disappears in Baïf's later fragments. But it remains a cardinal feature of Ronsard's style. The Hymne de Pollux et de Castor, for instance, contains several clusters of images, like those that will appear in the Franciade. They are found as early as the passage in which Timante describes how Amycus towers over the band of people surrounding him. First, Timante likens the tyrant to a lofty pine, then to Mount Olympus; no sooner has the image of the pine established itself, than it is uprooted, replaced by the greater detail of the evocation of Olympus in lines 156 to 160 (VIII, p.300).¹ Then Timante compares Amycus' lined face to a ploughed field (ll.163-4, p.300), and likens the noise made by his teeth to that of a 'grande meulle',

Que la force d'un homme, ou d'un ruisseau coulant,
Tout à lentour du blé fait sonner en roulant ...
(ll.167-8, p.300)

Both similes are taken from agriculture, and suggest Amycus' bellicose nature. His hair is like 'le poil d'un ours' (l.169); his eyes are bloodshot, 'Comme l'astre de Mars tout roillé de courroux' (l.172). So great is his rage that it assumes cosmic proportions. His arms and legs are 'Plus que la dure peau d'une chievre pelüe' (l.174, p.301). When he walks, he makes a noise more horrid than 'un grand torrent d'yver, qui bouillonnant s'enfuit' (l.176).² This is the second simile utilized in the

1. The image of the tree will be picked up in the description of the combat; the lofty peak recalls the rock struck by lightning in the opening lines of the hymn. Images are being woven into patterns in a manner that will be studied below. - In 1578, an alteration to lines 159 to 160 accentuates the personification.
2. A more forceful epithet is found in the variant of 1587: 'un torrent escumeux'.

section to represent a noise. Ronsard heaps image upon image to form a vivid picture of this oppressor: there are no less than eight in twenty lines. Many of these similes connect Amycus with the elements and with bestiality.¹

Yet the most striking part of the hymn, the part that Ronsard will use in the Franciade, is the duel between Pollux and Amycus. In the corresponding passage from the beginning of Book Two of Apollonius' Argonautica, one finds only four similes; and, in Theocritus' lengthier account, only one fleeting comparison, likening Amycus reeling under the blows to a drunken man. Ronsard's technique is completely different. In the 124 lines describing the duel (ll.415-538, pp.311-17), there are no less than eleven similes. The multiplicity of the objects thus drawn into the evocation is a means of suggesting the confusion of the combat. The reader's eye is not permitted to dwell on one spot for too long, but is attracted away in another direction. An example of this is the depiction of Pollux' tactics as he darts around Amycus, looking for the best place to strike.² These tactics remind the poet of

Les soldatz qui par ruse, embuscade, et finesse
Espient les abordz de quelque forteresse,
Descouvrantz d'un oeil prompt ores bas ores hault
Le lieu le plus commode à le prendre d'assault.

(ll.429-32, p.312).

The focus shifts from Pollux to a group of soldiers; one's attention, which was concentrated upon Pollux, is now divided; and the anaphora (l.431) contributes to the impression of a fragmentation of viewpoints. Again, in lines 467 to 468, a reference to Mars calling a temporary halt to a war widens the spectrum to include two

1. See Demerson, La Mythologie classique ..., p.452, and p.452, n.200.

2. Derived from the Aeneid, V, ll.439-42.

armies.¹ It reminds one that behind the duel of Amycus and Pollux lies the combat between Neptune and Jupiter. Just as one blow leads to another, and, in rhetorical terms, just as one occurrence of an adverb leads to its repetition, so one simile seems to trigger off a different one. The cluster of images both distracts attention from the duel, and reinforces the sense of the speed and confusion of the fight: it is both decorative and functional.²

(c) Networks of images

Even if they are not accumulated in the same section of the poem, the images can form networks linking various sections of the secondary narrative level. This was already true of Montmoret's miniature epics, where the comparisons circled around one or two main themes. As will be seen in Chapter 5, it becomes a key feature in the Franciade. Yet it is present also in Ronsard's earlier mythological works, as the above survey of the Harangue suggested. Often, the fabrication of a network cannot be disentangled from the weaving of an elaborate design in one place: both aspects are closely intertwined in Ronsard's Argonautic hymns.

In the conclusion to Hylas (ll.417-30, Lm. XV, pp.252-3), Ronsard provides a clue to his technique. Although not referring specifically to his use of images, he likens himself to a bee,

1. From Valerius Flaccus, Argonautica IV, ll.280-1.

2. In Les Discours de Jules Cesar avant le passage du Rubicon, Jodelle playfully accumulates comparisons for his new version of the combat between Hector and Achilles: the image of a thunderbolt, of two bulls fighting over a cow (a simile reminiscent of Virgil and Ronsard), of a lion fighting a bull, of an anchor, of a dragon attacking an elephant. Perhaps he is parodying Ronsard. (See E. Balmas's edition, pp.334-43).

which goes first to a red flower, then to a yellow one, amassing 'force vivres' (l.421), that is, extremely composite material.

He also envisages his poetry as a visual art:

Ainsy courant et fueilletant mes livres,
J'amasse, trie et choisis le plus beau,²
Qu'en cent couleurs je peints en un tableau,
Tantost en l'autre ... (ll.422-5)

He mentions the multiplicity of his sources, using the verb amasser to connect his methods with those of the bee, and conveys the impression that he is collating as many models as possible, then subjecting them to a process of ordering and filtering. The visual nature of the passage makes it especially appropriate for a study of Ronsard's images: they are perhaps the most obvious 'tableaux' in his work. Bearing in mind Ronsard's statements here, one expects his similes to demonstrate the same sort of variety as that found in all creation (see line 426).³

One is therefore not surprised to discover that a mesh of images culled from diverse sources encircles Hylas. As indicated in Chapter 2 (pp.98-100), the poem centres on a contrast between Hercules and Hylas. The imagery reinforces the opposition. As he is pulled into the water, Hylas is compared to a shooting star

1. Compare Pindar, Pythian Odes, X, epode 3 (concluding section); Horace, Carmina, IV. 2. 25-8; Seneca, ad Lucilium, 84; Du Bellay, La Musagoeomachie, ll.193-204, edited by Chamard, IV, p.12; Ronsard, Ode de la Paix, 1550, ll.295-301, Lm. III, p.23; Response aux injures ..., ll.881-92, XI, p.161; 'Preface svr la Franciade', XVI-2, p.336. See R.J. Clements, Critical Theory and Practice of the Pléiade, pp.164-74.

2. The synonyms in these two lines reinforce the impression of Ronsard adding one idea to another.

3. Ronsard clearly thinks imitation of other authors and imitation of nature perfectly compatible. See G. Castor, Pléiade Poetics, Chapter 6, pp.63-76.

(11.305-12, p.247) - a bizarre image derived from Theocritus.

The comparison is largely redundant: for the atmosphere it creates, by portraying a ship that is saved, is one of relief. Nevertheless, the way Hylas is likened to a thing of transient beauty, shining only momentarily, is clearly appropriate for someone abducted in the prime of life. Moreover, the image was anticipated by Ronsard's description of Geryon's bulls (11.28-32, pp.235-6), likening their shining brows to dancing and shooting stars. There is a great difference between these beasts and the delicate Hylas; but, as the similes suggest, both are treasured by Hercules for their beauty.¹

Hercules, on the other hand, is connected with a wild animal. Although eschewing Valerius Flaccus' two similes comparing Hercules to a frenzied bull and a lion (Argonautica III, 11.581-93), Ronsard does liken the hero, mourning Hylas, to a cow calling for her heifer, which has been sacrificed.² The image, whilst testifying to the way Ronsard here tones down his ancient models in order to present a more favourable picture of Hercules, creates an impression both of the blood-soaked victim, with its trembling entrails, and of the lowing of the cow. One temporarily forgets that the simile is referring to a demigod. And the latent violence of the comparison, its connection with a bloodthirsty cult, establish a contrast with the delicate objects surrounding Hylas.

Another strand of images concerns everyday occupations. In

1. Other, isolated images connect Hylas with delicate materials: down (11.259-60, p.245), flowers and milk (11.286-8, p.246: compare Anacreontea XXVIII. 23, and Propertius, II. 3. 12).

2. As indicated in Chapter 2, p.91, Ronsard probably derived this image from Flaminio's 'De Hercule et Hyla'.

lines 47 to 50 (p.236), Hercules is compared to a farmer, who visits a distant field only when necessary. The heroic world is reduced to the proportions of agricultural affairs. Again, the crew of the Argo is likened to a group of common workers, in a sentence remarkable for its construction:

Ja le rivage aparoissoit au soir
 Du Mysien: le vent se laissa choir,
 Et sur le mast flotloit la voile lasche:
 Quand ces Guerriers, ainsy qu'ouvriers de tasche
 Qui vers le soir (alors que le bouvier,
 Dessoubz la nuict, vient ses boeufs deslier)
 Hastent leurs mains à tout ouvrage dures,
 A qui le ventre affamé dit injures:
 Ainsi chacun se print à s'animer
 Par un combat honneste de ramer.

(ll.111-20, p.239)

This graphically illustrates how, within a period, one tableau may succeed another: the shore, the limp sail; then the image of hungry workers, which itself shifts to include the herdsman and his cattle; then the crew of the Argo, seen in close-up, and thus foreshadowing the way the protagonist of L'Adonis will be depicted (see page 193, above, note 3). In terms of syntax, too, the sentence provides a good example of catenation, with its hyperbaton, enjambement, parenthesis, anacoluthon, and syllepsis. The resultant structure is complex: each clause appears about to break away: yet all are held together by rhetorical patterns. One feels that reality is too manifold to be evoked by means of a single image. Thematically, the similes link together Hercules and the Argonauts against the same background of activity and striving, and contrast the heroes with the tender Hylas. They constitute a level of meaning parallel to the primary narrative.

However, Ronsard's statement in the conclusion of Hylas does

not apply to this poem alone, but can be seen to highlight in retrospect his technique in the earlier poems, notably the Argonautic hymns. These two hymns in fact represent a blending of the copia method with the network construction.

Images in the Hymne de Calais, et de Zetes are intricately interwoven. The motif of birds in flight, for instance, runs through the poem.¹ In an evocation of Orpheus early in the piece, the pattern formed by the strings of his harp is compared to the gradationed wing-tips of flying falcons (ll.62-4, p.258). Not only Calais and Zetes (through their physical attributes), but also the vates (through an image) are connected with flight. The two brothers represent the active side of life, and Orpheus its artistic facets; but the imagery hints that both are closely linked. The simile helps to give Orpheus a prominent position among the Argonauts. Consequently, one detects three different but overlapping groups in the hymn: the men of action (Jason, Calais and Zetes, the rest of the crew); the poet and musician (Orpheus); the prophet (Phineus).

Later, Calais and Zetes are compared to cranes, and their preparations for flight are described literally step by step

1. For the significance of the theme of flight in relation to other aspects of Ronsard's oeuvre, see V.E. Graham, 'Fables of Flight in Ronsard's Poetry'. See also B.M.J. Crawford, 'Mythologie et création poétique dans Les Hymnes (1555-6) de Ronsard', pp.153-82 (Chapter 4); and especially page 161:

N'est-ce pas à l'échelle de son dynamisme intérieur que le poète a ressenti le dynamisme qui emporte les frères ailés? En effet il est frappant que ce soit précisément à des images de vol que le poète fasse toujours appel lorsqu'il veut rendre compte de ses propres impulsions, au même titre que ces images illustrant de façon spectaculaire l'élan héroïque qui anime Calais et Zetes.

(11.370-5, p.275). This image, from Ariosto's Orlando Furioso, II. 49, is characterized by its curious precision, and by the contrast between the slow process preceding flight, and the suddenness with which one is shown Calais and Zetes 'Pendus dedans le ciel' (1.375).¹ A few lines later, the winged brothers become falcons (11.387-9, p.276).² The change from an ungainly bird to a predator suggests the way the brothers become more nimble once airborne. The Harpies see that they must increase their speed; the images of birds and pursuit are continued, showing how the two aspects of the use of simile under consideration may be intertwined. The Harpies empty their mouths and are compared to a kite chased by a falcon (11.399-400, p.277).³ Thus the falcon motif recurs, whilst attention shifts from predator to prey. Having been ordered not to kill the Harpies, the Boreadae sheathe their swords. The images from falconry are maintained:

comme oyseaux pantois, sans ailes esbranler
Soufflent à grosse haleine, et s'arrestent en l'air.
(11.451-2, p.279)⁴

Finally, when the brothers at last come down to earth, they are once more seen as falcons (11.675-9, p.290). The idea of time passing is suggested ('long temps', 1.675; 'sur la nuict', 1.678).

1. In this image the protagonists are seen as slightly clumsy. See Creore, p.153.

2. In 1584, Ronsard replaces 'Sans se passer l'un l'autre' (1.388) by 'Hautains apres leur proye', stressing the idea of lofty flight.

3. In 1567, the kite becomes a heron, a bird less commonly associated with scavenging. Compare the 'Palles et Butors', 1.349.

4. The term 'pantois', used in hawking (see *Lm.* II, p.205), seems to have displeased Ronsard, who replaces it in 1578 with 'recreus' - this despite his advocacy of the use of technical words. In 1584, the image disappears altogether. The constant re-workings in this section indicate the importance Ronsard attaches to images.

The simile indicates that many hours have indeed elapsed since the Argonauts landed, and thus prepares one for the departure of the crew. There are, therefore, at least occasional threads connecting the main narrative and the imagery.

A group of cynegetic similes is closely linked to those involving flight. An addition placed in 1587 after line 368 suggests how Ronsard, in the variants, did not intend to tone down the vividness of the imagery, but, if anything, to heighten it. Two similes describe the Harpies seizing Phineus' food:

En mangeant ils (sic) craquoient et du bec et des
ailes,
Comme font ces corbeaux qui succent les cervelles
Des animaux pourris: leurs gorges aboyoient
D'une voix de mâtins qui les Grecs effroyoient.

These animal images link up with the hunting motifs elsewhere in the poem. The first is particularly loathsome. One recalls how, at an early stage, the Harpies' teeth are compared to those of a wolf chasing a stag (ll.188-92, p.266).¹ At this point, the Harpies are themselves the marauding beast; but a reversal of images soon indicates that they have become the prey. The reversal occurs in the evocation of the aerial pursuit, in which there is a veritable cluster of variations on the theme of hunting - one of the favourite occupations of Ronsard himself.²

An extended cynegetic comparison describes the way in which the Harpies strive to escape from Calais and Zetes:

1. The variant of 1587 to line 190: 'Ou comme d'un lyon dont la maschoire sonne', introduces a third animal into the image, providing further evidence of Ronsard's love of copia.

2. In the 'Preface svr la Franciade', Ronsard will advocate study of the hunt as an excellent source of technical terms and images (XVI-2, p.347).

Comme un lievre, pressé d'une importune suite
 De chiens, par meinte ruse entrecoupe sa fuite
 Maintenant d'un destour, maintenant d'un retour
 Pour tromper les levriers amuzés à lentour ...

(11.405-8, p.277)

Urgency and the repetition of various patterns of movement are suggested by the internal rhyme: 'destour ... retour ... entour', and by anaphora: 'maintenant ... maintenant' (echoing the sound of 'meinte'), which have a cumulative effect. The enjambement in lines 405 to 406 suggests that the air is filled with movement, to the point of overflowing. The comparison was inspired by a passage from Apollonius (Argonautica II, 11.278-81) and by Ovid (Metamorphoses I, 11.533-8).¹ Like Ovid, Ronsard has substituted a hare for Apollonius' deer and goat. He is then able to create the verbal echo 'lievre - levriers'.² He differs from the two ancient authors in placing greater emphasis on the quarry than on the hounds.

A third group of images centres on inclement weather, and will be discussed below (pp.211-12). Connected with these is a series of similes involving fire. The robes of the Dioscuri are 'de porpre ainsy que feu tramblante' (l.141). Fire is here teamed with movement, as it is in the image of a forest fire, used by Phineus when foretelling how Jason will escape from the dragon which guards the Fleece (11.653-63, p.289).³ The simile suggests the undulation of the dragon's back, likening it to the way

1. An image also used by Baïf in Le Laurier. See above, pp.186-7.

2. This echo is banished by the 'chasseurs' who replace the 'levriers' in 1584.

3. For this image, Apollonius, Virgil in his Georgics, and Lemaire de Belges are all possible sources. See R.V. Merrill, 'Ronsard and the Burning Grove'.

Un reply de fumée entresuivy de pres,
 Puis un aultre, et un aultre, et puis un aultre apres
 Se courbe en ondoyant ...

(11.659-61)

The phrase 'reply de fumée' links a strongly concrete term to a more ethereal one. The repetition in line 660 conveys the impression of constantly renewed movement; and indeed the emphasis on circular motion reminds one of the description of Calais' and Zetes' locks (11.165-6, p.264), and also anticipates the image of a caterpillar used of the Argo as she moves off (11.697-702, p.291).¹ In the latter example, too, a 'dos courbé' is mentioned. The variants indicate the attention Ronsard devoted to the comparison of the burning grove. In 1578, he specifies that the hollow tree is an oak. In 1584, he replaces the 'tizon de feu' with the larger 'flame', then changes line 656 into 'La flame en tournoyant s'augmente peu à peu', which stresses the notion of spiralling movement. In 1587, whilst allowing the idea of circularity to recede, the variant suggests that the fire is like some animal dragging itself along:

La flame en petillant se traine peu à peu
 Mange premier le pied ...

This passage makes the foreshadowing of the caterpillar image even clearer. In all versions, however, the use of the extended description of the forest fire to evoke sinuous movement strikingly involves many details (the mention of the shepherd and his flocks, and of the stealthy progress of the flame) not entirely relevant to the poet's purpose.

1. The image recurs in the Franciade, I, 11.1229-34, Lm. XVI-1, pp.90-1. Compare the simile of a snail in Robert Garnier's Hippolyte, V, 11.2121-2, p.97.

Finally, one might consider the comparisons based on the great smithy of Vulcan. In his description of Caeneus, Ronsard mentions the hero's skin, which could not be penetrated by any weapon, and off which iron rebounded like hail.¹ The poet is reminded of the way one sees

dessus une enclume un marteau par compas
Ressauter, quand Vulcan la frappe à tour de bras.
(11.107-8, p.261)

Later, Phineus prophesies the episode of the brazen-footed bulls, animals that make him think of the bellows and furnace in a smithy (11.591-9, p.286).² The last line of the comparison foreshadows the connection between smoke and circular motion established in the simile of the blazing grove. The image of the smithy is derived from Apollonius (Argonautica III, 11.1299-1305), but has been enriched by means of verbal patterns. The sound of the word vent is woven through the lines: 'venteux ... vent ... esventé ... vent'. The symmetry of line 593: 'Puis haut puis bas', 'tirant et repoussant', suggests the regularity of the blacksmith's actions. The enjambement of lines 593 to 594 stresses the effort with which air is expelled.

In this hymn, therefore, groups of images intersect, and create a complex whole reinforcing on another level motifs of the main narrative: pursuit, movement, violence. The imagery may also help to underline or adumbrate a new stage in the action,

1. The motif of bad weather occurs here.

2. For a similar image of a blacksmith (or Vulcan) and his forge, see the Response aux injures ..., 11.173-8, Lm. XI, p.126. The phrase 'à tour de bras' is found in line 178, recalling line 108 of the Hymne de Calais, et de Zetes.

as when the Harpies, initially connected with predators, themselves become the quarry.

Networks of images, as well as clusters, are encountered again in the Hymne de Pollux et de Castor. The introduction to the hymn establishes a pattern that will be picked up later. Ronsard first likens himself composing the poem to lightning striking a rock (11.9-15, p.294).¹ He then attaches the comparison to the mythological figures of the Dioscuri, by evoking the storm from which the twins save some sailors (11.53-70, p.296).² The rock is found again ('un grand escueil marin', l.58), as are thunder and lightning:

Le tonnerre ensouffré s'esclatte de la nûe,
Un éclair qui scintille à longue pointe aigüe
Fait un jour incertain du meillieu de la nuit ...
(11.65-7)

The idea of the ship in distress is developed much more fully than that of soldiers and horses in battle.³ For, although Castor and Pollux are also renowned for their military prowess, the latter notion is simply touched upon in lines 49 to 52 (p.296). The tempest-imagery helps to bind the three levels of the poem: the poet, composing the work; Castor and Pollux, its heroes; Odet and Gaspard, its dedicatees. The poem ends as it began, with the motif

1. See below, Chapter 5, pp.244-5. •

2. Compare Virgil, Georgics III, ll.196-201; Aeneid II, ll.416-19, VII, ll.528-30, X, ll.356-9. On the effectiveness of Ronsard's evocation, see G. Gadoffre, Ronsard par lui-même, p.87.

Ronsard is fond of images of the storm-tossed sea: compare the Response aux injures ..., ll.325-38, Lm. XI, p.134.

3. Raymond (L'Influence de Ronsard, II, p.51) draws attention to Pierre Botton's Panégyrique sur l'avant-couronnement du Roy de Pologne (1573), an episode of which depicts Henry, like Castor, saving Poland from the tempest. It is inspired by the description of the storm in Ronsard's hymn.

of the storm. Referring to the twins' assumption of the form of stars or flames in the sky, Ronsard asks them to calm any storms in which Gaspard may happen to be caught while at sea. Introduction and conclusion are carefully wrought so as to match the motifs of the main body of the poem.

The significance of the storm-motif does not end there; for it serves also as a link with the Hymne de Calaïs, et de Zetes, reinforcing the impression that Ronsard intended these poems to be considered as a diptych. A group of images in the Hymne de Calaïs, et de Zetes, too, involves the notion of inclement weather. First, such imagery is used to describe the Harpies, who, according to Phineus, are like 'ces tourbillons qui devancent les pluyes' (1.249). They descend on his table

ainsy qu'on void fondre une nue
Armée de tempeste, ou quelque orage pers
Qu'Orion laisse choir sur les blez qui sont verdz.
(11.258-60, p.269)

Having attacked Phineus' food in full view of the Argonauts, the Harpies fly off 'comme tourbillons en l'air' (1.358). One is told that they 'de legiereté les fouldres egalloyent' (1.379).

Later, Phineus foretells the episode of the Cyanean Rocks, and employs the image of thunder and lightning, to evoke the fire that arises from the rocks on collision:

à leur rencontrer
Un feu sort de leur front, ainsy que le tonnerre
Qui choquant rudement la nuë qui l'enserre
Au milieu de la nuict, des pluyes et du vent
Fait un jour de son feu qui se va resuivant,
Brillant à longue pointe ...

(11.520-5, pp.282-3; italics mine)

This evocation (especially by virtue of the phrases here placed in italics) is close to lines 65 to 67 of the Hymne de Pollux et de

Castor, quoted above (p.210). The imagery creates links, not only between different parts of the same hymn, but between the two compositions, over and above the explicit themes.

Within the Dioscuri-hymn itself, a series of images connects Amycus with wild beasts. As soon as he appears, he is compared to a lion (ll.261-4, p.305): a favourite Homeric simile. Ronsard's image includes a reference to Amycus' victims: for the tyrant is like a lion, 'Qui oyt le plaint d'un fan, dans un prochain bocage' (l.262).¹ Whereas Homer's lion-similes generally denote great valour, savage devotion to the cause of war (see the Iliad XII, ll.41-8, and XVI, ll.751-3), Ronsard's comparison emphasizes the senseless violence of Amycus, who is not fighting a battle, but who nevertheless causes much bloodshed. Again, espying the Argonauts, Amycus trembles with joy, and is compared to a starving tiger 'Voyant un Cerf aux bois de son front desarmé' (l.276); pity is once more aroused for the defenceless victim.

The fashioning of such a web of imagery enables Ronsard, as in the preceding hymn, to suggest by subtle variations a change in situation, as well as to exploit literary allusions. For instance, weighing up his opponent, Amycus is again likened to a lion; but now, the image implies that Amycus himself is in greater danger: the roles have been reversed, making the tyrant the hunted one (ll.335-40, p.308).² An image occurring after Amycus' death

1. The image changes in 1587: the lion becomes a wolf; the detail that the hunted animal has lost its mother arouses further pity; the undulating mane is replaced by the terse 'Herisse son eschine'; leonine roaring gives way to gnashing of teeth; and stress is placed on the fact that the wolf intends to devour its quarry.

2. The 'espaix million / De chasseurs' (ll.336-7) reminds one of the Argonauts and Bebryces, awaiting the outcome of the combat.

similarly draws attention to the contrast between past and present and underlines the downfall of the bully, who is now a dead lion (ll.557-60, p.318). Pollux here becomes the herdsman protecting his cattle.¹

If one follows up the pine-image seen in lines 156 to 157, one is able to make similar observations. Amycus as he falls is compared to a pine (see the Aeneid, V, ll.447-9). The pine, first used to suggest Amycus' swaggering form, now portrays him close to death (ll.533-8, p.317). The tree, uprooted, falls 'Tout d'un coup lourdelement du feste d'un Rocher' (l.536). The mention of the rock recalls lines 159 to 160; then, it denoted Amycus' supercilious attitude; now, it foreshadows his downfall. Again, there is a reference to the 'grand bruit' the tree makes as it falls (l.538). This reminds one of lines 175 to 176, in which Timante described the noise made by Amycus striding arrogantly along. Former pride and imminent downfall are simultaneously suggested by the image of the pine, which of course also creates Homeric and Virgilian echoes.

As suggested (p.199), another series of similes connects the tyrant with the elements. A comparison from Theocritus describes Amycus' body, stripped for battle, with muscles like pebbles

que la course des flots
D'un grand torrent d'yver a pollis sur le sable ...
(ll.372-3, pp.309-10)

The last line provides a verbal reminiscence of the evocation in line 176 of the great noise made by Amycus' feet - an echo even

1. The reversal of roles is also embodied in certain actions described in the hymn. For example, Amycus' head is hung from the crow's-nest of the Argo (ll.573-4, p.318), just as the giant himself once used to hang up heads at the entrance to his cave (ll.193-8, p.302 - a particularly lurid evocation).

more precise than that in the pine-image.¹ Once again, the cruel bully is linked with the great powers of water. Then, despite the ardour with which Pollux attacks him, Amycus remains unmoved, and is likened to a rock on the shores of the Aegean (ll.433-4, and 11.439-40: compare Apollonius, Argonautica II, ll.70-3; and Statius, Thebais VI, ll.777-9). This image recalls the introduction to the hymn, with its picture of lightning striking a rock at sea. Likewise, an image occurring when Amycus and Pollux have been thrown establishes a further link with the framework to the hymn, for it depicts flashes of lightning:

Plustost que deux esclairs qui s'eslancent de nuit
Se trouverent debout ...

(11.511-12, p.316; see also line 525)²

Imagery in this hymn - of storms, of wild animals, of trees, of the elemental aspects of nature - serves to anticipate the course that the action will take. It is a concise way of drawing parallels and suggesting contrasts: contrasts between one point in the plot and another, but also, on a much larger scale, between Ronsard's work and that of classical authors. Ronsard's use of similes that were among Homer's own favourites clearly hints that the French poet is deriving many of his effects from a system of allusiveness. As the next chapter will demonstrate, this is true also of sections of the Franciade. Again, in the context of the hymn itself, the similes link the framework to the main narrative. Rhetoric underpins the structural features studied in the previous chapter: it reinforces the structural connection between Ronsard's

1. Surprisingly, Leslie sees in lines 372 to 373 an anticipation of the name of the protagonist of the Hymne de l'Hyver (p.103).

2. Ellipsis of the personal pronoun here increases the impression of speed.

two Argonautic hymns, where one framework plainly anticipates the other. For the motif of the tempest, of lightning rending the heavens, figures large in both poems; and indeed a passage in the Dioscuri hymn contains distinct verbal echoes of the Hymne de Calais, et de Zetes.

(2) CIRCUMLOCUTION

Circumlocution is, for the sixteenth-century poets, a further means of ramification. The writer, whilst using one object as a starting-point, proceeds to transport both himself and the reader into a different realm. It is, like the heroic comparison, a device recommended by several contemporary theorists. They may well be recalling Quintilian, who spoke of one form of periphrasis, antonomasia, in his Institutio Oratoria, VIII. 6. 29, providing four examples.¹ Peletier mentions antonomasia briefly in his Art poétique, I. 9.² And in the Deffence et Illustration de la langue francoyse, Du Bellay speaks first of antonomasia, then moves on to consider the wider domain of circumlocution in general:

-
1. Antonomasia, quae aliquid pro nomine ponit,
 poetis quoque modo frequentissima, et per
 epitheton, quod detracto eo, cui apponitur,
 valet pro nomine, Tydides, Pelides, et ex
 iis, quae in quoque sunt praecipua,
 Divum pater atque hominum rex,
 et ex factis, quibus persona signatur,
 Thalamo quae fixa reliquit
 Impius.

2. Page 135 of A. Boulanger's edition.

Entre autres choses, je t'averty' user souvent de la figure ANTONOMASIE, aussi frequente aux anciens poëtes, comme peu usitée, voire incongne des Francoys. La grace d'elle est quand on designe le nom de quelque chose par ce qui luy est propre, comme le Pere foudroyant, pour Jupiter: le Dieu deux fois né, pour Bacchus: la Vierge chasseresse, pour Dyane. Cete figure a beaucoup d'autres especes, que tu trouverras chés les rhetoriciens, et a fort bonne grace principalement aux descriptions, comme: Depuis ceux qui voyent premiers rougir l'Aurore, jusques la ou Thetis recoit en ses undes le filz d'Hyperion, pour Depuis l'Orient jusques à l'Occident.

(II. 9, 'Observation de quelques manieres de parler francoyses'; edited by Chamard, 1904, pp.285-6)

Thus the poet is advised to use periphrasis to designate people, on the one hand, and to add pleasing details to a description, on the other. Both sorts of periphrasis are popular with the writers of the sixteenth century.

(a) Antonomasia

Many examples of antonomasia are very brief, like the examples supplied by Du Bellay, and are simply indications that the epic style is being employed. They are interesting, however, when they are extended by the poet to the point where they, like the simile, assume virtually independent status.

An extremely lengthy instance of the figure is found in the Favola di Atlante, by Alamanni. Introducing Perseus into Atlas' garden, the poet gives a seventeen-line circumlocution for the hero (11.260-76, I, pp.350-1). The antonomasia then merges without further transition into the narrative proper. At no stage in the

passage is Perseus actually named. By means of this vast periphrasis that soon seems to lose sight of its point de départ, Alamanni is able to refer to famous episodes from Perseus' life which, being thus called into the reader's mind, cluster behind Alamanni's account and endow it with great density. The poet relies on other texts to fill in details he has no time to provide. Alamanni refers first of all to Perseus' birth, following upon Jupiter's visitation of Danaë in her tower (ll.260-2). This evocation was perhaps inspired by Ovid's portrait of Perseus, 'quem pluvio Danaë conceperat auro' (Metamorphoses IV, 1.611). The second episode depicted is the decapitation of Medusa, described by various mythographers and later to become the subject of Baïf's Hippocrene (ll.263-6). Then Alamanni mentions, again by means of antonomasia, Perseus' steed, Pegasus (l.270). His subsequent evocation of the blood dripping from the Gorgon's head is taken from Ovid, Metamorphoses IV, ll.617-20. Alamanni writes:

Et sopra essendo all' Aphricane arene
 Spesso cadean dalla Gorgonea fronte
 Stille di sangue, che spargendo à terra
 Il uenenoso humor, lacerte, ed angui
 Tosto eran fatti, onde piu d'altri ha colmo
 Di nocenti animai la Lybia il seno.
 (ll.271-6, pp.350-1)

.

This may be compared with the Latin poet's version:

cumque super Lybicas victor penderet harenas,
 Gorgonei capitis guttae cecidere cruentae,
 quas humus exceptas varios animavit in angues.
 unde frequens illa est infestaque terra colubris.

There are even verbal echoes: 'cecidere' and 'cadean', 'angues' and 'angui', for example. Alamanni is more diffused and hyperbolical; but his passage indicates how antonomasia, as well as being a means of widening the scope of the narrative by reference

to legends connected with one of the characters, can contribute to the allusive nature of the poem, calling up episodes and even verbal harmonics from another author. This evocation of Perseus is so long that it may well in turn have influenced other writers, notably Baïf in L'Hippocrène.

Alamanni also reveals his predilection for antonomasia in his Favola di Phetonte. The poet here designates Epaphus by means of circumlocution (ll.146-54, p.113). Although Ovid is the source for much of the poem, he provides no equivalent periphrasis. Alamanni manages to evoke in limited space Zeus' love for Io, his transformation of her into a white heifer, to protect her from Juno's jealous wrath, and the handing over of this cow for safe-keeping to Argus Panoptes (who is himself designated by means of antonomasia in line 149). He refers to Io's frenzied travels over the globe, tormented by the sting of the gadfly, and to the way Zeus restored her to human form on the banks of the Nile. A whole legend is succinctly evoked. Alamanni indulges in this mythological virtuosity for its own sake, as knowledge of the myth of Io is not essential to the action of the poem. A briefer instance of antonomasia is found in lines 158 to 163 (p.113), where it expresses Epaphus' pride in his divine descent, and lays emphasis upon the fearful aspects of Epaphus' father, Jupiter. These periphrases - like the decorated objects discussed in Chapter 3 (pp.149-56) - link the protagonist with an illustrious background testifying to Jupiter's power.

The parallel between the use of ornate objects and that of antonomasia is suggestive; for in Tagault's Le Ravisement d'Orithye, the two are combined in order to connect the events recounted with more famous episodes from legend, as well as to elevate the style. In this piece, one generally encounters

circumlocution being employed by one character to refer to another. Orithye, for instance, mentions Vulcan, his banishment from the heavens, and his ceaseless activity. From the point of view of the plot, she really needs only to pronounce Vulcan's name; yet she tells Jupiter much more (ll.520-5, fol. 12 recto). She seems to elaborate on the evocation in order to render more cogent her argument that Jupiter has ample resources with which to punish her for spurning Aquilon. Whatever its psychological implications, however, the antonomasia is a good illustration of Tagault's deployment of retarding, decorative motifs.

In Alamanni and Tagault, who have been taken as representative of the poetry under consideration, antonomasia widens the vistas of the work. Yet it may sometimes be a relatively vacuous stylistic feature. In Petit's Arion, for instance, the numerous brief circumlocutions merely create an impression of obscurity. Theocritus is referred to in lines 24 to 25:

eximii foelix praenuncia cantus
Innuba sicanio volucris sub monte susurrans ...
(fol. B1 verso)

Hesiod appears as the 'Ascraeus(que) senex' (l.31). Those who gain momentary respite from the tortures of Hades thanks to Orpheus' descent to their realm are designated by periphrasis in lines 79 to 84 (fol. B2 verso). Bacchus is 'semeleia ... / Progenies' (ll.153-4, fol. B4 verso) and 'vinipotens' (l.800, fol. F3 recto), and 'semeleia proles' (l.954, fol. G2 verso). Jason is presented as the son of Aeson (l.296, fol. C4 recto), and Hercules as the club-bearing hero who bathed himself after his labours (ll.432-4, fol. D2 verso). The Muses are designated generally as sisters of Apollo, but also as 'Thespiadum (...) cohors' (l.436). Mercury is 'Maia genitum' (l.633, fol. E3 recto). Orpheus is the Thracian

prophet (1.887, fol. G1 recto), and Arion himself is the 'dulci-sonus vates' (1.763, fol. F2 recto; 1.848, fol. F4 recto). Petit seems to think antonomasia so suitable a feature for the heroic style that he only rarely gives to people their proper names.

Antonomasia is also a literary mannerism in Vitel's Hymne de Pallas. Lines 189 to 200 are typical: Vitel indicates how indebted various personages are to Pallas by means of two legendary episodes: the taming of Pegasus by Bellerophon, with the help of a bridle given to him by Athene; and Hercules' twelfth labour, the capture of Cerberus, facilitated by the moral support of the goddess. Both references evoke a time of heroic deeds commensurate with Pallas' great valour. Nobody is mentioned by name: Neptune is the 'Dieu de la Maree' (1.190), Cerberus 'le Chien trois fois testu' (1.200). The contribution of the circumlocutions to the effect of epic magnification does not compensate for the considerable amount of erudition required of the reader.

(b) Descriptive circumlocutions

Descriptive periphrases, the second type recommended by Du Bellay in the passage quoted above (p.216), could also degenerate into literary mannerisms. Used in moderation, however, they added to the colour of the fragment. And indeed, the poets of this period thought that embellishment was a prerequisite of their work. In his Abbrege, for instance, Ronsard advocates decoration of the poetic text. His remarks also shed light upon his taste for similes, as they combine 'inventions' and 'descriptions' with 'comparaisons', and even contain a simile exemplifying the very technique Ronsard is advocating, and playing a crucial role in his argument:

tout ainsi qu'on ne peult veritablement dire
 un corps humain beau, plaisant et accomply
 s'il n'est composé de sang, venes, arteres et
 tendons, et surtout d'une plaisante couleur:¹
 ainsi la poësie ne peut estre plaisante ny
 parfaicte sans belles inventions, descriptions,
 comparaisons, qui sont les ners et la vie du
 livre qui veult forcer les siecles pour
 demourer de toute memoire victorieux et
 maistre du temps. (Lm. XIV, p.10)²

By the time Ronsard comes to write his 'Preface svr la Franciade, touchant le poëme heroïque', his taste for circumlocution as a specific form of elaboration has become so pronounced that he devotes two pages to an examination of Virgil's use of the technique to evoke day, night, and spring (XVI-2, pp.333-4).

In the French poets, as in Virgil, the 'belles inventions' and 'descriptions' often take the form of a periphrasis for the time of day (a tempus) or for a certain place (a locus, or a topothesia, if the place is imaginary). The circumlocutions may introduce another fable, a new viewpoint, or a change in tone. The last trait is found above all in the periphrases of Baïf; Tagault and Belleau provide examples of the first two elements.

Baïf's circumlocutions are clear illustrations of how the poet may branch out from the central narrative, as they often introduce an entirely different tempo. In Amymone, they cause the narrative to stand still at moments of great intensity, as well as forming

1. The simile recalls Giraldis Cinthio's Discorsi (Vinegia, 1554, p.16). See R.C. Williams, 'Italian Influence on Ronsard's Theory of the Epic'. But it was also used by classical writers, notably by Tacitus, in Dialogus XXI. See Coleman, pp.69-75.

2. Compare Lm. XIV, p.15, where Ronsard suggests that a poem, like a painting, must be adorned with patches of colour; and also the 'Preface svr la Franciade', XVI-2, p.343.

Similar remarks might be made about the periphrasis found in Le Meurier after the suicide of the two lovers (ll.593-600, p.181). As in Shakespearian tragedy, one glimpses the order that will triumph over heartbreak and chaos. The note of beauty and peace (represented by the light of dawn) and the gaiety of the shepherds contrast sharply with what has gone before. A rejet emphasizes the sense of movement and rebirth:

la nuit s'eparpilloit
Deuant les raiz du Soleil qui sailloit
De l'Ocean ... (ll.595-7)

With its representation of light vanquishing darkness, the circumlocution - not found in Ovid - even suggests that death will not be the end for the two lovers.

Such examples of periphrasis enable Baïf to follow rapidly recounted action with passages in which the dominant motif is one of joy, beauty, or calm. His use of circumlocution, whilst extending the scope of the poem, forms an interesting contrast with the Ronsardian simile. Whereas Ronsard reinforces the notion of activity on the level of imagery, Baïf periodically turns away from the events he is evoking, in order to indulge in calmer meditation. His poetic vision is characterized by obliquity.

The periphrases of Belleau and Tagault are somewhat different: they widen the scope, but do not lessen the intensity of the narrative, as they occur near the beginning of the poems, and prepare the reader for what is to come. Le Ravissement d'Orithye opens with an extended circumlocution that sets the scene for the fable (ll.1-10, fol. 3 recto). It is spring, and still dark, although dawn is approaching. Epithets and antonomasia - periphrasis within a periphrasis - create an epic tone. The Night is 'tenebreuse' (l.8), the Earth is 'nostre antique Mere' (l.6), the

Moon is 'la blanche fille / De Ceres' (11.9-10).¹ Thematically, the passage strikes chords that will be sounded again later. The spring is seen in terms of fecundity ('sein fecond', 1.6); this anticipates the way the thoughts of the cold North Wind himself will turn to marriage and procreation, and also reminds one of how Ronsard often envisages nature as an interplay of sexual forces. The notion of the day chasing away the night (1.9) suggests that the elements can be violent - as Aquilon's abduction of Orithye will make clear. In general, the passage creates an atmosphere of peace, like many of Baïf's circumlocutions - the moon shines through 'le vuide tranquille' (1.10) - but also of expectancy, reinforced by the construction 'n'auoit ... Encore' in lines 7 to 9. It therefore has a purpose related to the main action: it sets the scene for what is to happen. On the other hand, it introduces strictly extraneous allusions; one notes in particular the reference to the Golden Fleece, introduced by means of the Ram, who bore

et le frere et la Soeur
Par les voyes de l'eau, qui fuioient la fureur
D'Inon ... (11.3-5)

The Argonauts' quest will indeed henceforth never be far from the surface, since, as indicated in Chapter 3, prophecies remind the reader that Orithye will give birth to Calais and Zetes, who will join Jason's crew (see above, pp.170-1). The circumlocution is, one concludes, partly functional and partly decorative.

1. Diana was usually seen as daughter of Leto by Zeus. But, in agricultural terms, Core, Persephone, and Hecate (an aspect of the moon-goddess) were all seen as facets of Demeter, or Ceres; they were the goddess in triad. Core represented the green corn, Persephone the ripe ear, and Hecate the harvested grain. See Graves, I. 24. 1, page 92.

Tagault's evocation may be compared with a periphrasis in Belleau's Les Amours d'Iris et d'Opalle, placed immediately after the statement of the subject of the poem (ll.7-16, p.123); for this too denotes the season of the year, in astrological terms first of all.¹ Belleau, like Tagault, appropriately sets his love-story in spring. Unlike Tagault, however, Belleau does not develop mythological allusions. 'L'image à Persé' (l.11) appears as a heavenly body rather than as a legendary figure. Belleau's circumlocution is more decorative, less connected with the main narrative. The leitmotifs are purity and beauty, constituting a striking introduction to the passion of Iris and Opalle. They are sounded by the evocation of the sun in line 7, and reinforced by the notion of the early hours of the morning (l.12) and of a spring landscape (ll.13-16). The idea of beauty is made concrete by the mention of flowers, and by the depiction of the sun gilding Taurus' horns.² The passage moves from celestial bodies to the humblest creatures of the earth: flowers (the diminutive size of which is emphasized by the form 'fleurettes' in line 13), and birds (whose songs are 'mignars', l.16). The reference to the ocean supplies a transition from cosmos to earth. No mention is made of human beings. Belleau prepares a virgin territory on to which the protagonists may step, a world rendered beautiful by the artifices of nature, the perfume of flowers, and the music of birds. He is different from Baïf in that he does not interrupt a dramatic action with his circumlocution. The latter simply provides a prelude.

1. Verdier (p.123) suggests that Belleau was perhaps inspired by his translation of Aratos to include so many allusions to the heavenly bodies. - Like Tagault, Belleau mentions the Ram (l.9).

2. This metaphor (l.8) interprets nature in terms of visual art, anticipating the introduction of precious stones, and reminding one of how nature and art are interwoven in the Pierres precieuses.

Both Tagault and Belleau are hence aware of the way they may use a season or a place as a base on which to construct a little scene which, although of no direct pertinence to the main action, can create parallels to it, establish an atmosphere, or provide a glimpse of another section of mythology. In both poets, as in Baïf, the periphrasis tends to assume a vividness inducing one to forget the object that was originally meant to be designated.

A section from Ronsard's Hymne de l'Autonne constitutes an amusing example of how periphrasis may be used to intertwine different narrative levels. Autumn seeks out her father, the Sun:

C'estoit au mesme poinct que l'estoille du jour
 Avoit desja chassé les astres d'alentour
 Des pastures du Ciel, et les contant par nombre,
 Pour la crainte du chaut les alloit mettre à l'ombre.
 Ja la Lune argentée alloit voir son amy,
 Son bel Endymion sur le mont endormy,
 Et ja la belle Aurore au visage de roses
 Les barrieres du ciel par tout avoit decloses:
 Et desja le Soleil son front avoit huilé
 De fard, à celle fin qu'il ne fust point haslé,
 Et assis dans son char desja tenoit la bride
 A ses coursiers tirés hors de l'estable vuide,
 Quand tout à l'impourveu l'Autonne arriva là.

(11.239-51, Lm. XII, pp.57-8)

Having been taken ever deeper into the mythological world by the repeated 'ja', it is indeed 'à l'impourveu' that the reader realizes this circumlocution is no mere embellishment, but is to be taken literally. Autumn can actually see the sun. The phrase that usually indicates a digression, 'C'estoit au mesme poinct que ...', is here employed to designate an occurrence that concerns the protagonist. Ronsard plays with the expectations of the reader, allowing him to stray some distance from the main narrative, before bringing him abruptly back.

(3) PRETERITION

In the foregoing example from the Hymne de l'Automne, Ronsard is using a rhetorical stratagem. He is announcing that he intends to do one thing, and then doing another. In some respects, the device of preterition – also known as occupatio or paraleipsis – is similar. The poet pretends that he will not talk about a certain subject, whilst calling the subject to the reader's attention by this very claim. In the sixteenth-century writers, the device can provide links with other texts. It becomes another means of rendering the boundaries of the fragment more elastic, of fitting as many events as possible into a limited number of lines.

The device seems first to have been put to extensive use by Ronsard. It occurs in his Hinne de Bacus (published in 1555), where it provides the reader with a summary of as many episodes of Bacchus' life as possible (ll.245–56, Lm. VI, pp.188–9). In the space of twelve lines, Ronsard refers to the tale of the daughters of Minyas, as recounted by Ovid (Metamorphoses IV, ll.1–35; ll.389–415); to the punishment of Marsyas (Metamorphoses VI, ll.382–400); to Telephus, wounded by Achilles, as he tripped over a vine (Apollodorus, Epitome III. 17); and to the death of Acrisius (hinted at in the Metamorphoses, IV, ll.607–14). All these are examples of the folly of refusing to honour Bacchus, and contribute to the portrayal of the wine-god as a being whose strength is far from the traditional view of him as effeminate. The list is introduced by the question: 'Rechanterai-je encor ...' in line 245. The use of the iterative verb suggests that Ronsard is referring the reader to Ovid, who has dealt with this story before; and indeed Ronsard's technique here is one of literary allusion: he completes the information furnished in his poem by

reference to the work of others; he touches on subjects even whilst suggesting that they are unworthy of detailed treatment.

There is an extended example of the use of this technique for encomiastic purposes in Les Daimons, lines 23 to 44 (Lm. VIII, pp.116-17); but it is Ronsard's Phineus who, in the Hymne de Calais, et de Zetes, best illustrates its deployment for epic ends. The prophet informs the Argonauts that he cannot tell them much about their future adventures, but then, as seen in Chapter 3 (pp.167-8), proceeds to predict at length what awaits them (ll.575-666, VIII, pp.285-9). Many elements from Apollonius and Valerius Flaccus are drawn into the orbit of Ronsard's poem.¹

Such instances of preterition in Ronsard seem to have influenced Baïf. Throughout Les Muses, Baïf is anxious to open out a broader vista behind the figure of Orpheus, magnifying the latter's status just as Ronsard magnified that of Phineus. In lines 451 to 558 (M-L. II, pp.83-6), for example, Baïf incorporates many of the Argonauts' adventures by mentioning events connected with places the Argonauts pass; these events include the seduction of Hylas, the combat of Pollux with Amycus, and the routing of the Harpies by Calais and Zetes: all subjects treated by Ronsard. Thus, as well as referring the reader to the epic tradition, Baïf seems also to be calling upon fresher memories of the work of Ronsard.

In the passage, Baïf relies heavily on occupatio. He stops short and addresses Belot, claiming suddenly to have realized that he was about to venture 'Du vieil Orphé les louanges deduire'

1. For another good example of preterition in Ronsard, see the Discours à Maistre Juliain Chauveau, from the Sixième Livre des Poèmes, ll.29-44, Lm. XV, p.154.

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(1.504).¹ However, he still mentions - as subjects that he dare not treat - what befalls Jason's crew. Formulae such as 'Diroy-ie bien' (1.519), 'Pourroy-ie bien assez dignement dire' (1.523), 'chanteroy-je assez bien' (1.527), 'rediroy-je assez bien' (1.535), and, again, 'Diroy-je bien' (1.539) recall Ronsard's Hinne de Bacus, and indicate that occupatio is being used. Baïf in fact devotes eight lines to Orpheus' religious powers, whilst claiming that this is not the right time to praise the vates (ll.551-8, pp.85-6). With apparent casualness, he supplies details about the Argonauts as well as about his protagonist.

This mode of presentation seems particularly to have appealed to Baïf; it recurs for instance in Pan, where the poet introduces the episodes of Marsyas and of Midas with a rhetorical question: 'Diray-ie comme il dit l'outrecuidé Satyre ...?' (1.161); 'Diray-ie comme il dit de Midas les oreilles ...?' (1.169). Before he has even decided whether it is appropriate for him to recount these sections of Pan's song, Baïf has provided a glimpse of the most salient features of the legend. Hence it is not surprising to find that the poem contains references to no less than eight distinct sections of mythology, and allusions to such diverse writers as Diodorus Siculus, Apollodorus, Hyginus, Pliny, and Ovid.

In this way, both Ronsard and Baïf adopt an allusive style which at the same time tries to conceal the fact that it is essentially expanding the limits of the poem. The urge for expansion becomes so strong that it feels the need to hide behind its opposite. Simile and circumlocution were supported by theoretical

1. Compare Baïf's claim that he is unworthy of singing Orpheus' praises with the ending of Hesteau's La Metamorphoze du Figuier, ll.379-95, fol. 79 verso - 80 recto.

statements; preterition, on the other hand, is not openly discussed by the poets. In Baïf above all, paraleipsis leads to other rhetorical peculiarities, which are best illustrated by the original poem, L'Hippocrene.

L'Hippocrene contains, in a mere 364 lines, a wealth of mythological allusions, many of which are introduced as pieces of incidental narrative by means of paradiagesis. Even the account of Perseus' birth and the subsequent rejection of Danaë by her father is an example of the device, being prefaced by Pallas' resolve to punish Medusa and

par vn mesme moyen honorer son frere Persee,
Que l'Acrisine Danés conceut en pluie d'or forcee ...
(11.45-6, M-L. II, p.62)

Then, Danaë reminds the Nereids of how they saved Ino and Palaemon and made them 'Dieux nouveaux' (11.101-3, p.64).¹ In the space of approximately fifty lines, there are two different references to the past, which broaden the scope of the poem. Again, the fact that Perseus and Minerva fly over Pisa at quite a distance suffices to summon up the tale of Denomaus, Myrtilus, and Peleus (11.289-92, p.69).² And indeed, the whole evocation of the flight resembles a very condensed version of the Argonauts' periplus.³

Similar examples of paradiagesis are found in Tagault's Ravissement d'Orithye, and serve especially to provide a summary

1. See Graves, I. 70h, page 227.

2. See *ibid.*, II. 109 *passim*, pages 31 to 34.

3. The vers baïfin used in the poem (a line of fifteen syllables, divided into hemistiches of seven and eight syllables respectively, and found also in Antigone, 11.710-14 and 'A Marie', Passetems IV. 345), is a good reflection of the nature of the work as a whole: structures are strained to the utmost, in order to accommodate a large number of episodes.

of other legendary love-affairs. With a possible reminiscence of Baïf's Hippocrene, Orithye's nurse uses the example of Danaë to prove that love can overcome all obstacles - even Orithye's watchful father (ll.261-6, fol. 7 verso). She thus emphasizes the power of the gods, and foreshadows the way Aquilon will succeed in abducting Orithye. Orithye herself is mindful of other mythological lovers, and at one point sees their lives as proof that she should not have rejected Aquilon's advances. She asks herself:

La Deesse Venus, combien qu'elle feut belle,
A elle refusé le pasteur Phrigien?
La Dame de la Nuit, le dormeur Ladmien
N'ha elle pas aimé? voire et mesmes, encore
Cephale fut il pas bien aimé de l'Aurore,
Quand le ravit au Ciel? (ll.533-8, fol. 12 recto)

Orithye's own love-story is enriched with the memories of other legendary romances, all of which suggest to her that she should be less obdurate. The examples she lists contain an increasing element of abnegation of life: Anchises' existence was enriched by the love of Venus; but Endymion was sent into a perpetual sleep by the moon; and Cephalus was gathered up (for a period of time varying in different versions of the fable) into the heavens, as Orithye indicates. Unconsciously, the maiden is preparing herself for her own abduction. These references to other myths suggest parallels with the main narrative, and are more than simple asides.¹

1. An allusion to another mythological love-affair underlines the fact that Aquilon can be violent in his treatment of women unwilling to return his love (ll.478-82, fol. 11 recto).

Belleforest's La Fable de Narcisse, et Eolio contains three groups of references to other myths: the first concerns the prisci poetae, the second Adonis, and the third metamorphosis: of Daphne, Echo, and Hyacinth. Narcissus' fate is anticipated and enriched by the echoes of other fables.

Returning to L'Hippocrene, one finds that the predilection for incidental narrative is accompanied here by parenthesis, which, on the level of the individual sentence, enables the poet to embrace further allusions to mythology. In the following lines, a fisherman takes Danaë and her son

à Polydecte prince
De Serif, qui gouvernoit la non encor friche prouince
De l'Isle,¹ qui fut depuis de fertile faitte pierreuse,
Quand le peuple s'empierçant regarda la face hideuse
Que Persee le vangeur de la vergongne de sa mere,
(Car tout le peuple aprouuoit de Polidecte l'adultere)
Leur fit voir à son retour de l'auanture de Forcide.
(ll.121-7, pp.64-5)

This brief account is of no particular relevance to the narrative proper; it momentarily distracts attention from the main action by pointing, like the device of prophecy, to the future. Yet temporal perspectives are blurred here, since 'l'auanture de Forcide', an event which, from the standpoint of the primary narrative, has still to occur, is referred to in the past tense.² Baïf tries to telescope into a limited space various aspects of the legend with which he is dealing; and he does so at the expense of strict chronological order and coherence.

A similar ramification is encountered but a few lines later. Its principal effect is to create a blend of complexity and brevity. Minerva

1. The enjambement in this and the preceding line is another indication that the boundaries of grammar and versification are at this stage felt by Baïf to be constraints.

2. The reference is derived from Palaephatus, who rationalizes the claim that the Seriphians were turned to stone (Palaephatis scriptoris Graeci opusculum De non credendis fabulosis narrationibus, 'De Phorcynis filiabus').

Au Tiran Serifien mit finement en la pensee,
 (Lors qu'en vn festin public du païs la gent amassee
 Le don que le Roy vouloit luy donnoit en signe
 d'hommage)

De demander à Persé de la Forcide le visage ...

(11.135-8, p.65)

The crowd, and the whole force of popular tradition are evoked in a mere couple of lines, in an almost casual aside. Parenthesis and paradiagesis here combine in the endeavour to fold as much material as possible into as compact a form as possible.¹

Baïf's utilization of parenthesis anticipates certain sections of the Franciade, as Chapter 5 will demonstrate (see especially page 289). It indicates that the poet is anxious to pierce through the limits of the period.² But it operates less obtrusively than the heroic comparison and circumlocution; it is not a device recommended by the writer himself in critical works.

This chapter was concerned with what might be termed devices of display and devices of concealment, both of which tended to widen the vistas of the fragment and to make the encyclopaedic urge triumph over the episodic. The survey began in the broad fields of simile. There, art was flamboyant: images were embedded in

1. See Augé-Chiquet, p.222. Augé-Chiquet condemns Baïf's aesthetic without really attempting to understand it.

2. Parenthesis is favoured by Antoine de Cotel, as a means, precisely, of circumventing syntactical problems. In La Cigale and the second Bergerie, the technique occurs so often that it becomes a lax means of expression. This shows how a device used sparingly by Baïf and Ronsard may, in another poet, be a mere literary tic.

great clusters in the gangue of the narrative; similes were woven into intricate webs. There stood one poet above all: Ronsard. Images proliferate in Ronsard's epic fragments. They enable the poet to raid many arts and crafts and advance towards that encyclopaedic ideal of which he dreamed. They demand watchfulness on the part of the reader, a willingness temporarily to withdraw from the main narrative field. They are reinforcements for the exuberance that is the escutcheon of Ronsard's poetry. Yet they are not random in their tactics; for they are thematically inter-linked, tracing out paths for one another and signalling important stages in the narrative. They are a vital part of Ronsard's deployment of epic techniques. Accordingly, they play a crucial role in the Franciade, as the following chapter will demonstrate.

The realm of the simile proved adjacent to the technique of circumlocution, another device explicit in its aim to embellish and to transpose everyday objects into a mythological realm, another technique consciously advocated by the sixteenth-century poets themselves.

These paths led to a smaller, more secret domain. Masks were worn and feints adopted here. The poet concealed his digressive tendencies, strayed on to wider territories whilst pretending not to do so. The rhetorical stratagems he used are found in particular in the work of Baïf, the poet of obliquity and indirectness, the poet who illustrates the most profound tendencies of the epic fragment with his Hippocrene, and who does so precisely because he is not conforming to an honestly formulated purpose. He reveals how the writers of fragments feel the limits of genre, versification and syntax as constricting forces, how they have at the back of their minds the wish to compose a full-scale heroic work.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE FRANCIADE

The poems examined in the foregoing chapters are fragments, in the sense that they result from the selection of individual episodes from a larger whole, such as the Argonautic cycle. Poets choose one theme, and are content simply to suggest wider vistas by means of the structural and rhetorical devices illustrated above. Ronsard exploits this episodic form with great success; indeed, he develops to the full many features adumbrated by others, as the survey of his use of similes showed. Far from being a constraint, the incomplete character of the narrative enables Ronsard to adopt an allusive technique, to provide in passing glimpses of other authors, different time-scales, various crafts, whilst repeatedly checking his digressive tendencies just in time to return to the central, comparatively circumscribed subject. The epyllion seems, in fact, to act as a leash for the poet's vagrant imagination, allowing it freedom whilst preventing it from straying too far.

Although one is inclined to think that this form suited the talents of Ronsard, one cannot deny that the urge to transcend it, by writing a full-scale epic, runs through his work. Laumonier has shown how allusions to Ronsard's epic undertaking are found as early as 1550, in the Ode de la Paix, and recur at various intervals until the publication of the Franciade in 1572.¹ Ronsard considered his miniature epics a minor form when compared with the heroic work intended to rival Homer and Virgil, and to provide an

1. XVI-1, pp.vi-xviii.

encyclopaedic vision of the world. He believed that he would leave the fragment far behind him.

From the outset, however, circumstances seem to be against the Franciade. The poet repeatedly complains of inadequate patronage; Charles IX makes demands running counter to Ronsard's wishes, for instance that the epic be written in decasyllables;¹ and Books One to Four appear on 13 September 1572, only shortly after the Massacre of Saint Bartholomew (23 and 24 August), at a time when the public has concerns more pressing than its distant ancestry. Yet one wonders to what extent Ronsard blames external events for difficulties stemming from his own nature: an examination of the Franciade reveals his awareness of the arduousness of his venture. The poet tries to give his material a satisfactory structure, but seems frequently to be deflected from his purpose. Features meant to provide coherence sometimes do just the opposite. His work takes on a shape very different from what he planned. Nevertheless, it is not to be condemned simply for this reason: on the contrary, it contains many features that make it a colourful, interesting work. Its incompleteness should not obscure its good qualities. And it is useful to analyse the work to find exactly what Ronsard produced, why and how it differs from his aims.

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(1) THE PROBLEMS OF INVENTION

Ronsard is concerned to glorify his own nation and monarchy; and he decides to do this by using subject-matter which, unlike

1. See the lines Ronsard inserted into the second edition of his Abbrege in 1567, quoted by Laumonier, XVI-1, p.xiv.

the Argonautic material, has not been hallowed by classical epics. Largely inspired by his reading of Lemaire de Belges's Illustrations de Gaule et Singularitez de Troye, he resolves to show that the French nation is descended from the Trojans.¹ His theme is thus related to the Iliad, in the sense that it concerns the survivors of the sack of Troy (and Ronsard will be seen to make use of this link as a means of justifying his own epic), but it begins where the Iliad ends. His purpose, being eulogistic and dynastic, is similar to Virgil's; but, once again, his subject-matter is different. Ronsard chooses material found in historical and pseudo-historical works rather than in poems, material to which he himself must lend cohesion, and which must be radically transformed if it is to be anything other than a bare list of facts. He must invent rather than imitate other writers.

The 'Au Lecteur' to the first edition of the Franciade shows that Ronsard is aware of the difficulties of his task, and anxious to defend his treatment of the historical sources. He wishes to base his work on fact, since he would otherwise deprive it of all cogency; but he takes a liberal view of what constitutes factuality. He asserts his right to mould the subject-matter into a pleasing form, by drawing a distinction between poet and historian (Lm. XVI-1, p.4), and announcing: 'Brief ce livre est un Roman comme l'Iliade et l'Aeneide ...' (p.5). He returns to the problem of the poet's liberty as regards his sources in the 'Preface svr la Franciade, touchant le poëme heroïque', published

1. On the legend that the French were descended from the Trojans, see E. Faral, La Légende arthurienne: Etudes et documents, I, Appendix I, pp.262-93, 'Comment s'est formée la légende de l'origine troyenne des Francs'; Chamard, III, pp.122-30; and R.E. Asher, 'Myth, Legend and History in Renaissance France'.

in the edition of 1587 (Lm. XVI-2, pp.336-7). Here too he stresses that

le bon Poëte jette tousjours le fonde-
ment de son ouvrage sur quelques vieilles
Annales du temps passé, ou renommee
inveteree, laquelle a gagné credit
au cerveau des hommes. (p.339)

Yet he points out that use of these annals still leaves the poet free to display considerable ingenuity: the writer must feel at liberty to build his creation upon probability rather than historical fact. Ronsard's definition of poetic truth is markedly lax. He explains:

imitant ces deux lumieres de Poësie
(Virgil and Homer), fondé et appuyé
sur nos vieilles Annales, j'ay basti
ma Franciade, sans me soucier si cela
est vray ou non, ou si nos Roys sont
Troyens ou Germains, Scythes ou Arabes:
si Francus est venu en France ou non:
car il y pouvoit venir, me servant du
possible, et non de la verité. (p.340)

What is important is the poet's power of invention.

In spite of this bold proclamation, however, one senses that Ronsard is worried by the fact that the main thrust of his oeuvre has no classical counterpart. He is aware that he is writing in the shadow of the great poets of Antiquity, whilst at the same time departing from these very poets. He is concerned with the status and worth of his protagonist when compared with heroes such as Hector and Aeneas. He seems to wonder to what extent he is justified in devising new material, and strives whenever possible to incorporate in his composition echoes of the works of the past.

(a) The figure of Francus

The motif of substitution in the Franciade interestingly reflects Ronsard's doubts. In the Ode de la Paix, Ronsard outlines the plot of the Franciade. The variants, from 1560 onwards, to lines 165 to 174 (Lm. III, p.14) indicate how the notion of his hero being a surrogate character becomes progressively more important in Ronsard's eyes. The poet mentions in the editions from 1560 to 1573 how Venus (later 'Jupin') saved Francus when she

faignit

Une idole à lui ressemblante ...

The result was that

la feinte

Garda le vrai ...

The editions from 1578 to 1587 announce

Ainsi la fraude de la feinte

Le corps de Francion sauva.

The verb feindre was used in the sixteenth century in relation to both the plastic and the literary arts. In the latter domain, it meant simply representation of something in written form.¹

Ronsard thus refers to his epic hero by means of a term with specific literary connotations, which hence suggests, not only the way his protagonist was saved by the gods, but also the way the poet himself fashions Francion out of almost nothing.

The notion of replacement assumes great importance in the Franciade itself. One could link it with Ronsard's preoccupation with illusion, as expressed in various sonnets from Les Amours.²

1. See Castor, Pléiade Poetics, pp.117-25.

2. See, for example, Sonets pour Helene, II. 23, edited by Weber, p.431; Castor, 'The Theme of Illusion in Ronsard's Sonets pour Helene and in the Variants of the 1552 Amours'; and McFarlane, 'Aspects of Ronsard's Poetic Vision', p.45.

And it is certainly part of Ronsard's desire to establish narrative vraisemblance: he must explain how Astyanax survived the sack of Troy.¹ Yet it seems above all to reflect the poet's awareness of having to graft his epic on to others from the past, his consciousness of the problems that creative imitation entails.

The word feinte first occurs when Jupiter tells the assembled gods how he substituted an image for Andromache's real son (I, 11.107-8, XVI-1, p.35).² It achieves prominence by being echoed in line 114 and line 133; it is thus found three times in the same passage. Helenin, speaking to the people, tells how Jupiter saved Francus by replacing him with 'une feinte image' (I, 1.710, p.65). Francus himself appears to feel that he is a surrogate character, existing only by virtue of a trick performed by Jove; for, during the tempest, he prays to Jupiter for help, and reproaches the god for ever having rescued him from Pyrrhus:

1. See the 'Au Lecteur', XVI-1, pp.3-12, especially page 10, where Ronsard explains why he introduced Jupiter's long opening speech. He refers to the large number of feintes in Book One.

For the way Ronsard has adapted theories such as that of Lemaire de Belges as to why Francus survived, see H. Guy, 'Les Sources françaises de Ronsard'.

2. B.L.O. Richter, in 'Belleforest, The First Critic of Ronsard's Franciade?', pp.73-6, refers to François de Belleforest's criticism of this passage involving the notion of a feinte, of falsification. Belleforest attacks Ronsard's presentation of the origins of the French, and uses this excerpt (I, 11.107-18) to demonstrate that the argument for the Trojan origin of the French nation is founded on mere fabrication, not on historical fact. His onslaught was published soon after the first edition of the Franciade, in his Chroniques et Annales de France dès l'Origine des François, et leur Venue es Gaules, Paris, Gabriel Buon, 1573 (fol. 1 verso).

Ha! tu devois en la Troyenne guerre
 Faire couler mon cerveau contre terre,
 Sans me sauver par une feinte ainsi
 Pour me trahir à ce cruel soucy ...

(II, ll.181-4, XVI-2, p.103)¹

These statements may be seen as reflections of Ronsard's awareness that there is little support in ancient sources for the existence of his protagonist: Francus is virtually a figment of the poet's imagination.²

Imaginary or not, however, Francus must be fitted into the heroic tradition. His relationship with the great heroes of ancient epics must be clarified. Another leitmotif suggests how Ronsard attempts to validate the status of his protagonist: this is the series of references to Hector. Hector is a figure made famous by Homer, and hence deeply rooted in the epic past. He is, Ronsard stresses, Francus' father. This point is made as early as the fourth line of the first book (p.29). Jupiter tells us that the little Francus closely resembled Hector (I, ll.105-6, p.35). Helenin ponders on 'les destins de Francus Hectoride' (I, l.350, p.46), and is reminded by Mercury of his duties towards 'L'enfant d'Hector' (I, l.371, p.47; compare line 468, p.53, and line 700, p.65). The Trojan priest prays that Francus may once again raise 'Jusques au ciel le noble sang d'Hector' (I, l.444, p.52). The

1. Francus often wishes he could cast off his heroic mission, and accuses the gods of deceiving him. Compare Book Two, ll.537-59, pp.120-1, and ll.1005-9, pp.144-5; Book Three, ll.201-10, p.182.

2. The drowned sailors call themselves a 'fainte' of the men they once were (II, l.654, p.125); but this occurrence of the word has little connection with Ronsard's consideration of the problems of invention.

shade of Hector appears before Helenin and advises him to choose the strongest Trojans to follow Francus (I, 11.631-68, pp.61-3). Mars decides to help Francus because he is Hector's son (I, 11.769-70, p.68), but accuses him of idleness:

Tel n'estoit pas Hector le pere tien,
 Qui des Troyens fut jadis le soutien ...
 (11.819-20, p.70)¹

Andromache stresses that Francus was the only son she had by Hector (I, 11.964-5, p.77), and hopes that he will surpass his father in valour (11.1012-14, pp.79-80). She gives Francus a robe worn by Hector on the day Helen entered Troy (I, 11.1033-6, p.81).

Thus Ronsard firmly establishes in the course of the first book that Francus is worthy of admiration first and foremost because he is the son of Hector. Although the motif occurs less frequently in the following books, it is repeatedly called to the reader's attention. For instance, Francus, praying to Jupiter for aid during the storm, reminds him of Hector's piety (II, 11.177-80, p.102). He tells Dicaee of the circumstances of Hector's death, in a passage recalling sections of the *Iliad* (II, 11.514-24, p.119). Dicaee welcomes Francus because he remembers Hector's valour (II, 11.588-616, pp.122-3). For Dicaee at least, Francus' virtue is guaranteed in advance by the fact that he is Hector's son. Again, Hyante is from the outset inclined to love Francus because he is 'de la race Hectorée' (III, 1.42, p.174); and Clymene refers to Francus as 'Le fils d'Hector' (III, 1.896, p.214). Preparing for his rendezvous with Hyante, Francus dons a belt given to him by Helenin in memory of Hector (IV, 11.229-31, p.254). And finally, Hyante reminds Francus and the reader that the

1. Compare I, 11.863-4, p.72.

French kings trooping past have Hector as their ancestor (IV, 1.1554, p.317). One has the impression that Ronsard is almost afraid of letting Francus stand on his own: he seeks constantly to lend him the support of a character whose poetic reality is fully sanctioned by Homer.

When trying to persuade Hyante to help him, Francus boasts of his relatives: not only Hector, but also Priam, his grandfather, and Paris, his uncle (IV, 11.399-401, p.262). And one finds that references to Paris in particular, although less numerous than allusions to Hector, again link Francus with the epic tradition. Francus tells Venus that he is the nephew of the man who granted her the golden apple (II, 11.715-16, 1.728, p.129). The nurse reminds Clymene of Francus' relationship to Paris (III, 1.1140, p.225). But whereas the allusions to Hector all enhance Francus' status, some of those to Paris are meant by the characters concerned to lessen it. Clymene compares Francus unfavourably with his uncle (III, 11.1429-34, p.238).¹ Dicaee accuses Francus of causing Clymene's death, and calls him a 'Second Pâris' (IV, 1.37, p.246). These references, although coloured by the particular situation and by the people who utter them, almost suggest a depreciation on the poet's part of his undertaking, or, at least, doubts about Francus' worth in relation to other epic heroes.²

1. Francus himself remembers Paris' abduction of Helen as the sort of act he must avoid, because of its disastrous consequences: the sack of Troy once more looms before the reader's eyes (III, 11.1377-80, p.236).

2. In connection with this mythological motif underlying the story of Francus, one thinks of the use of the same section of mythology in the Sonets pour Helene. There too, a personal relationship is evaluated in the light of an archetypal love-story, and is frequently found lacking.

This detailed survey suggests that Ronsard, whilst being obliged to invent material of specific relevance to the French nation, and hence to depart from his favourite Homeric and Virgilian territory, at the same time attempts to authenticate his work and his protagonist by providing links with the epics he knows so well. He tries to combine originality with imitation. The work that was meant to be radically different seems on such occasions to come close to the epic fragment, which relied for its effects precisely upon its relationship with and echoing of other texts. And at times, even this initially triumphant assertion of a close connection with the Ancients appears to reflect a lack of certainty on Ronsard's part.

In this respect, it is significant that Ronsard, having outlined the plot of his epic in the Ode de la Paix and the ode 'Au Roi' (the first poem in the Troisième Livre des Odes of 1555: Lm. VII, pp.24-34), proceeded to prepare himself for his great task, not by further sketches of the Francus material, which would have given him a sense of confidence, but by the imitation of isolated episodes from other epics, by the selection of themes that could not help him achieve a more comprehensive, independent genre.

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(b) The 'coup d'essay'

The Argonautic hymns – central representatives of Ronsard's approach to the epic miniature – are explicitly viewed by the poet as exercises in the epic style. The idea of experimentation looms large in the Hymne de Pollux et de Castor, where Ronsard stresses that his work is a 'coup d'essay' based on foreign (Greek and Latin) models (l.13, VIII, p.294), a means of testing his own strength (l.11), an exercise conducted with a view to praising

Gaspard de Coligny in a larger work. A series of images conveys this notion. The first is the simile of thunder and lightning assailing a lofty rock before attacking the land (11.9-15). Then Ronsard uses the comparison of a lyre, the player of which

decoupe un fredon, ains qu'il commence à dire
 Quelque belle chanson, pour tenter seulement
 Si la corde à l'esprit respond fidelement.
 (11.30-2, pp.294-5)

In Ronsard's work, the lyre frequently represents poetic creativity; here, it conveys the notion of the tuning of an instrument, of the perfecting of one's techniques.¹ The fact that Ronsard expresses the notion of the 'coup d'essay' in a cluster of images - like musical variations on a theme - mirrors the suggestion that he is here trying his hand at treating certain material.

The hymn is thus seen as an exercise, the purpose of which is to form an epic style, a style suited to the glorification of patrons. It is, accordingly, interesting that the first part of the hymn, devoted to Pollux' duel, should by far outweigh the second. Pollux' combat occupies 487 lines, and Castor's only 176 (11.575-750). Perhaps Ronsard is already aware that he is more likely to draw on the material of the first section: for the description of the duel between Pollux and Amycus will be employed in Book Two of the Franciade (see Lm. XVI-2, p.145, note 2).²

This idea of a sample is in fact a vital concept in the

1. See B. Jeffery, 'The Idea of Music in Ronsard's Poetry'.

2. See A. Klengel, Pierre de Ronsards Hymnendichtung, pp.13-30. Demerson sees the Argonautic hymns as experiments conducted specifically with the Franciade in mind (La Mythologie classique, p.448, note 187).

sixteenth century.¹ In the preface to his Adolescence Clementine of 1532, Clément Marot writes: 'Ce sont oeuvres de jeunesse, ce sont coups d'essay ...'.² And the notion occurs in several of the epic fragments. Baïf presents Le Meurier of 1552 as 'vn avant-jeu' (l.16), a sample of what is to come. Likewise, in the conclusion to Le Narssis (1554), Ronsard dedicates his poem to François Charbonnier as 'l'avant-jeu de plus haute chanson', a prelude to a much larger work in praise of Charbonnier and D'Avanson. In Le Ravissement d'Orithye (1558), Tagault has clearly remembered Ronsard's mythological hymns, as the above chapters indicate.³ He has derived from Ronsard the whole notion of his poem's being a stylistic exercise, a prelude to higher things. In the postscript to his composition, he informs his dedicatee, with a precise echo of Ronsard, that his poem is the 'avant-ieu de plus haute chanson' (fol. 23 recto). In the preface to La Taille's La Mort de Paris Alexandre et d'Oenonne, this mythological poem ('ce petit poeme') apparently inspired by Lemaire de Belges is presented as a sample of the poet's talents, as proof of what he could do in 'quelque oeuvre de plus grande haleine et consequence', if only he had adequate support from his patrons. La Taille here bows down to the sovereignty of Ronsard, who has received more

1. Compare the double set of variation exercises provided by Erasmus in Book One, Chapter 33 of his De utraque verborum ac rerum copia. Erasmus opens this show of virtuosity with the injunction: 'Nunc experiamur'. This is an exercitatio or experientia. See Cave, The Cornucopian Text, Chapter I, pp.3-34.

2. Oeuvres, edited by P. Jannet, s.d., IV, p.189. Quoted by H. Friedrich in Montaigne, p.420.

3. Compare especially lines 1131 to 1132 with lines 51 and 52 of Ronsard's Hymne de Calais, et de Zetes, and line 1145 with line 434 of Ronsard's hymn.

favours from Heaven and the king. He acknowledges that he himself must display his capacities in the limited form of the poetic miniature, and implies that circumstances do not yet favour his composition of an epic (III, p.157). Again, Amadis Jamyn presents his Metamorphoze de la nimphée dicte Nenuphar as an experiment. He tells how the deity of the pond appears 'pour m'ayder au conte que j'essaye' (I.12, p.293). Since he was once Ronsard's secretary, Jamyn may well have derived this notion from his master.

One thinks also of the prologue to Gargantua (1534), which Rabelais calls 'ce prelude et coup d'essay' (page 6 of P. Jourda's edition); and of Montaigne's Essais, a series of tests of the writer's self, in which words suggesting probing (taster, sonder, exploicter, and so on) abound.¹ The predilection for the 'coup d'essay' is thus reflected both in poetry and in prose. It seems to have encouraged the cultivation, in particular, of the poetic miniature, a work containing in essence the talents of the poet, enabling him to develop an epic style whilst providing fewer constraints than a long work of well-defined form.

The notion provides a key to the way the sixteenth century viewed the epic fragment: as a sample which would ideally be transcended by a full-scale epic. Certainly, this is how Ronsard saw his Argonautic hymns. Circumstances had forced him to select only two episodes from the Argonautic cycle; but he expected that, with time, and with the patronage he hoped to attract by demonstrating his talents, he would be able to use them in a much larger poem. The hymns were a temporary storehouse for epic motifs.

As suggested, however, what the Argonautic hymns did not

1. See III. 13, 'De l'expérience'.

provide was an epic framework. They furnished the poet with rhetorical devices, but did not suggest a narrative structure. Ronsard was left with a fundamental problem: how was he to move beyond the 'coup d'essay'? The following sections will study how Ronsard attempted to provide in the Franciade a sense of wholeness, a broad vista. Since the structural and rhetorical techniques surveyed in the preceding chapters were suited to the fragment, they might be expected to fade in importance in the Franciade, or to be combined in a different fashion. Is this true of Ronsard's epic? How is the poem Ronsard finally produced influenced by his awareness of the problems involved in inventing his materials, and by the fact that his preparations for the Franciade consisted in the writing of fragments?

(2) THE SEARCH FOR COHERENCE

In the 'Preface svr la Franciade', Ronsard manifests his awareness of the need to link the elements of a long epic poem, and advocates the use of such techniques as recollection, prediction, digression, and hypotyposis in order to connect episodes:

Le Poëte bien advisé, plein de laborieuse
industrie, commence son oeuvre par le milieu
de l'argument, et quelquefois par la fin:
puis il deduit, file et poursuit si bien son
argument par le particulier accident et
evenement de la matiere qu'il s'est proposé
d'escrire, tantost par personnages parlans
les uns aux autres, tantost par songes,
propheties et peintures inserees contre le
dos d'une muraille et des harnois, et
principalement des boucliers, ou par les

dernieres paroles des hommes qui meurent, ou par augures et vol d'oiseaux et phantastiques visions de Dieux et de demons, ou monstrueux langages des chevaux navrez à mort: tellement que le dernier acte de l'ouvrage se cole, se lie et s'enchesne si bien et si à propos l'un dedans l'autre, que la fin se rapporte dextrement et artificiellement au premier point de l'argument. (XVI-2, pp.336-7)

The notion is of a work whose elements are all closely interwoven as a result of anticipations and digressions, and where the germs of each new feature are contained in those that preceded it. In his theory, Ronsard is clearly aware of the need for coherence. This section will examine how he tries to achieve it in practice.

(a) Narrative organization

(i) The division into books

The Franciade has one obvious structural feature not found in the fragments: it is divided into books. The poem as we have it contains only four books; but Ronsard apparently intended to write twenty-four, the same number as the Iliad and the Odyssey contain (although Homer's poems were divided into chapters, not by their author, but by the Alexandrian scholars who edited them).¹ Ronsard provides links between the books, clearly concerned that they should form a harmonious whole. Notwithstanding, the books

1. See Lm. XVI-1, p.xvii. Laumonier bases his judgement as to the number of books on the testimony of Binet and on a letter written by Ronsard on 11 November 1572 to the chapter of Saint Martin de Tours, asking that he might be replaced as a semainier during his stay in Paris whilst working on the Franciade.

are of increasing length: Book One has 1248 lines, Book Two 1484 lines, Book Three just slightly more, 1520 lines; and Book Four is by far the longest, with 1898 lines. The breaks between the books are also quite clearly defined: each has its own theme. For instance, Book Two is devoted largely to the duel between Francus and Phovère, and Book Three turns to an entirely different subject: that of love. Books Two to Four end with the death of one of the characters: of Phovère, of Clymene, of Clovis. Yet there are connections between the books: Ronsard has both the overall structure and the substructure in mind. Thus Books One to Three are bound together thanks to the way the conclusion of one is echoed in the opening of the next. At the end of Book One, the focus is on Francus' ship as it sails away, and then on the shore vanishing into the distance. The sea is viewed in great detail, in a passage echoing the epic writers of Antiquity (ll.1235-48, XVI-1, p.91).¹ Then individual features give way to the vastness of sea and sky. Book One thus forms a rounded whole, encompassing the mission and departure. The opening of Book Two links up with

1. The last stanza is filled with Virgilian reminiscences (see Lm. XVI-1, p.91, note 3). It also echoes the concluding lines of the narrative section in the Hymne de Pollux et de Castor. Ronsard has used lines from the Aeneid which are not there employed to end any of the books. Ronsard has also taken a simile from Apollonius (I, ll.575-9), whilst changing the sheep to goats and removing the implicit comparison of Orpheus to the shepherd-piper. See Silver, Ronsard and the Greek Epic, p.397. Again, the mention of the water churned by the prow may be inspired by Catullus, LXIV, ll.12-13. See Morrison, 'Ronsard and Catullus ...', p.263. - This contamination of sources points to Ronsard's resolve to imitate as many aspects of the ancient epics as possible, to surround his invented subject-matter with more familiar themes.

the close of Book One, as it focuses once again on Francus' ship. But this time, the vista extends to include the gods on Mount Olympus. This opening serves as a transition to the theme of Neptune's wrath; but verbal echoes, as well as the thematic continuity provided by the sea, and the further reminiscence of the same passage in Catullus (ll.11-14, p.94), establish a connection with Book One. For example, line 8 - 'Un trac d'escume à bouillons se rouloit' - echoes line 1246 of the previous book - 'Meint tourbillon en escumant se rouë'; and line 10 - 'L'eau fait un bruit luitant contre la rame' - reminds one of line 1243 in Book One: 'L'eau faict un bruit sous le fort aviron'. Reprise forms a bridge between one book and another, and also indicates that one episode is terminated and another about to begin. Repetition in general is, as will be seen, important in Ronsard's poem as a means of organizing the material. Books Two and Three are likewise linked by structural and thematic echoes. Book Two ends with a hymn of victory, celebrating Francus' defeat of Phovére. Then night falls and the company retires to bed. The note of calm and rest so established forms a sharp contrast with the violence of the duel (ll.1469-84, p.171).¹ The start of Book Three picks up the motifs of this conclusion: night (which is again personified) and sleep (ll.1-6, p.172). •

Books Three and Four, however, are not linked in this way. The former ends with Clymene's death, and with a maxim, 'l'offenseur

1. This conclusion may be contrasted with the opening of Book Four, where Dicaee's attitude towards Francus has swung round as a result of Clymene's death. At this later stage, far from celebrating Francus' valour, Dicaee is ready to class the Trojan amongst those men who are 'sans foy, parjures, et sans ame' (IV, 1.21, p.245).

est toujours offensé' (l.1520, p.243), which was removed in 1573. The fourth book begins with the grief-stricken Dicaee, whose first reaction is to avenge the death of his daughter. The link here, being the motif of vengeance, is purely thematic. There are no verbal echoes of the other books. As for the ending of Book Four, it is sententious in tone – appropriately enough, as throughout, the portrayal of the early kings of France has been interspersed with maxims. In the context of Ronsard's epic venture, it also sounds an ominous note. Hyante chooses as her theme the way Pepin le Bref, not originally of royal blood, accedes to the throne and becomes the first of a new line of kings. From the disappearance of Clovis' royal line, she draws the following generalization:

N'espere rien au monde de certain:
 'Ainsi que vent tout coule de la main:
 'Enfant d'Hector, tout se change et rechange:
 'Le temps nous fait, le temps mesme nous mange:
 'Princes et rois et leurs races s'en vont,
 'De leurs trespas les autres se refont.
 'Chose ne vit d'eternelle durée.
 'La vertu seule au monde est assurée!
 (ll.1891–8, p.330)¹

This final theme of metamorphosis and of the brevity of individual lives is a constant in Ronsard's thought.² It pervades Hyante's presentation of the monarchs: every king will eventually die

1. On the importance of the motif of virtue, see H. Franchet, Le Poète et son oeuvre d'après Ronsard, p.66. Compare Ronsard's Discours des vertus intellectuelles et morales, l.m. XVIII, pp.451–60.

2. A. Noyer-Weidner sees this as a vestige of mediaeval thought in Ronsard ('Ronsards Antike-Nachahmungen und die mittelalterlich-französische Tradition', p.323). – On Ronsard's picture of a mutative universe, see O. de Mourgues; Silver, 'Ronsard's Reflections on the Heavens and Time'; M. Quainton, Ronsard's Ordered Chaos: Visions of Flux and Stability in the Poetry of Pierre de Ronsard, passim.

and give way to others.¹ But it is interesting that this image of, precisely, discontinuity and dissolution as a prelude to change should come at the end of Ronsard's fragment. As it stands, it seems to mirror the poet's awareness of the necessarily incomplete nature of the projected epic.² Ronsard, who began with the urge to fashion his material into a coherent whole, has perhaps come to realize that the structure is crumbling around him. Since these lines were published in 1572, they must have been re-read many times by Ronsard; yet in drafting his variants, he made no changes to them.³ Maybe the lines were allowed to stand as an indirect tribute to Charles IX, and as a warning to the new king that ultimately only the life of virtue would prevail. But one also wonders whether they were left by Ronsard as an implicit declaration that his work would never be finished.

(ii) Repetition and parallelism as structural features

Anticipating a later stage in this chapter, therefore, one is led to think that Ronsard may well encounter obstacles in his search for continuity. Yet, returning to the ways in which Ronsard attempts to mould his poem into a well-proportioned whole

1. See the Franciade, Book Four, ll.741-2, p.278; ll.1073-4, p.295; ll.1250-2, p.303; ll.1315-16, p.306; ll.1674-6, p.321.

2. See D. Ménager, p.304. Ménager compares Hyante's last words with the Discours à Maistre Juliaain Chauveau, published in 1569 (Lm. XV, pp.152-63, especially lines 45 to 54, pp.154-5).

3. Compare the 'Mutability Cantos' in Spenser's The Faerie Queene (VII. 6-8). Spenser's masterpiece, which first appeared in 1590, is in some ways similar to the Franciade. Spenser worked at it for twenty years, and left it unfinished at his death. See A.W. Satterthwaite, Spenser, Ronsard, and Du Bellay: A Renaissance Comparison.

and to create a pattern of expectation and fulfilment, one finds him reinforcing the links between the books by means of other features. Important amongst these is repetition, already touched upon in the discussion of the four books (p.251). Repetition establishes connections between parts of the work that are often at a considerable distance from one another.

One may take as an example the message Jupiter gives to Mercury, with instructions to convey it to Helenin (I, ll.291-304, p.43). When he comes to deliver the message to Helenin, Mercury repeats Jupiter's words almost verbatim, adding merely a distich concerning the way the memory of Troy will live for ever (I, ll.366-8, p.47). This reprise can be attributed to Ronsard's imitation of his sources, for similar isolated examples of repetition occur in Homer and Virgil. Rather more significant, however, is the fact that the essence of the speech is repeated for a second time when Rumour spreads the news of Mercury's visit (I, ll.453-64, pp.52-3). The variation on Jupiter's speech here indicates how the general public hears about the message, how it begins to realize that Helenin was right in predicting a glorious future for Andromache's child.

Less than three hundred lines later, the content of Jove's command is repeated a third time, as Helenin informs the assembled people of what Mercury told him. The same idea is expressed again, in different terms (I, ll.737-52, pp.66-7: compare the Aeneid, IV, ll.265-76, where Mercury reproaches Aeneas with procrastination). The rhetorical device of interpretatio is thus found here on a structural level. This time, one views the message more from Helenin's angle: he sees it as a reprimand directed at him alone by Jupiter. Within the space of sixty lines, the theme of Francus' wasting time on idle pursuits is picked up yet again, in

direct speech addressed to Francus himself by Mars, disguised as an old friend of Hector (ll.795-804, p.69; ll.811-16, p.70). To ensure that the message strikes home, Mars gives details of Francus' inane activities. Basically, however, the situation remains static, and the series of repetitions and variations continues to circle around the same moral theme - rather as in Renaissance tragedy.¹

Jupiter's message hence plays an essential part in Book One. It continues to echo through Books Two and Three, although one might expect its potentialities to have been exhausted. Thus Francus, explaining to Dicaee who he and his shipwrecked men are, reproduces Mercury's speech to Helenin (II, ll.533-44, pp.119-20). Mercury's words are placed in the mouth of Francus himself. Again, in Book Three, Cybele accuses Francus of staying too long in Crete without courting Hyante for her magic powers. Francus' idle pursuits are once again evoked (III, ll.1273-8). The poet exploits the same motif in different ways.

Another set of repetitions emphasizing what Francus' duties are indicates that Francus has been chosen by the gods and given tasks to perform. The central theme, that of Francus being saved by Jupiter, has been examined above (pp.240-1). It should simply be noticed here that in Book Two, Francus ~~makes~~ the substitution motif a source of woe rather than rejoicing, as he curses his fate (ll.181-4, p.103; ll.525-6, p.119). After this, the theme of rescue disappears. Francus starts, albeit it in dilatory fashion, to make good the debt of gratitude he owes to the gods.

1. See R. Griffiths, The Dramatic Technique of Antoine de Montchrestien: Rhetoric and Style in French Renaissance Tragedy, Chapter 4, pp.62-81.

The storm at sea in Book Two also provides the basis for a set of reminiscences. The storm is introduced in line 151, as a product of the wrath of Juno and Neptune. Shortly afterwards, Francus tells Dicaee of the launching of the ships, and of how he and his men have been washed to the shore of Crete (ll.552-9, pp.120-1). Moreover, approximately one hundred lines later, the ghosts of Francus' drowned men appear, recalling once again the tempest that destroyed thirteen of the ships (ll.653-62, pp.125-6). These variations on the theme of the storm give a multangular view of what happened in this climax of the narrative: first from the standpoint of the hidden poet-narrator, then from Francus' standpoint, and finally from that of the sailors. It will be seen that Ronsard's comparisons present the same action from different viewpoints in rather similar fashion.

The theme of banqueting and dancing likewise heightens narrative peaks. In Book Two (ll.927-98, pp.140-4), a banquet is given to welcome Francus to the Cretan palace, and is followed by a ball. The old minstrel, Terpin, sings a song begging love to set afire the hearts of the company (ll.959-94, pp.142-4).¹ Shortly afterwards, Francus fights Phovére; then in Book Three, Orée sacrifices a hundred bulls in thanksgiving for the way he was saved from Phovére. Another banquet and ball ensue, and Terpin again sings a hymn, this time to Victory (ll.481-532, pp.195-8). Francus' triumph over the tyrant is, in this way, framed by two celebrations.

As a result of the first series of repetitions examined in this section, Francus' idleness and his obligation to follow his destiny are emphasized, until his duty to imitate the valour of

1. Compare Baïf, Les Muses, ll.216-99, M-L. II, pp.77-9.

his father becomes a leitmotif. The repetitions remind one of the goal that must be attained. Yet, just as Book Four seemed to end with an implicit recognition of the fact that the Franciade would never be finished, so these repetitions have, at least in the context of Ronsard's attempt to write a complete epic, more negative implications: they actually serve to defer the journey: when the final variation on the theme occurs, Francus is no nearer to founding his city. Ronsard seems to circle around the target of his epic, never reaching it in reality: another suggestion that the search for coherence perhaps produces the opposite effect.

Nevertheless, there is another form of repetition acting as a link between various parts of the work: the same incidents are alluded to by different characters in support of their views. B.R. Leslie has shown how Clymene, Francus, and Hyante all use the myth of Ariadne to support their arguments.¹ One might add to his examples the way the deceitful Clymene, trying to make Hyante ashamed of her love for Francus, reminds her sister of how Ariadne was deserted by the Theseus whom she had followed (ll.111-18, p.177). Here, the case of Ariadne is taken as a warning about the perils of abandoning all for the sake of love. There are, in all, four references to the legend of Ariadne.* A mythological narrative underpins Francus' relationship with Clymene and Hyante, and anticipates the course it is to take. It may be compared with the allusions to Paris, examined above (p.243), and with the way Paris

1. Leslie, pp.72-3. Further references to Leslie's book will be given after citations in the text.

For other instances of the Ariadne-motif in Ronsard, see Morrison, 'Ronsard and Catullus ...', pp.263-4.

finally becomes a standard of love and devotion against which Francus is measured and found lacking.

Thus one sees that variations on a single theme are on several occasions used by Ronsard to underline vicissitudes in the plot, and to suggest parallels between the events of this epic and sections of mythology, to connect human relationships with archetypal patterns and thereby to prove their poetic truth. The variations occur on the primary level, and thus produce a sense of continuity.

Ronsard also uses parallelism as a means of endowing his poem with a coherent structure. Illustrations of this are the descriptions, first of the cave of Sleep (II, ll.381-94, p.113, derived from the Metamorphoses XI, ll.592-615), and secondly, of the cave of Jealousy (III, ll.1303-30, pp.233-4, taken from the Metamorphoses II, ll.760-82). Parallels are to be found between the various sacrifices performed before crucial episodes in the narrative. Prior to the departure of Francus and his ships, Helenin sacrifices a bull to Neptune (I, ll.1049-84, pp.81-3). Then in Book Three, Clymene and Hyante sacrifice to the gods, hoping that the latter will favour their love (ll.169-81, p.180). Lines 179 to 181, an imitation of the Aeneid II, lines 793 to 794, recall how Neptune granted only half of Helenin's prayer (I, ll.1081-4, p.83). Returning to Book Three, one finds another sacrifice, mentioned above (p.256), performed by Orée to celebrate Francus' victory (ll.429-65, pp.192-4). In Book Four, Francus carries out sacrificial rites and other preparations for the appearance of the future monarchs of France (ll.612-36, pp.271-3). There are two sets of funeral rites, the first being for the drowned Trojans (II, ll.677-704, pp.126-8), and the second for Francus' unnamed friend (III, ll.669-782, pp.204-9).

Parallelism and repetition - devices that were, in Chapters 2 and 3, seen at work in the Argonautic hymns - in fact underlie Ronsard's whole presentation of his heroines.¹ Whereas Apollonius focuses on Medea alone, and Virgil on Dido, Ronsard has two heroines. He abandons this dualism when he makes Clymene drown herself; but even here (at the end of Book Three in the edition of 1572) there are signs, such as the sententious tone, indicating that he wished to show Clymene exercising an influence over the destiny of Francus even after her death.²

(iii) Prophecy

A pattern of prophetic utterances also helps to create bonds between various parts of the poem, or to form expectations that the text will later fulfil. When carrying out such functions, the shifts in time-scale are different from those studied in Chapter 3: they lend shape to a composition intended to be of much

1. Ronsard's presentation of two sisters in love with the same man cannot be explained by the parallel with Des Masures's David triomphant (1563, 1566) suggested in Laumonier, XIX, page 176. Although interesting, this comparison does not indicate why Ronsard has portrayed the progress of love in both sisters; for in Des Masures, Saul's elder daughter does not love anyone.

Leslie thinks that Ronsard may have been influenced by Ovid's tale of Aglauros (p.19). Certainly, like Clymene, Aglauros is filled with jealousy by the fact that her sister is preferred to herself (Metamorphoses II, ll.737-832).

2. For a demonstration of the importance of Virgil as Ronsard's source in the depiction of Clymene, see Stone, 'Dido and Aeneas: Theme and Vision in the Third Book of the Franciade'. He argues that the figure of Clymene enables Ronsard to develop the Virgilian themes of 'temptation, suffering, rejection and death' (p.290).

larger proportions than the epic fragments. They point beyond themselves, but to episodes treated in other parts of the epic.

First of all, one has predictions concerning happenings that are depicted in the first four books. They extend over a relatively short period of time and provide further links between one book and another. Thus after Helenin's prayer to Neptune, the tempest is foreshadowed: one is told that Neptune

ottroya que la flotte troyenne
 Pourroit aller dessus l'onde aegéenne,
 Mais ne voulut l'autre part ottroyer
 D'y sejourner long temps sans la noyer.

(I, ll.1081-4, p.83)

The storm will occur very soon, in Book Two. This anticipation ensures that it does not constitute a totally unexpected element.

Secondly, one has utterances anticipating events that Ronsard would presumably have depicted had he completed his epic. In Book One, Jupiter predicts the dangers awaiting Francus (ll.165-216, pp.38-40). Likewise, in Book Four, Hyante foretells, first, the fate awaiting her if she should follow Francus (ll.484-92, p.266), then the troubles that will befall Francus in Gaul (ll.719-836, pp.267-83). Again, in Book One, Helenin sees a good omen and utters a prophecy:

Il previt bien que deux grands adversaires
 Retarderoient Francus et ses affaires,
 Et s'opposant à son premier honneur
 A forte main empescheroient son heur:
 Mais qu'il feroit combatant aparoistre
 Que de petit deviendrait un grand maistre,
 Et chasseroit ses ennemis devant
 Son camp armé, comme une poudre au vent.

(ll.517-24, pp.55-6)

This prediction reinforces the sense of the grandeur of Francus' mission, and is part of the process of epic magnification. Had

the epic been complete, the reader would subsequently have approached Francus' combats with the knowledge that Francus would win. The prophecy would have enabled the reader to feel that events had conformed to a predestined pattern. The same applies to lines 631 to 670 of Book One, where Hector's shade announces that 'Les champs Gaulois aux Troyens sont promis' (l.651, p.62), and to lines 1085 to 1130, where Helenin predicts the course that parts of Francus' voyage will take. Prophecy therefore plays a vital role even at an early stage. It allows one to keep in mind the central theme of Francus' being called to found a new Troy, and outlines the development of future events.

There are no significant examples of prophecy in Book Two, which is concerned rather with the avenging of past crimes. In Book Three, however, the prophetic techniques again come to the fore. Leucothoé predicts that Francus will indeed found a capital and advises him to court Hyante (ll.269-306, pp.185-6). Prophecy here has a function affecting the relationships between the characters: it reminds Francus himself that he should be fulfilling his destiny, and is therefore more than a simple narrative marker for the reader. The two further main examples in Book Three are rather different, serving much the same purpose as the prognostications in Book One, indicating the course the action will take, and reassuring one at the same time that the central purpose of the epic has not been lost from view. First, Francus promises that he will build a city for his dead friend on reaching Gaul (ll.771-6, p.209). Then Clymene prophesies that Francus will desert Hyante (ll.1437-44, p.239).

By means of these two kinds of prophecy - predictions that involve events depicted in the first four books, and predictions involving events that Ronsard would probably have included in the

rest of his epic – Ronsard charts a course for the reader through the epic waters, reminding him of central motifs.

(b) Rhetorical organization

(i) Verbal echoes

Reinforcing the repetition and parallelism of certain episodes in the work is a series of verbal echoes. These too can lend coherence to apparently disparate elements set at some distance from one another.

An instance is provided by the verb acazaner, which occurs several times in connection with Francus and his supposed sloth.¹ First of all, Jupiter gives an order to Helenin and Andromache:

N'acazanez en paresse si lasche
L'enfant d'Hector ...
(I, ll.370-1, p.47)

Then Helenin informs the people:

Depuis un an ce Prince est de retour
Acazané, qui mange en vain le jour ...
(I, ll.723-4, p.66)²

Finally, Mars chides Francus, using the same word, which has now become stamped with the displeasure of the gods:

1. Huguet gives examples only of the reflexive verb s'acasaner, meaning 's'établir, s'habituer à rester chez soi, dans l'inaction', and of the past participle, acasané, meaning 'habitué à ne pas sortir de chez soi, à rester dans l'inaction'. Ronsard replaced 'N'acazanez' (I, l.370) in 1573 by 'Il ne faut plus que sous silence on cache', and in 1578 by 'N'amollissez en paresse si lâche'.
2. From 1578 onwards, this line read: 'Sans action mangeant en vain le jour'.

Toy, sang trop froid pour un jeune guerrier
 Acazané, demeure le dernier
 Serf de ta mere ...

(I, 11.811-13, p.70)¹

This word, used three times in the space of five hundred lines of Book One, becomes a leitmotif, although it was removed altogether from the edition of 1578.

Another leitmotif is formed by an example of paronomasia; but here the echo is heard at a greater distance from the first utilization of the device. In Book One, Mars reproaches Francus with the following words, reminiscent of the Aeneid, IX, line 617:

Vraye Troyenne, et non Troyen, as-tu
 Desja d'Hector oublié la vertu ...
 (11.795-6, p.69)

Then in Book Four, Hyante exclaims, as she beholds a group of wretched kings joining the procession:

Ah! malheureux! ils seront fils des tiens,
 Germe maudit, troyennes non troyens ...
 (11.1659-60, p.321)

The verbal echo helps to underline the reversal that has taken place: Francus, accused by Mars of unmanly cowardice, has now become a paragon of courageous manhood, a quality in which these kings are sadly lacking.

'Trois fois' is a formula repeated in order to emphasize, partly by virtue of the occult significance of the number three, the way Clymene is carried along by a force she cannot resist. It is first encountered in a passage imitating Apollonius (Argonautica III, 11.654-5), where Clymene hesitates before entering Hyante's room (III, 11.967-9, p.218). It occurs no less than four

1. 'Acazané' was replaced in 1578 by 'Tout engourdi'.

times in three lines. Then when Clymene is about to write to Francus, it occurs twice (III, ll.1175-6, p.227). Its final appearance underlines the fact that Clymene's destiny has come full circle, for it evokes the way she drowns:

trois fois sous l'eau profonde
Son corps alla, trois fois revint sur l'onde,
Trois fois le flot la revint abysmer.
(III, ll.1501-3, p.242)

The formula lends a note of ritual to Clymene's death.¹

Ronsard's verbal echoes are therefore indicators for the primary narrative level. The latter may ramify considerably; but these echoes refer to the main trunk, and serve as a reminder that one has returned to the central tale.

(ii) The simile as leitmotif

Just as verbal echoes connect different moments of the narrative, so thematic links can be distinguished between the images. The point has been well made by Leslie:

Singly or clustered together, they can
signal an important moment in the story;
they can also serve as elements in the
structure of longer episodes by acting
as nonexplicit cross-references, echoing
previous similes and future episodes.
(p.37)

It is possible to distinguish groups of comparisons centred on given themes. Some will be dealt with very briefly here, as they are discussed by Leslie.

One might consider first the motif of the sea-bird.² This

1. For the use of 'trois fois' with ritualistic connotations, compare the Chant pastoral of 1559, ll.35-7 (Lm. IX, p.77).

2. See Les Parolles que dist Calypson ..., ll.98-101, XV, p.53.

occurs twice: once when Francus addresses laments to wind and waves (III, ll.211-18, p.182); and again when Hyante attempts to describe the life she would lead if she gave up everything to follow Francus (IV, ll.457-60, pp.264-5). For both Francus and Hyante, the sea-bird comes to represent a rootless life, affording no rest from birth until death.¹ This thematic rappel suggests Hyante's perspicacity: she assesses the situation quite correctly, and is not deceived in her interpretation of Francus' character. The link between the two images creates overtones of relevance to the primary narrative.

Birds other than sea-birds also connect one part of the poem with another. In the description of the assembling Trojans, they emphasize the vast numbers of people who appear on the shore, as well as suggesting the noise they make (I, ll.889-92, p.73; and ll.893-908, pp.73-4). The simile of cranes recurs when Hyante tries to convey some impression of the tribes enlisted by the Saracen Abdirame to fight Charles-Martel (IV, ll.1763-72, p.325). The comparison acts as an echo, recalling the way Francus' own army assembled, with a far nobler mission in mind.²

Another specific comparison used on two occasions, although with inevitable alterations, occurs first in the description of how Francus looks much taller after Mars' visitation (I, ll.839-48, p.71). The essential idea is that the god of war towers over

1. Francus, when presented as the lonely plaything of Destiny - in the passage from Book Three, for example - reminds one of Apollonius' Jason and Virgil's Aeneas.

2. The simile is derived from the Iliad, III, ll.1-7, and II, ll.459-63. For images of birds of prey marking the completion of a narrative segment, see Leslie, pp.48-9.

ordinary mortals.¹ A variation of the motif is encountered in the evocation of Clymene and Hyante on their way to the temple: they are like the goddess of hunting, who is much taller than her nymphs (III, ll.151-60, p.179).² The images in the two passages are very similar; but this similarity in fact underscores the contrast between the fate awaiting Clymene and Hyante, who will be deserted like Dido, and that facing Francus, who, like Mars, will be victorious in his mission. Moreover, the comparison employed in connection with the two sisters has even more sinister implications, as Leslie has explained (p.31). Both the menace intrinsic to this image, and the verbal echoes it contains of the simile depicting Mars, anticipate the course of the action.

Some images are employed more than twice. They then serve as signals denoting that a certain stage in the narrative has been reached. The secondary level of images, therefore, does not always represent a deviation from the narrative proper; rather, it may divide the latter into sections that anticipate and recall one another, although it does introduce visual and auditory elements very different from those of the main narrative. One example of such a series of comparisons portrays trees, especially falling trees.³ Once again, the reader will find a clear exposition of

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1. This hypotyposis provides a good example of syntactical concatenation: the focus shifts from Francus to Mars, by means of epiphora (the repetition of the verb surpasser at the end of successive clauses), then to Mars' lance, and finally to the villainous king.

2. In 1578, Ronsard replaced 'la belle croupe' of line 158 with 'la pineuse croupe', which has more specific, richer connotations. The image is derived from the Aeneid, I, ll.498-504.

3. See W.B. Cornelia, The Classical Sources of the Nature References in Ronsard's Poetry, pp.68-89, and especially pp.85-6.

Ronsard's use of the Homeric tree image in Leslie (p.49). But one might add to this the observation that on one occasion in the Franciade an extended comparison involving trees is employed, not in the context of war, but in that of love. It occurs when Francus and Hyante meet face to face (IV, ll.302-12, p.258). They are likened to two pine-trees. The image, which reminds one of the opening of Hylas (where Hercules uproots the tree), is the more effective thanks to the implicit contrast with the tree images that have preceded it.¹ These trees, instead of being toppled, are firmly 'plantez au rivage' (l.305); the wind, when it rises, merely causes them to 'talk' to each other. The keynote is one of peace. Yet, by virtue of the fact that the level of the imagery contains cross-references, one is reminded that Francus cannot afford to devote himself to love, since his mission is essentially martial. Moreover, the word 'caquettent' provides an

1. This comparison, like most of the interview between Francus and Hyante, is taken from Apollonius, Argonautica III, ll.967-72, where Jason and Medea face each other. For a discussion of Ronsard's version, see Silver, Ronsard and the Greek Epic, pp.409-10, where the writer suggests that

the muted gravity of the dialogue is impaired by the use of the words 'caquettent' and 'babiller', which seem ill-chosen, in their charming lightness and frivolity, for the momentous nature of the interview between Francus and Hyante.

In objection to this, one should remember that Ronsard is here intentionally presenting the scene first of all in its more light-hearted aspects. For once, the weight of destiny is lifted from the shoulders of his hero, and the latter is seen - albeit briefly - as capable of love. This is a lyrical interlude, the significance of which will be recognized in the light of the third section of the present chapter (pp.270-300).

explicit echo of Book One, line 570 (p.58), where it referred to forests resounding to the blows of the shipbuilders' hammers. The image is doubly rooted in a warlike context.

Similes involving a shepherd and his sheep have also been discussed by Leslie (p.50). However, they in fact occur more frequently than he suggests. A shepherd image is evoked in the conclusion to Book One, where the other ships follow that of Francus (ll.1235-40, p.91). Similar comparisons are found in the description of clouds gathering around Juno's throne (II, ll.127-9, p.100), and in connection with the souls who are conducted to the waters of Lethe (IV, ll.955-8, p.288). These images, all denoting the quiet superiority of a leader, form a striking contrast with the evocation of the way Phovère takes prisoner Orée and his companions (II, ll.1064-6, p.147).

Fire is the basis of another series of images, which highlight the progress of love in Clymene and Hyante.¹ Some are Petrarchan topoi (II, ll.853-6, p.136; IV, ll.419-24, p.263; IV, ll.446-8, p.264). But at several points, Ronsard creates a vignette. The mention of the nascent love of the sisters leads to the evocation of a domestic scene (II, ll.867-71, p.137). The image, an imitation of Apollonius, Argonautica III, ll.291-9, recalls Baïf's hypotyposis in Le Laurier (ll.191-205, M-L. I^f, p.48), examined in Chapter 4 of the present study (pp.185-6). The vision of the 'artizane' (l.869) makes a greater impression on the reader than

1. Fire is not the sole element used by Ronsard to form a group of images. Water and waves are frequently employed to suggest suppressed force, as in I, ll.157-62, pp.37-8; I, ll.201-2, p.39; II, ll.1287-92, p.161; and IV, ll.1806-30, pp.326-7. These interconnected images are also linked to the narrative proper, much of which concerns the sea. The imagery enhances the main action.

the portion of the narrative from which it derives. The notion of love being like a fire is also elaborated in Book Three, lines 648 to 668 (pp.203-4): one finds here the motif of the burning grove, also examined in Chapter 4 (pp.207-8).¹ In the second image, the fire has become a destructive force, rather than a flame confined to a domestic hearth. The comparison suggests how the sisters are now consumed with passion. It was removed in 1578 (lines 661 to 664 having already disappeared in 1573).

The Franciade thus contains images that reappear in the course of the work.² I.D. McFarlane suggests that the projected length of this epic enabled Ronsard to treat it as a repository for his favourite similes. He refers to the work as 'a splendid storehouse of material illustrating Ronsard's vision du monde'.³ However, the term 'storehouse' does not indicate that images are interwoven in the Franciade; it does not suggest the way the similes reflect, not only Ronsard's obsessions, but also his concern to lend coherence to the narrative. For the fact that the images recall one another has two main implications. First, it enables the similes to form a superstructure to the epic; and secondly, it allows the images to serve as pointers in relation to the narrative, so that the reader may link different stages in the events depicted. In

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1. Line 660 ('En se suivant s'alonge peu à peu') resembles the 1584 variant to line 656 of the Hymne de Calais, et de Zetes: 'La flame en tournoyant s'augmente peu à peu ...' (VIII, p.289).

2. The serpent is another recurring image; see, in Book Three, ll.249-60, p.184; ll.949-57, p.217; ll.1353-5, p.235. It forms links between one book, rather than between different books. The motif occurs in the narrative proper in the evocation of Hyante's 'carquan / Fait en serpent' (IV, ll.155-62, p.251).

3. 'Aspects of Ronsard's Poetic Vision', p.50.

this respect at least, the poet, whilst simultaneously developing his composition on the level of plot and the level of images, provides reminders for the reader that these strata are connected. The similes produce an impression of cohesion amidst Ronsard's multilinear techniques.

(3) THE TEMPTATIONS OF LYRICISM

By dividing his poem into books, by forming patterns of repetition, parallelism, and anticipation, by providing verbal echoes, Ronsard seeks to establish a sense of coherence, to remind the reader of central motifs. Yet the very methods he employs to shape his material sometimes have the opposite effect: they can cause reader and poet to lose sight of the narrative impetus. They are reminiscent of the urge for expansion that was detected in many of the mythological miniatures in Chapter 3, but are the more striking as they occur in a work meant to be comprehensive. Prophecy and simile are perhaps the best examples of devices which, although intended to produce a sense of integrality, often cause fissures in the narrative structure.

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(a) Structural aspects

(i) Prophecy and retrospection as expansive features

Two types of prophecy were considered above (pp.259-62): the first related to events actually depicted in Books One to Four, and the second concerning events that would have occurred had the poem been completed. There is, however, a third type: that referring

to events completely external to the Franciade. This sort alludes to times much nearer the poet himself. It creates a sense of dilation, by widening the scope of the poem to embrace a multitude of points in time.

The whole poem in fact erodes temporal boundaries. The process begins as early as Book One, where Jupiter, having foretold some of the tribulations awaiting Francus, predicts also the advent of Charles IX (ll.247-76, pp.41-2). Mercury too refers to the monarch of Ronsard's own time (I, ll.377-8, p.48). Then in Book Four, Hyante starts to reveal to the hero the succession of the early kings of France. Ronsard intended to continue the procession till he came to the rulers of his own day, thus constructing his epic on a dynastic principle similar to that of the Aeneid.¹

The motif of retrospection reveals even more clearly how Ronsard is constantly expanding the boundaries of his poem. Furthermore, it links up with Ronsard's awareness of the problems involved in the invention of completely new material.

Like the device of prophecy, retrospection is employed by Virgil in the Aeneid. The best example is provided by the recordatio

1. In the 'Au Lecteur', Ronsard points out that he has had to depict far more monarchs than Virgil did, and that Charles IX has insisted he mention each and every one (XVI-1, p.5).

Virgil too makes extensive use of prophecy. He employs the device when presenting the shade of Creusa appearing to her husband, Aeneas (II, ll.776-84), and when depicting the Harpies, one of whom predicts that the Trojans will be devoured by hunger before they are granted a city in Italy (III, ll.253-7). More importantly, prophecy (in Book Six for example) enables Virgil to incorporate in his poem reflections on the function of Rome within the world as he knew it, and on the status of Augustus as a god incarnate.

in Books Two and Three, in which Aeneas tells Dido of his experiences during the fall of Troy and his subsequent travels; but there are other instances. Thus Venus tells Aeneas of Dido and her life hitherto (I, ll.342-68); pictures in Dido's temple to Juno summon up in Aeneas' mind vivid memories of the siege of Troy (I, ll.456-93); the shade of Deiphobus, son of Priam, tells Aeneas of how Helen invited the Greeks into Troy and opened the doors of his house to Menelaus (VI, ll.511-32); the poet informs the reader of the history of Latium (VII, ll.45-106); Evander relates how Hercules killed the man-monster, Cacus (VIII, ll.190-267). Many of these passages apprise the reader of events vital to an understanding of the action.

Ronsard uses recall as a means of exposition, especially towards the beginning of the Franciade. But other examples of the device are basically gratuitous; and, occurring as they do in the space of a mere four books, they create an impression of greater density than the Virgilian passages of retrospection.

Retrospection is used as a means of exposition in lines 33 to 156 of Book One (pp.31-7). Jupiter recalls the connivance of Juno and Pallas in the victory of the Greeks. Later, Helenin tells the Trojans how he hid Francus from the enemy and made him travel to various countries (ll.711-22, pp.65-6). Again, Mars, having aroused Francus' fervour, stirs up the other Trojans by evoking the courage of Hector (ll.863-6, p.72). An extended instance of this retrospective motif is found in lines 963 to 994 of the same book (pp.77-9), as Andromache looks back on the loving care she lavished upon Astyanax (Francus), her only child. Retrospection in Book Two again serves largely to familiarize the reader with the background to events. A piece of secondary narrative concerning Neptune's quarrel with Laomedon explains the grudge that Neptune

bears the Trojans, thus preparing one for the tempest (ll.15-26, p.94), and refers the reader to a section of the epic tradition with which he is familiar, thanks to accounts in Homer and Ovid (the Iliad, XXI, ll.441-57, and the Metamorphoses, XI, ll.199-210).

Other retrospective passages provide motivation for the action. In lines 411 to 424 of Book Two, Cybele explains to Sleep how Dicaee fell in love with a nymph who bore him two daughters and a son, and how the son is being held captive by a giant (pp.114-15). Francus himself is later told by Dicaee of how Orée has been captured (II, ll.1021-72, pp.145-8). Although this is something the reader already knows, it does serve to make Francus decide to fight Phovére. Again, in Book Three, the sea-goddess, Leucothoé, informs Francus of the death of one of his friends (ll.307-30, pp.187-8). Francus must now bury him. Such passages summarize events which, whilst not depicted to the full in the poem itself, lie as it were on the boundaries of the Franciade and initiate developments in the plot.

Another group of retrospective passages refers to events closely connected with the protagonist, but of no relevance to the action. Francus, having celebrated the funeral rites of his companion, recalls a past that will be no more, remembering how they used to walk together (III, ll.757-76, p.209). Retrospection here slows the pace of the narrative; it is not vital to one's comprehension of events or to the furtherance of the plot: it is a retarding motif. Essentially lyrical in nature, it suggests that Ronsard prefers to allow past events to reverberate through the present, rather than to depict actions in rapid succession. Indeed, what is the purpose of the funeral rites (admittedly part of Ronsard's imitation of Virgil), if not to provide an opportunity for such melancholic musings?

A retrospective passage in Book Two is less clearly connected with Francus, of little pertinence to the plot, and apparently not directly derived from other epics.¹ Having welcomed the Trojans, Dicaee narrates a tale about Idomeneus, who was received with courtesy by Hector (II, ll.591-616, pp.122-3). The account deflects the reader from the central action. But it does reveal that Ronsard is capable of re-shaping traditional legendary materials in order to suggest a new pattern of relationships between his characters.

There is, on the other hand, a group of reminiscences directly derived from the works of Antiquity. The allusions to Hector and Paris have already been examined (pp.241-3); but a further example is provided by lines 705 to 732 of Book Two, where Francus prays to Aphrodite (XVI-2, pp.128-9). He recalls the circumstances of her birth; Paris' granting of the golden apple to her; her love for Anchises; her protection of Jason during the quest for the Golden Fleece, and of Theseus in his task of slaying the Minotaur. None of these incidents has a direct bearing on the plot. Ronsard's technique here is allusive: he relies for his effects on the work of others. Moreover, he brings his text particularly close to the Aeneid, by referring to Venus' union with Anchises, out of which Aeneas was born. The implication is that Francus appeals to the goddess' pity by telling her first, not of himself, but of a famous hero from the past.

First and foremost, recall shows how the characters feel the full weight of the past upon their shoulders. Andromache's farewell speech to Francus stresses that he is expected to be another Hector, equalling, if not excelling him in courage. But Francus

1. See Laumonier XVI-2, p.122, note 5.

seems to feel himself inadequate: he justifies his pleas for help from Venus by hiding behind great epic heroes; he wishes he could once more be with his dead companion, free from the obligations of his mission. For Francus, the past provides at once a standard of excellence (in the shape of Hector) and a refuge in which he is able to lose his identity.

The retrospective motif also links up with Ronsard's doubts about his capacity to invent new materials. Like Francus overawed by Hector, the Prince of Poets himself seems conscious of having to prove his worth in relation to the foremost epic poets of Antiquity. The Idomeneus episode does prove that Ronsard is capable of invention, in the sense that it re-fashions traditional materials; but other passages in which Ronsard alludes to classical works suggest that, whenever possible, he is pleased to abandon invention in favour of imitation, to avoid creating new epic themes. Instead of looking forward to the country that Francus is to found, he looks back to the Troy already familiar to his readers.

However that may be, it seems clear that whereas the devices of prophecy and retrospection were used legitimately in the miniature epics as a means of broadening the scope, they have different effects in the full-scale epic.[•] They tend to replace direct representation with secondary representation: events are summarized, rather than being depicted before the reader's eyes. By multiplying the temporal strata to which reference is made, they can cause the reader to wander far from the main plot. They are rifts in the territory that Ronsard has attempted to mark out. The Franciade assumes characteristics different from those Ronsard had intended it to incorporate.

(ii) Ornate objects

In the Abbregé, Ronsard advocated splendid 'elocution' (XIV, p.15). In the 'Preface svr la Franciade', he makes the notion of copia even more explicit, expressing it in concrete terms:

(Poets) d'une petite cassine font un
magnifique Palais, qu'ils enrichissent,
dorent et embellissent par le dehors de
marbre, Jaspe et Porphire, de guillochis,
ovalles, frontispices et piedsdestals,
frises et chapiteaux, et par dedans de
Tableaux, tapisseries eslevees et bossees
d'or et d'argent, et le dedans des tableaux
cizelez et burinez, raboteux et difficile
à tenir és mains,¹ à cause de la rude
engraveure des personnages qui semblent
vivre dedans. Apres ils adjoustent vergers
et jardins, compartimens et larges
allees ... (XVI-2, p.340)

Although metaphorical, the passage calls to mind Ronsard's inclusion in his works of highly ornate objects, adorned with detailed sculptures and made of precious materials. And indeed, Ronsard introduces elaborate articles into his epic, just as he did into his fragments. Again, they suggest that he is digressing from his main purpose.

1. This detail suggests a closeness to the object in question (see L'Adonis, ll.15-18, XII, p.110, and above, Chapter 4, p.193, note 3). A feature of Ronsard's poetic vision is that he often pauses to view each object in a mass of detail. See F. Joukovsky, Paysages de la Renaissance, p.62. - The images Ronsard chooses here have suggested parallels between his poetry and the Mannerist movement. See the introduction to the present study, page 14, note 2; Raymond, 'La Pléiade et le Maniérisme'; R.A. Sayce, 'Ronsard and Mannerism: the Elegie à Janet'; W. McAllister Johnson and V.E. Graham, 'Ronsard et la Renommée du Louvre', p.8.

Mention has already been made of the way Andromache, bidding her son farewell, presents him with a cloak that belonged to Hector (I, ll.1015-32, pp.80-1).¹ This description transfers to Francus some of the glory of his father. It also refers, like some of the retrospective passages, to the epic continuum: for the garment depicts Troy, 'En filetz d'or jointes aux filets de soye' (l.1018).² It recalls, once again, the former grandeur of Troy. In addition, it surrounds the characters with mythological allusions by referring to Ganymede, abducted by Zeus. The protagonist is allocated a place in relation to the heroes of the past. The evocation casts light upon Francus' status.

More clearly digressive, however, is Dicaee's narration in Book Two of how Hector gave Idomeneus a golden cup. Depiction of the cup enables Ronsard to introduce a further section of narrative, which is again part of the mythological tradition: the tale of Hesione, who is shown about to be devoured by a sea-monster (ll.599-608, pp.122-3). Thematically, the description links up with the motif of the sea and its attendant dangers, as exemplified notably by the tempest; but it does not further the plot. In the same book, there are two more strictly irrelevant descriptions of decorated articles. They add a mythological dimension to the text and depict abnormal processes: metamorphosis, and all-devouring

1. The evocation of the cloak was inspired by the Aeneid, V, ll.250-7. In his Panegyrique sur l'avant-couronnement du Roy de Pologne, P. Botton, who also imitated the Hymne de Pollux et de Castor (see above, Chapter 4, p.210, note 3), depicts Francus himself entering, wearing a full-length cloak evoked in terms similar to Ronsard's. See Raymond, L'Influence de Ronsard ..., p.51.

2. As suggested in Chapter 3 (p.154, and p.154, note 1), Ronsard reveals a predilection for this combination of materials.

hunger. Both objects are part of the tableware in Dicaee's banqueting-hall. The first is a water-jug depicting Briareus and the transformations he underwent out of his love for a nymph (II, ll.897-910, pp.138-9). Ronsard has here embroidered considerably on Hesiod's Theogony: another indication that he is good at adapting material already present in ancient epics.¹ The article has become an excuse for the recounting of a tale: it is difficult to see how all the details and transformations mentioned could be depicted on a jug. The thematic expansion is reflected in the exceptionally long period, in which Ronsard compensates for the leanness and constraint of the decasyllable by prolonging the sense from one line to another. The second object is a basin, portraying Rhea hiding her son, Jupiter, from Cronos to prevent him from being devoured (II, ll.911-26, pp.139-40).²

In Book Three, Venus places her girdle around Hyante's bed. There follows a portion of secondary narrative, concerning the marriage of Venus and Vulcan (ll.615-26, p.202). One is told:

Tout ce qui nouë au plus profond de l'onde,
Ceux qui d'une aesle en l'air se font un train:
Tout ce qui paist la terre au large sein,
Tout animal cazanier et sauvage,
Est enfanté de ce grand mariage. (ll.622-6)

As in the description of the water-jug, thematic expansion is reflected in the verbal fabric: for the anaphora (a figure that will be examined below) creates an impression of the poet extending his scope to embrace the whole universe. Ronsard is

1. See Laumonier XVI-2, p.139, note 1.

2. Silver compares this transcription of the Cronos-myth with the account in A la Roine (Lm. VII, p.38). See Ronsard and the Greek Epic, p.325.

doubtless trying to incorporate in his work some of the scientific knowledge he thinks an epic poet should display. The tone reminds one of the hymns of 1555 and 1556: and this passage in fact gives way to a description of the figures portrayed on the belt, personifications reminiscent of the Hymne de l'Eternité (ll.627-46, p.203; compare VIII, pp.246-54). The extended evocation changes the narrative tempo and distracts attention from the fact that Venus has come to give Hyante special instructions: it delays the action and the development of the love-theme.

In the space of just over two hundred lines at the beginning of Book Four, there are two object-descriptions that similarly introduce a new narrative level. The first relates the history of Hyante's necklace (ll.155-66, p.251). The actual description is brief, attention being focused on the various owners of the necklace rather than on the piece of jewellery itself.¹ Parallel to this evocation is the history of Francus' scimitar, given to him by Helenin, who had himself received it from Hector (ll.224-31, p.254).² The description endows the sword with the weighty significance of the past: the poet carefully traces its movement through Francus' family. Both these evocations retard the action at a dramatic point, just as the rendezvous is approaching.

Object-descriptions were a vital part of the ancient epic. They enable Ronsard to emulate the Ancients, and to embed his characters

1. This genealogy is an example of Ronsard's Homeric enamelling of his poem, since it recalls, for example, the description of the staff Agamemnon holds, likewise a product of Vulcan (Iliad II, ll.101-8).

2. The gift as a token of love or friendship plays a vital role in Ronsard, as in Baïf. Compare the Hymne de l'Esté, ll.135-54, XII, pp.41-2, for the gifts that Nature and the Sun exchange; and see the poems to Jean Brinon.

in a heroic setting; but they also constitute deviations from the central epic path. This is not in itself a defect: for all epics depend to some extent upon retarding motifs.¹ However, in Book Two above all, Ronsard accumulates descriptions, and seems for a time to forget his main goal, which is to bring Francus to the new Troy. What he intends to be a poem of action here becomes a slow-moving series of lyrical interludes. The encyclopaedic vision that might have been achieved by a careful dosage of digressions is obscured by the episodic presentation.

(b) Rhetorical aspects

Frequently, the passages of prophecy, retrospection, and description thus testify to Ronsard's urge to expand the present moment in order to include details from a past and future lying

1. Ronsard in fact advocates the careful use of secondary narrative, necessarily a retarding feature, as a means of enriching the epic:

Tu dois davantage, Lecteur, illustrer ton
oeuvre de paroles recherchees et choisies,
et d'arguments renforcez, tantost par fables,
tantost par quelques vieilles histoires,
pourveu qu'elles soient brievement escrites
et de peu de discours ...

('Preface svr la Franciade', XVI-2, p.334)

Incidental narrative in the Franciade provides a further link between the epic and techniques used in the fragments. Clymene's selection of a poisonous plant leads to a depiction of the torture of Prometheus (III, ll.1080-7, p.223). The way Cybele disguises herself as Turnien gives rise to a digression concerning this son of Hector (ll.1289-98, pp.232-3). As Laumonier points out (XVI-2, p.233, note 1), this episode appears to be of Ronsard's own invention.

outside the limits of the Franciade, and from sections of fable foreign to his immediate concerns. Sometimes, the overall coherence of the work is, at least temporarily, lost from view. Just as rhetoric and structure were found to be closely linked in the epic fragments, so in the Franciade several rhetorical features reinforce the impression created by the structure.

In the following survey, the reader may well be puzzled by the absence of any mention of preterition, which played a small but important part in the rhetoric of the fragment. The fact is that preterition is not found in the Franciade, perhaps because Ronsard, working to a larger scale, felt little need for deviousness in the introduction of material. Preterition allows for the telescoping of many details into a few lines; but in the vast structure of the twenty-four books he planned, Ronsard probably felt such compression unnecessary. The nearest he comes to the device is in his presentation of vicious kings, in Book Four. Nevertheless, Ronsard uses circumlocution and simile as before.

(i) Circumlocution

In the 'Preface svr la Franciade', Ronsard asserts that 'Les excellens Poëtes nomment peu souvent les choses par leur nom propre' (XVI-2, p.333). One is therefore not surprised to find many circumlocutions in his poem. Frequently, these are brief: they may contribute to the poem a touch of Homeric phraseology (see I, ll.677-9, p.63; II, ll.465-70, p.116; IV, ll.133-8, p.250); they may combine brevity with vivid description (II, ll.361-5, p.112; II, ll.1097-1102, p.149; III, ll.581-4, p.200). But others are longer and more decorative.

An example of the latter type is provided by the evocation of spring in Book Three (ll.535-44, p.198). The term 'émail de fleurs'

in line 544 suggests a parallel between nature and art, implying, as often, that Ronsard's aim is to weave elements from the real world into an aesthetic whole. Personification brings alive the whole of nature; the reprise of 'robe' establishes the notion of someone making herself beautiful. The narrative, which concerns the love growing in the hearts of the two sisters, branches out into a sketch of the effects of spring on the rest of creation.

(ii) Devices of accumulation

The rhetorical means whereby Ronsard creates an impression of accumulation will be studied in greater depth than the circumlocutions: for although verbal cumulative devices are, like periphrases, found in Ronsard's fragments, they assume a particular significance in the Franciade, where Ronsard is constantly trying to break away from the limitations of the decasyllabic line. They show how the poet tackled the problems of versification and reflect the whole conflict between freedom and restraint, expansion and coherence which has been seen to underlie the Franciade.

Some of the devices of accumulation apply to small sections of the narrative. Asyndeton is an example. It can convey a sense of profusion, as in lines 628 to 632 of Book Two (p.124; compare the Aeneid, I, ll.633-6); it may create an impression of obsession, as in Clymene's letter to Francus (III, ll.1193-6, p.228), or in the passage introducing Dicaee's grief at the death of his daughter (IV, ll.4-6, p.244).¹ This is a mannered rhetorical figure; E.R. Curtius lists it among his examples of 'formale Manierismen'.²

Ronsard also conveys a sense of complexity by means of

1. This asyndeton was removed in the edition of 1587.

2. Europäische Literatur und lateinisches Mittelalter, p.287.

enumeratio. Hyante uses the device when predicting what will befall the Trojans:

la rive et la course de Seine
De Troyens morts auront l'eschine pleine,
D'armes, d'escus, de chevaux renversez
Et de bouclers d'outre en outre persez.

(IV, ll.733-6, p.277)

Hyante apparently thinks that only by accumulating substantives can she render the turmoil of the scene. Francus too employs enumeratio, when assuring Hyante of the depth of his love. The effect is one of hyperbole: he makes the most of a perhaps rather tenuous reality (IV, ll.103-6, p.248). The device in these two cases is not purely gratuitous, as it contributes to the characterization. But the frequency of its occurrence does suggest that it conforms to Ronsard's individual kind of mimesis. For instance, Terpin in his hymn to Victory also employs the technique, in an attempt to embrace in his paeon all of Victory's attributes (III, ll.509-16, pp.196-7). No light is cast here upon Terpin's own personality. In the passage, the effect of accumulation is accompanied by an antithetical construction, 'toutefois' marking the transition from Victory's unfavourable to her favourable qualities.

Cybele, addressing Sleep, makes extensive use of both enumeratio and asyndeton. She tells Sleep to make Dicaee dream of

cent formes épandues
Piqueurs, veneurs, trompes au col pendues,
Lesses, et chiens, bocages, et forests,
Larges épieux, cordages, et filets:
Limiers ardans, cerfs suivis à la trace,
Et tout le meuble ordonné pour la chasse ...

(II, ll.433-8, p.115)

The last line sums up the contents of the list. Exuberance and diversity are the keynotes of the passage.

A particular form of asyndeton found in the Franciade involves proper nouns, and lends exotic colour to the narrative.¹ Thus in the evocation of the apparition Francus sees in answer to his prayer, proper names add mythological overtones to the style (III, ll.241-6, p.183), whilst adjectival phrases also play their part. Again, in Francus' libation for Hecate, proper nouns convey some of the horror of Hades (IV, ll.680-8, p.275); they sound a barbaric note and create an impression of the mystery of the ritual. They are also used by Hyante in her prophecies, with cumulative effect (see for example Book Four, ll.1016-20, p.292; and ll.1743-8, p.324).

A form of verbal accumulation found in the Franciade more frequently than in Ronsard's epic miniatures is annominatio. Many examples of this figure in the poem extend over several lines. Some are contained in the utterances of the characters themselves. A good illustration of linguistic virtuosity, for instance, is incorporated in Jupiter's description of the way Pyrrhus seized the likeness of Astyanax and hurled it to the ground:

Il le porta sur le haut d'une tour,
D'où le roüant et tournant de meint tour
En tourbillons ...

(I, ll.135-7, pp.36-7)

Appropriately, these words are uttered by the supreme god of Olympus, who can view events with serenity, and is therefore all the more likely to be able to construct aesthetic patterns out of them. Shortly afterwards, Jupiter describes Francus as 'magnanime

1. Compare Les Bacchanales ..., III, pp.184-217, especially pp.197-201; Dithyrambes, V, pp.53-76; the Hinne de Bacus, VI, pp.176-90; and the Franciade, Book Three, ll.1471-2, XVI-2, p.240.

à la main' (I, l.184, p.38). Then, in Book Four, Francus employs the related device of polyptoton, which involves, not a shift in meaning, but merely a change in grammatical function: he plays on the word 'mourir', illustrating his perplexity on the subject of metempsychosis (IV, ll.855-8, p.284). Hyante herself uses annominatio in her reply to Francus' questions concerning the soul (IV, ll.905-6, p.286). But few examples of annominatio are found in Book Three: each personage appears too caught up in his own troubles to contemplate playing with words.

Other examples of the figure are to be attributed to the invisible narrator, rather than to a character. Thus annominatio occurs in the evocation of the way the ghosts of the drowned men disappear (II, ll.673-6, p.126). The verbal patterning here does mirror the sense: what is being described is a revolving motion, that of a point receding only to reappear, just as the sound tour is picked up in the ensuing words. Again, Jupiter is depicted as

fronsant le sourcy

Renfrongné d'ire ... (I, ll.31-2, p.31)

One is told that Helenin 'Mille discours discourt en sa pensée' (I, l.625, p.61), and that he 'pensoit cent pensemens divers' (I, l.631): both examples of polyptoton, which Laumonier compares with Greek syntax (XVI-1, p.61, note 1). As Francus' ship is about to be launched, annominatio is combined with alliteration: 'Du coup la corde en deux pars fut coupée' (I, l.1170, p.88).

This is a device that draws attention to itself, asserting the value of purely aesthetic configurations. It forges links between different parts of a sentence, and causes words to enter into a pattern of relationships transcending their intrinsic significance. In this respect, it is comparable with retrospection and prophecy which, on a structural level, establish connections

between different moments in time. Although not specifically an epic technique, annominatio does seem to testify to Ronsard's wish to expand and adorn.

Several passages may be taken as illustrations of Ronsard's use of other techniques not exclusively epic in nature in order to produce an impression of accumulation. Frequently, anaphora forms the basis for repetition and variation on a given theme, as in Jupiter's prophecy to Juno concerning Francus:

Il doit souffrir meint peril sur la mer,
Tantost icy, tantost de là ramer
 Pendu sur l'onde: il doit voir meint rivage,
Meinte cité, et meint peuple sauvage
Meint Roy, meint Prince, et connoistre leurs cueurs
Leurs volonte, leurs façons et leurs moeurs ...
 (I, ll.171-6, p.38; italics mine)

The excerpt involves the repetition of three different words: 'meint' in particular forms an intricate web of recurrences. The repeated words link one line with another: 'meint' connects lines 173 to 175, and 'leurs' attaches line 175 to line 176; the decasyllable is expanded. The rhetorical devices reinforce the meaning here, giving some impression of the multiple adventures facing Francus. However, one also notices that the anaphora enables Ronsard to avoid giving specific details about the development of his plot. Once again, one finds signs of Ronsard's uncertainty regarding the invention of material.

In lines 154 to 160 of Book Two, modes of repetition and accumulation evoke the effects of the tempest. Synonyms in lines 154 to 155 enable one impression to be added to another. In line 157, geminatio occurs twice: 'Branle sur branle, et onde dessus onde'; it is found again in lines 159 to 160. The last two lines are, in addition, neatly placed in antithetical relationship

through the use of anaphora. Rhetorical devices thus help to evoke the rising and falling motion of the waves.¹

However, one must guard against trying always to connect such stylistic features with signification. Often, verbal patterning seems to take over from the meaning of the passage. An example is provided by the evocation in Book Three of the confusion into which love plunges Clymene (ll.806-16, p.211). Here, the synonymia in line 807, 'virant et tournoyant', is followed by a simile, in which one encounters anaphora, polyptoton, and geminatio:

Ce pront esclair, ores bas ores haut
 Par la maison sautelle de meint saut
 Et bond sur bond aux soliveaux ondoye²
 Pirouetant d'une incertaine voye,
 Et fait courir ses longs rayons espars
 De place en place errant de toutes pars.
 (ll.811-16; italics mine)

The same meaning might have been expressed very briefly - as indeed it is in Ronsard's chief source for this passage, Apollonius, Argonautica III, ll.755-8.³ Ronsard has developed the comparison by means of rhetorical devices, which concentrate on the diverse

1. Compare the image of the storm-tossed sea in the Response aux injures ..., ll.325-38, XI, p.134 (and see above, p.210, note 2). One observes in the Response examples of annominatio, as in line 336: 'Meint tortu tourbillon, qui sur le bord tournoye ...'. See also Lm. X, pp.8-9. The most likely sources for such passages are indicated on page 210, above.

2. In this line, geminatio is combined with assonance (ond).

3. See Silver, Ronsard and the Greek Epic, p.403, note 15, for the suggestion that Ronsard may have collated Apollonius with both Virgil and Ariosto.

McFarlane examines this image in thematic terms: see 'Aspects of Ronsard's Poetic Vision', p.20.

movements of the reflected light. In his version, words seem to assume an autonomous existence and to dance about like the rays of the sun.

Ronsard's sentence-structure itself often contributes to the impression of acervation. A characteristic feature of many of the poet's periods is in fact their shifting focus, their sinuous nature. The sense is prolonged from one line to another, so that the limits of the decasyllable are transcended even without recourse to anaphora. Lines 341 to 352 of Book Three (pp.188-9) illustrate this point, although they do make some use of anaphora:

Prince Troyen, dont la vertu premiere
 Du pere tien efface la lumiere:
 Quand mon païs en deux je partiroy
 344 Et d'une part honoré je t'aurois,
 Encor beaucoup je serois redevable
 A ta vertu, qui n'a point de semblable,
 Qui as tiré mon enfant du danger,
 348 Qui seul as peu du monstre me vanger,
 Monstre cruel, qui moquoit la justice,
 Moquoit les Dieux et l'humaine police,
 Et m'ahontant de toute indignité
 352 De son harnois estonnoit ma Cité.

Lines 341 to 342 have virtue as their subject. Dicaee is the subject of lines 343 to 346; but the second hemistich of line 346 marks the reprise of virtue as subject. In line 347 there is a transition from Francus' virtue to Francus himself, which introduces the anaphora 'qui ... Qui ... Qui'. In line 349, the way the word 'monstre' from line 348 is picked up enables Phovère to be made the subject of the concluding clauses. Anaphora occurs again in the repetition of 'moquoit'. The result is an extremely flexible period, to the structure of which the enjambement in lines 345 to 346 and the hyperbaton (l.342) both contribute. The sentence seems to imitate the rambling nature of the spoken word,

yet at the same time it is composed of a series of traditional rhetorical figures. Whilst being restricted by the short lines, Ronsard tries to maintain a certain amount of freedom.¹

Parenthesis is also frequently used, in the Franciade as in Ronsard's epic miniatures, to dislocate the sentence and add extra detail. It overrides the essentially linear nature of the period. It has this function in Francus' evocation of the fall of Troy:

du vainqueur la rouë Aemonienne
(Acte vilain et plain d'impiété)
Trois fois le traine autour de sa Cité.
Je fus sauvé de la flamme cruelle
(Acte divin) pendant à la mammelle ...
(II, ll.522-6, p.119)

By means of the parenthetical construction, the two qualifications of the actions described are placed in antithesis: 'Acte vilain': 'Acte divin'. The movement of the phrase is momentarily disrupted and the focus of attention is shifted.² The sentence exists on several different planes simultaneously.

In such ways, rhetorical devices reinforce the sense of

1. Anadiplosis is a device that enables Ronsard to create similar effects. It was used in Hylas (ll.238-9, XV, p.244; ll.291-2, p.247) to suggest the movement and indeed the lapping sound of water. The sentences seemed to expand from within. There are several examples of anadiplosis in the Franciade. In lines 328 to 329 of Book Two (p.110), the word 'rocher' is repeated; it is interesting to note that the device is again found here in connection with water. Perhaps the act of depicting this fluid element led the poet - whether consciously or not - to increase the flexibility of his verse-form. The repetition of a word in these examples permits the period to ramify. See also IV, ll.869-70, p.284.

2. Compare III, ll.435-9, p.193, where the parenthesis introduces a mythological dimension.

dilation created by some of the rhetorical features, and tend to run counter to Ronsard's attempts to circumscribe his material.

(iii) The simile as ramification

Another rhetorical figure, the simile, can produce an expansive effect; for although many images act as leitmotifs, as connecting threads between various parts of the poem, others become the focus of the reader's attention in their own right. They are elaborated with all the vividness, all the appeals to eye and ear, which Ronsard recommends in the 'Preface sur la Franciade' as ingredients for descriptions of battle (XVI-2, p.344). Moreover, they are often (like the other rhetorical devices) arranged in clusters, in which detail is piled upon detail. Although they do, when so arranged, usually mark dramatic moments in the main plot, they also testify to the charms of digression and lyricism.

The departure of Francus' ships at the end of Book One is heralded by a cluster of similes, which, appropriately, open up the vistas of the epic just as Francus is embarking on his voyage. Again, several examples of hypotyposis occur in the evocation of the Trojans assembling on the shore. The passage has been studied in detail, although somewhat negatively as 'a glaring example of overdevelopment', by Leslie (pp.42-7).¹ To Leslie's survey one might add the observation that the variants testify to the care Ronsard lavished on this group of comparisons. Lines 893 to 908 (pp.73-4), for example, are altered in later editions. The 1578

1. See Silver, Ronsard and the Greek Epic, pp.175-7, on Ronsard's imitation of Homer in this passage. See also Silver, 'Ronsard's Homeric Imagery'.

version omits lines 903 to 906. The description of the marshes disappears, giving way to a closer view of what each bird is doing. The indication of place - 'Poitou' - is removed; to it is preferred a mention of the season - 'Au mois d'Avril'. The symmetry of the passage also becomes more prominent, while the cumulative effects grow less marked.¹ But the image still creates a scene existing over and above the narrative proper. A total of fifty-four lines (ll.877-930, pp.73-6) is devoted to the evocation of the assembling Trojans. Of these lines, twenty-six - almost half of the passage - are occupied by comparisons. As Leslie indicates, Homer incorporated a similar constellation of images in Book Two of the Iliad (ll.455-83). But Ronsard has introduced some images not found in the parallel passage from Homer, and omitted others that are to be discovered there: in particular the somewhat unpleasant comparison of the soldiers to flies buzzing around pails of milk (ll.469-71).

However, Ronsard's use of image-clusters is not always to be attributed to imitation of specific passages from his sources. An examination of the variants often reveals Ronsard altering bare statements, adorning them with similes. For instance, lines 123 to 124 of Book Two are replaced in 1573 by a ten-line image, derived from Callimachus' Hymn to Delos (ll.228-31). Iris kneeling before Juno is likened to a dog lying at its master's feet. This extended comparison is at once followed by a simile from the first version, describing the clouds gathering round Juno's throne (ll.127-9, p.100). Then a hypotyposis taken from the craft of a gunsmith suggests the way Juno shapes the clouds (ll.135-43,

1. On Ronsard's variants, see Silver, Ronsard's General Theory of Poetry, pp.197-231.

pp.100-1). The impression of diversity of forms recalls Les Daimons, ll.87-126, VIII, pp.120-2; and Ronsard's culling of an image from the gunsmith's trade reminds one of the advice he gave in the Abbrege (XIV, p.10). One has a familiar eye-witness formula ('Ainsi qu'on voit ...', line 135), which at once signals to the reader that an image is beginning. The description of Iris' delivery of the message and Juno's shaping of the clouds occupies 37 lines in 1573; of these, no less than 24 (65 per cent of the passage) are devoted to similes.

The storm at sea provides another opportunity for the accumulation of similes. The first (II, ll.214-16, p.104) is derived from Orlando Furioso, XVI. 68. 3-6.¹ Then, to evoke the sound made by the toppling masts and rigging of seven of Francus' ships (ll.248-52, p.106), Ronsard uses the image of a pine uprooted by a mountain torrent. Twenty lines later, hypotyposis is employed in connection with a ship that braves the storm, but is finally engulfed by huge waves (ll.272-82, p.108).² Once again, the 'Ainsi qu'on voit' formula introduces the passage. The action described in this simile is almost as vivid as the depiction of the tempest itself: the evocation of the siege of the town hence runs parallel to the main narrative. Indeed, the likeness between breakers and soldiers is tenuous, hardly justifying the length and detail of the comparison.³ This indicates how Ronsard

1. See Cameron, p.80. Ronsard's simile contains another instance of annominatio involving tour: 'Tournez et tourmentez', l.216.

2. Compare Ovid, Metamorphoses XI, ll.526-38. See Hagiwara, pp.110-11, for an examination of this passage.

3. In the tempest passage, 19 lines are occupied by similes - approximately 13 per cent of the whole. But the images are grouped over 69 lines, in close proximity to one another.

can build a whole scene on the basis of a single detail from the narrative proper.

A similar arrangement of images occurs in Book Three, where one is informed of Clymene's distressed state. First one has an example of hypotyposis, with the usual introductory formula and the historic present, depicting a heifer and a gadfly (ll.897-908, pp.214-15).¹ Fifty lines further on, there is another hypotyposis, this time describing a pilgrim coming across a snake (III, ll.949-57, p.217). It provides further proof of Ronsard's contamination of sources in order to produce a decorative effect: for the hypotyposis combines a Virgilian image (Aeneid II, ll.379-81) with a simile from the Iliad (III, ll.32-5). Examination of the variants once more reveals the care Ronsard lavished upon his text. From 1578 to 1584, the editions of the poem contained a slightly more colourful version of lines 953 to 955:

Un long serpent horrible d'une creste,
Qui sifle, escume, et s'enfle de la teste ...

There is onomatopoeia in 'sifle'; and the s and f sounds are picked up in 's'enfle'. The actions of the snake are evoked in greater detail. But in 1587, this description gives way to a generalization, followed by the substitution of 'cracher' for 'toucher':

1. Laumonier suggests that this is inspired by the Aeneid, IV, ll.68-73, where Virgil evokes Dido's distraught state; but Silver postulates as the true source the Odyssey, XXII, ll.297-301 (Ronsard and the Greek Epic, p.171, note 12). What is most probable is that Ronsard has blended the two passages. Certainly, he has remembered Dido's plight elsewhere in his presentation of the love of the two sisters for Francus.

For another gadfly image, see the Responce aux injures ..., ll.46-50, Lm. XI, p.119.

Un long serpent dont la hideuse trace
 Donne frayeur à nostre humaine race,
 Et fait mourir les fleurs de son cracher.

Although he seems to have wondered how horrid he should make the creature, Ronsard apparently never doubted the value of the image as a whole.

There is a third lengthy comparison as Clymene finally enters the room, and is likened to a bride-to-be mourning her fiancé (III, ll.977-88, pp.218-19).¹ The oxymoron of line 981 - 'Elle de dueil et d'amour enflammée' - conveys a sense of the inextricable mixture of feelings in the girl's heart. Through the sheer length of this comparison, Clymene seems actually to become the bride-to-be. Her situation is made more poignant through the suggestion of irrevocable loss.²

Thus, in the space of one hundred lines (ll.897-996), one finds three examples of hypotyposis, which superimpose the plight of an animal or of another person upon that of Clymene. These images occupy a total of thirty-five lines.

However, the episode most clearly testifying to Ronsard's predilection for accumulating vivid images is the duel between Francus and Phovère, adapted from the Hymne de Pollux et de Castor.³

1. This simile, from Apollonius, Argonautica III, ll.656-63, reminds one of Yphis' plight in L'Orphée, ll.115-68, XII, pp.132-4.

2. Thematically, this image foreshadows the way Francus will be lost to Clymene. But in fact the roles will be reversed: Clymene is the one who will meet her death.

3. See Silver, Ronsard and the Greek Epic, pp.370-9. Several critics have suggested that the duel is reminiscent of mediaeval literature. See Guy, p.236, p.256; Franchet, p.227; Hagiwara, pp.133-4. Certainly, Ronsard's inspiration here is not purely classical. He may well be recalling, not only Ariosto, but the corpus of mediaeval literature for which he often professed scorn.

Almost as soon as the two come to blows, a simile occurs (II, 11.1247-8, p.159). Then, as the fight gains in intensity and speed, a hypotyposis is found, describing the actions and sounds involved in making a bridge (11.1259-66, pp.159-60). This is a further example of the poet's use of a craft as the source of a comparison, although the main origin of the image is Orlando Furioso, XLVI. 122. Characteristically, Ronsard adds vivid details: the men drive in the piles gradually, 'coup dessus coup' (1.1264), and the river-banks echo to the sound. He sketches in the background to the scene: the river and 'Le creux rivage' (1.1266). He also imitates the sound of the blows, in the dull echo that links one line with another, again transcending the limits of the decasyllable: 'congnent', 'besongnent', 'pont', 'tonne', 'resonne'. As with the simile from Apollonius evoking dancing beams of light, Ronsard both adds to the detail and reinforces the effectiveness of the image by means of verbal patterns.

After a short, more conventional simile (11.1267-8, p.160), one finds, in lines 1283 to 1292 (p.161), comparisons describing Phovère and Francus: Phovère is likened to a 'flot courroucé' (1.1283), and Francus to a 'bon pilote expert' (1.1287). This pair of images is not found in the chief source for the episode, Ariosto. Rather, it is derived from Apollonius, Argonautica II, 11.70-5, and from Valerius Flaccus, IV, 11.268-72. Ronsard has,

1. See Creore, pp.154-5. Creore argues that the simile has become an integral part of the narration; but I maintain that Ronsard's images are here so detailed that the reader momentarily loses sight of the main narrative level. - The motif of the perils presented by the sea is again picked up in the image.

On the extent of Ronsard's debt to Ariosto here, see Parducci; and Cameron, pp.81-2.

once again, increased the force of the images through verbal formulae. The antithesis between Francus and Phovère is brought out through the contrast 'L'un ... l'autre', and also through the use of epithets: 'courroucé', 'impetueux', as opposed to 'bon', 'expert', 'vigilant', 'prudent'. The anaphora, 'ores ... ores', also contributes to the movement of the scene.

The simile of an anvil is found in lines 1305 to 1308 (p.162; compare Orlando Furioso, XVII. 101). Less than thirty lines later, one finds an instance of hypotyposis, which this time takes one away from the duel itself, in order to convey some impression of the fear Clymene and Hyante feel on thinking Francus dead. They are likened to two doves (ll.1333-40, p.163).¹ The eye-witness formula, 'ainsi qu'on voit', recurs (l.1333). Here too, the variants indicate the care Ronsard took in creating his image. From 1578 to 1584, the mention of the dove-cote was replaced by a specific indication of the sort of food the doves were bringing. The interpolation, 'A longs soupirs', in the last line, which produced a disjointed effect, was removed. In 1587, the structure of lines 1336 to 1340 was normalized even further, by means of the exclusion of the hyperbaton in the last two lines. These two alterations concerned the syntax rather than the content of the image; but they do show Ronsard examining a passage of secondary narrative with great care. In all the versions, the simile refuses to be linked point by point to the narrative proper: the chicks in the comparison have no clear narrative counterpart.

After three brief images presenting few impediments to the narrative flow (ll.1358-63, p.165; ll.1365-7, p.165; ll.1391-3, p.167), Francus is wounded. The poet gives the reader two similes,

1. See Leslie, p.34, and p.120, note 5.

presenting them as alternatives (ll.1405-10, p.167). The second image reminds one of Ronsard's own L'Adonis; but the first is again derived from Orlando Furioso: XXIV. 65-6.¹ Ronsard avoids the narrator's personal intervention, so marked a feature of Ariosto's poem; he replaces the beloved girl with the anonymous 'la pucelle'. In juxtaposing the two comparisons, he presents a threefold view of the scene: Francus' actual wound, then the two things it conjures up in the mind of an onlooker.

In the original edition, lines 1413 to 1414 (p.167) briefly evoke waves and a rock. When compared with lines 1287 to 1290, they suggest that the roles have been reversed: Francus is now the wave, the one who attacks. Lines 1415 to 1416 link Phovére with metal and marble; like Amycus, the giant is connected with the elements. But in the edition of 1587, lines 1389 to 1418 are replaced by a passage including an extended simile which, like lines 1391 to 1393, associates the two contestants with bulls:

Comme Toreaux (quand la saison nouvelle
Les appetits de Venus renouvelle)
Se vont tuant et navrant pour l'amour:
La jeune troupe est muette à l'entour
Qui les regarde, ignorant qui doit estre
D'un tel Duel le veinqueur et le maistre.²

One's attention shifts here from Francus and Phovére themselves to the people surrounding them.

In all the editions, another simile ensues, comparing Francus to an eagle (ll.1419-26, p.168).³ The mere fact that Francus

1. This image, which Ronsard transferred from the Hymne de Pollux et de Castor, is discussed by Cameron, p.47, and p.47, note 252.

2. Compare the Hymne de Pollux et de Castor, ll.471-8, VIII, p.314. Ronsard has collated Apollonius with Virgil.

3. Compare line 1426 with line 1291, 'Ains adjoustant la vigilance à l'art ...'.

throws himself at Phovére with renewed vigour serves to introduce this detailed comparison. Then, when Phovére is knocked to the ground, a familiar tree image occurs (ll.1436-8, p.169). The 1587 variant extends these three lines: the 'sapin' becomes an oak, 'oracle és forests de Dodonne'; the poet elaborates on the fear of the birds nesting in it, and on how it is uprooted.

The final similes in the passage concern Phovére's death. Most striking is the evocation of blood spurting from his body:

Ainsi que d'un conduit
S'eschape l'eau qui jallissant se suit,
Et d'une longue et saillante rousée
Baigne la place à l'entour arrosée,
Ainsi le sang bouillonnant s'en alla ...
(ll.1455-9, p.170)

Emphasis is placed on the adjectives in line 1457 through the use of inversion. The present participles convey an impression of seething movement. This mannered description of changing patterns almost makes one forget that Phovére is dying. I.D. McFarlane calls it 'one of the most impressive illustrations' of the motif of dissolution, ebbing, in Ronsard.¹

From the start of the combat proper until its end, the narrative is thus enriched and extended by means of similes that cluster around the central line. Some of these reinforce the sense whilst drawing little attention to themselves: the comparison of the blows to snow, for example, is not developed. But the lengthy images do attract the reader's notice: when the two sisters are likened to doves, the initial point of comparison is soon forgotten, so vivid is the picture painted of the birds being caught by a sparrow-hawk. At many stages, the linear narrative focused

1. 'Aspects of Ronsard's Poetic Vision', pp.57-8.

upon the battle ramifies into evocations of such things as animal life or everyday occupations. Eye-witness formulae, usually 'Ainsi qu'on voit', inform the reader that he is momentarily deviating from the central récit. These digressions constitute a large proportion of the whole passage, for of the 236 lines taken up by the duel in the edition of 1572, 75 (32 per cent of the passage) are adorned with similes. Although the frequency, line for line, is less than in most of the other examples studied above, the total is in fact surprisingly high for an excerpt devoted to something as dramatic as a duel. Being concerned with concrete actions following one another in swift succession, this passage seems to present a much less appropriate opportunity for the deployment of comparisons than, say, Clymene's monologue, which is concerned with states of mind. This suggests that what Ronsard saw as most important in his poem was not action as such, but the aesthetic configurations to which a sequence of events lends itself, the reflection of action in images.¹

1. For other examples of hypotyposis, see: Book One, ll.57-62, p.32; ll.317-22, pp.44-5 (see Silver, Ronsard's General Theory of Poetry, p.221); ll.493-514, pp.54-5 (hypotyposis in the primary narrative); ll.557-84, pp.57-8 (main narrative); ll.839-48, p.71; ll.1015-32, pp.80-1; ll.1049-60, p.82 (main plot); ll.1133-46, pp.86-7 (main account); ll.1209-20, p.90 (primary level, plus a simile). Book Two, ll.59-66, p.96 (main action); ll.163-73, p.102 (main action); ll.381-94, p.113 (primary narrative); ll.897-926, pp.138-40. Book Three, ll.150-60, p.179; ll.555-66, p.199 (ll.556-8 recall the description of Adonis); ll.627-46, p.203; ll.653-68, p.204; ll.1080-94, p.223; ll.1303-10, p.233 (main narrative). Book Four, ll.175-84, p.252 (main account); ll.637-45, p.273 (main plot); ll.649-58, pp.273-4 (main action); ll.973-80, p.289 (main action, plus a simile ll.1195-1220, pp.300-1 (in ll.1208-15, the duel between Clovis and Alaric reminds one, rhetorically, of Francus' with Phovère); ll.1806-30, pp.326-7.

Hypotyposis is a figure in which Ronsard displays much theoretical interest, as indicated by his study in the 'Preface' of descriptions of battle. In practice, he uses the device as much for his comparisons as for the primary narrative. His actualization takes place at one remove from the basic narrative level.¹ Although in one case Ronsard's accumulation of similes could be explained by his emulation of Homer, his images are more usually culled from a variety of sources. In bringing them together, he is therefore exercising a choice, adopting a particular form of mimesis. The effect produced is one of exuberant copiousness: comparison is piled upon comparison. Whilst highlighting aspects of the events depicted, the similes occupy so much space that they delay the action. In the 'Preface svr la Franciade', Ronsard reminded the prospective epic poet of the virtues of brevity:

Car la Poesie Heroïque qui est dramatique,
et qui ne consiste qu'en action, ne peut
longuement traicter un mesme sujet, mais
passer de l'un à l'autre en cent sortes
de varietez. (XVI-2, p.343)

It seems that he preferred to ignore his own advice. His love of embellishment prevailed.

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Embarking upon his epic with the intention of writing twenty-four books, Ronsard realized that he would have to endow his work with a coherent structure. In an intricate maze of episodes, the

1. One might compare Ronsard's style with the remarks made by Poulet on Baroque art - a later movement, but one that does offer some affinities. See Les Métamorphoses du cercle, page 22.

reader would need as many landmarks as possible. And indeed, Ronsard began by fashioning his work into neat, interrelated sections. He divided his poem into books which, whilst being rounded wholes each focusing on a different topic, yet pointed forward to one another. He also established a pattern of repetition, parallelism and anticipation connecting the books. Rhetorical devices accentuated the impression of cohesion so achieved: verbal echoes linked one episode with another, and sometimes underlined reversals in the plot. Similes too constructed a web of cross-references. Strata of similes were produced: they anticipated and recalled one another; they often referred back to the narrative line, by suggesting the course the action would take thanks to their connection with past moments in the plot. Consequently, repetition in general became a vital feature of Ronsard's epic, as a means of controlling a large amount of material and of enabling the reader to perceive when a narrative thread was being picked up again.

However, this search for coherence contains the seeds of something different. Just as the ending of Book Four embodies implicit reflections on the fact that the Franciade will never be finished, just as the repetition of Jupiter's message, as well as being a structural marker, also indicates that Francus' journey is being deferred: so the very shifts in temporal perspective often remind one of the fragments, of that incomplete structure which Ronsard wished to transcend. For retrospection in particular testifies to a wish to divagate and, in many cases, to rejoin the more familiar epic tradition. Dicaeae's tale about Idomeneus is a good example of how the time scale can become extremely elastic. The poet ventures on to different legendary terrain - in this instance making changes to the fable - and slows the pace of the

narrative. The same is true of the ornate objects evoked in the Franciade: whilst adorning the text and helping the poet to provide a more comprehensive vision of the world, whilst giving the protagonist elevated status by enveloping him in the prestige of mythology, they also cause the reader to forget Francus' aim of founding another Troy. Indeed, through their depiction of myths, they represent a return to the dawn of mankind, a preference for origins rather than for the future, which fits in with the predilections of Francus and of the poet himself. This taste for *primaeval* myth is especially evident in the portrayal of Saturn on the basin.

Ronsard's attempt to provide coherence was, it is true, reinforced by verbal rappels; other rhetorical features, however, increase the impression of expansion. Circumlocution can represent, as in the fragments, a deviation from the primary narrative. And within the individual sentence, devices of accumulation and repetition reflect in microcosm the conflict between order and disorder. They include asyndeton, enumeratio, anaphora, geminatio, and annominatio. They are accompanied by techniques contributing to the concatenation so typical of Ronsard's syntax: anadiplosis and parenthesis, for instance, enable Ronsard to break down the barriers of the decasyllabic line. The poet who has to obey the demands of structure on a large scale, and those of versification on the scale of the individual sentence, is constantly searching for the means to incorporate in his work those moments of lyricism and dilation which seem to lie at the heart of his aesthetic apprehension of the world.

Similes, although frequently acting as leitmotifs, are a vital part of Ronsard's expansive technique. They cover ground which, strictly speaking, does not form part of the main subject.

They allow the poet to turn away from rapidly moving action, to retard the progress of the poem. They are clear indicators of the desire to eschew a linear approach to the epic. Moreover, they tend to appear in constellations: simile is added to simile and sources are intermingled, producing a highly ornate effect. It would be unwise to look for any perfectly consistent trend in the variants; but the latter certainly reveal the care Ronsard lavished on his comparisons, at many points extending them or even adding to their number. Ronsard shows a distinct predilection for ramified narratives incorporating numerous digressions often endowed with as much vividness as the main account. Even when describing actions as violent as those involved in a duel, he does not hesitate to suspend the narration. And the fact that for the combat he uses many of the similes deployed much earlier in the Hymne de Pollux et de Castor, implies that his attitude to the comparison has hardly changed. Although he is composing a full-scale epic, he feels justified in taking a principal episode from one of his fragments. The Argonautic hymns, Ronsard's exercise in the epic mode, embody a way of handling secondary narrative that remains a constant in Ronsard's poetry. And in fact the 'coup d'essai' is never completely transcended.

Ronsard's hero himself mirrors the obstacles Ronsard encounters during his epic voyage. Francus leans very heavily upon epic heroes of the past, especially Hector, for his prestige. His is a reflected glory; and Ronsard has to strive hard to make him appear anything other than a mere copy of the Homeric and Virgilian protagonists. Yet this new hero is constantly looking to the past: he would like to forget his mission and to revert to the world of ancient epics.¹ Crete was once the mother-land

1. See Ménager, pp.306-15, p.360.

of the Trojans, as Dicaee reminds Francus (II, ll.618-23, p.124; and III, ll.381-2, p.190); and Francus feels the attraction of this symbolic return to his origins; he at many points curses the gods for driving him onwards, away from Dicaee's kingdom. Moreover, he admits to Dicaee that, were he free to do as he wished, he would even leave Crete:

alaigre de joye
 J'irois chercher encor ma vieille Troye,
 Et me plairoit entre les vieux tombeaux
 De mes ayeux, bastir des murs nouveaux
 Et d'habiter la cendre de mes peres ...
 (III, ll.401-5, p.191)

He could hardly give a more explicit formulation of his preference for the past rather than the future.

Again, Francus is a hero who enjoys lyrical ponderings more than action: he uses the opportunity of the funeral rites for his friend to delay his voyage and to reminisce about bygone days. Francus' own predilections are mirrored in the organization of the poem, in which passages of action tend to be followed by moments of stasis, perhaps the best examples of which are Terpin's two hymns. In short, the characterization of Francus seems largely to be determined by the proclivities of the poet himself.

When making such judgements, one is to some extent reduced to speculation. Yet, in any consideration of the Franciade, one is faced with the incontrovertible fact that Ronsard never completed his epic. Whilst external circumstances did not favour a continuation, Ronsard was probably hampered even more by the realization that his grandiose scheme did not fully suit his poetic talents. By the end of the fourth book, Francus had made very few steps towards the foundation of a new Troy. The poet had embarked upon a long review of the kings of France which widened the vistas of

the poem before the epic goal had been adequately delimited. Ronsard had perceived how difficult it was to invent a plot without relying on the Ancients, and had returned to their works whenever possible. And he had increasingly felt the attractions of digression at the expense of the primary action.

An epic poem, with its large scope, should naturally allow the writer time to pause, elaborate, and adorn, just as Ronsard does. Indeed, such embellishment is necessary if the poem is to achieve a satisfactory breadth of vision. Again, Homer is the model for that retarding feature par excellence, the heroic comparison. But whereas Homer, and after him Virgil, combined decorative elements with a continuous narrative thread, Ronsard wanders so far from the tale of Francus that he virtually reaches a point of no return. Appropriately, the poem as we have it ends on the notion of dissolution. Just as one royal line must come to an end, so too Ronsard's attempt to follow through the adventures of his protagonist, and to embrace the whole series of French monarchs until his own day, will prove abortive.

In this sense, Ronsard plainly did not achieve what he intended: his Franciade is not a large-scale epic. However, it may be argued that the Franciade should be judged in terms other than that of completeness. Once one has dismissed the preconception that a poem, in order to be successful, must be a rounded whole, one sees that Ronsard's epic contains many valuable features. It is the quintessence of characteristics studied in Chapters 2, 3, and 4. For, though Ronsard regarded the epic miniature as simply a halfway stage, he has produced a work that tends to break up into a series of fragments, each with its own colours and impressions of movement and activity. Episodes such as the assembling of the soldiers, or the tempest, or the duel, are hard to forget. They

represent the writer of the epic fragment at his best; they determine the revaluation of the Franciade attempted in the conclusion to this study. It cannot be denied that Ronsard was the supreme poet of the heroic miniature; and it is his skill at handling the short poetic form which is reflected in the Franciade.

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CONCLUSION

THE AESTHETICS OF FRAGMENTATION

The 'epic fragment', with all that the appellation implies in terms of a heroic purpose combined, paradoxically, with incompleteness, could in many ways be regarded as the hub around which the poetry of sixteenth-century France revolves. For the fragmentation may be either voluntary or accidental: on the one hand, writers deliberately cultivate the short heroic poem relying for much of its effect upon allusions to full-scale epics; on the other hand, one finds Ronsard longing to produce a durable mythical image of the world around him, but succeeding only in producing a discontinuous and incomplete poem. However, both types of fragmentation represent a fundamental predicament of the sixteenth century, which longs for an all-embracing genre, and usually finds itself incapable of producing it.

Although many poets actively choose to adopt the fragment as a form, they live in an age characterized by a search for completeness. Various branches of Renaissance poetry testify to a taste for comprehensive structures: short poems, for instance, are often grouped into large collections. Thus Scève gathers his dizains into a cycle which he calls the Délie, and thereby enables the individual poem to acquire additional meaning from its surroundings; and Ronsard's love-poems are brought together in various editions of Les Amours, each of which seems to have a dominant tone of its own. However, it is the epic that represents for the poets of this period the supreme genre, capable of containing many different themes and styles, of linking together episodes and endowing them with a significance dependent upon the grandiose format of the whole. The writer of epic is thought to have and to express

in his work an almost encyclopaedic knowledge of the heavens, earth, and hell.¹ Consequently, epics are seen as allegorical expressions of profound truths: Dorat, for example, interprets the Odyssey as a sort of spiritual progress, in which Penelope and Ithaca represent wisdom and happiness: each stage of the travels of Odysseus becomes imbued with new overtones once one has perceived the sense of the complete work.² And, as seen in the concluding section of Chapter 1, the writers of the Renaissance are obsessed with the desire to compose a secular epic that will provide a faithful representation of their view of the world, and rival the Iliad and Odyssey of Homer and the Aeneid of Virgil. The Neo-Latins writing towards the beginning of the century are filled with the wish to produce a large-scale work, and do indeed succeed in creating several substantial poems on epic subjects; the poets of the mid century, taking this ambition further, aim to write a heroic composition in their mother tongue, as proof that French is as rich as Greek and Latin. Yet when the reader searches in this period for an epic using legendary material, he encounters only Ronsard's Franciade. The sixteenth-century writers seem never to have achieved their goal of completeness. Instead, they turn to the miniature, and come to realize that this too has considerable aesthetic worth. They achieve fulfilment in a more limited poetic form.

In many respects, one has the impression that the writers of fragments are seeking a compromise. Whilst limited to the small poem by, for example, lack of patronage and time, by the problem

1. See Silver, Ronsard and the Greek Epic, p.147; and compare Ronsard's 'Preface sur la Franciade', XVI-2, p.336 and pp.340-1.

2. See Nollac, pp.69-72.

of finding an appropriate subject for a full-scale epic, by the pressure of political events, the poets try to provide glimpses, samples, of the sort of work they would have liked to compose, and to prove themselves capable of treating a number of different subjects. This leads to characteristics grouped together in the present thesis under the notion of expansion.

It was in fact seen that the opposing urges of contraction and expansion govern both the narrative and the rhetorical organization of the epic miniatures. In structural terms, the poet frequently tries to create an effect of coherence and compression, making the epic fragment appear capable of independent status. He does this by providing for his poem an introduction or a conclusion, or both. These give the fragment a clearly defined form, and prevent the subject-matter from dilating indefinitely. It is the presence of both prelude and finale in Ronsard's two Argonautic hymns, for example, that gives them the appearance of carefully orchestrated compositions. Nevertheless, certain of the structural features make a completely different impression upon the reader: they seem to extend rather than to contract, they introduce shifts in the spatial and temporal perspective. Inviting comparison with the contemporary visual arts, with their creation of an elaborate surface, the poet adorns his piece with descriptions: of clothes, of domestic articles, of works of art, of armour. The narrative line branches out into new realms. Again, an impression of temporal depth is created by passages of retrospection and prophecy. Time and space become elastic. On a rhetorical plane, this effect of dilation is heightened, so that expansion generally triumphs over contraction. The poet enlarges the scope of the individual poem, by means both of circumlocutions capable of changing the tempo, and of similes evoking another area of experience in great

detail, and often attracting the reader's attention at some dramatic point in the main narrative. Techniques such as preterition, parenthesis, and paradiiegesis enable the poet to evoke episodes he does not treat in full, thereby indirectly emphasizing the incompleteness of his poem. In general, instead of following through a single narrative line, the poet attempts to proceed on several levels at once.

The technique of extension, in both its structural and its rhetorical aspects, relies on other texts for many of its effects: it exploits the resources of literary allusiveness, and simultaneously suggests that the fragment cannot exist in isolation from the works of the Ancients. This allusive device is most clearly to be seen at work in the passages of prophecy, recall, and incidental narrative. Contenting themselves with the composition of a short poem, the writers can draw upon the epic tradition in which their work is rooted, and can depend upon this tradition to provide details of events which they merely mention.

THE POSITION OF RONSARD

By means of various structural and rhetorical features, the writers of fragments thus try to achieve a compromise. The search for completeness makes itself manifest even in a paramountly unfinished form. Although relatively short, the heroic fragment tries to provide the wide vistas associated with the epic. The episodic urge ultimately yields to the encyclopaedic.

Whilst appearing as the product of opposing desires, however, many of the epic miniatures have considerable poetic worth. They constitute a new genre, which the sixteenth-century poets cultivate

with all the fervour they might have directed towards the full-scale epic. For, although conducted primarily with the aim to cast light upon Ronsard's Franciade, examination of the sixteenth-century epic miniatures did reveal good poems less ambitious in scope, which have received comparatively little critical attention hitherto. The Neo-Latins both in and outside France play a vital role in the development of the genre. Quinziano Stoa and Nicolas Petit write lengthy poems on, respectively, Orpheus and Arion, and help to promote the interest of the Pléiade in the prisci poetae. Luigi Alamanni cultivates the mythological fragment, often using mythological themes, as Baïf is later to do. He also supplies his eclogue on Adonis with both a prelude and a conclusion, antedating the techniques of poets such as Scève and Ronsard. Works by Pontano seem to have drawn the Pléiade towards the figures of Orpheus and Hylas.

Amongst the French poets writing later in the century, Jean-Antoine de Baïf played a role more original than that habitually attributed to him. He wrote Le Laurier, a mythological poem which possesses some of the features of the epic fragment, and which influenced Ronsard's Le Houx, contributing much towards the establishment of the hymne-blason as a genre. He produced Les Muses, which contained the seeds of an epic centred on Orpheus, and which incorporated - unlike the Franciade - reflections on the poet's art. His L'Hippocrène was likewise connected with the motif of inspiration, and constituted an attempt both to write on a heroic subject that had not been treated by other poets, and to use an original form of versification. Again, Remy Belleau invented mythological episodes and narrated them in epic style, providing good examples of hypotyposis and circumlocution, and infusing new life into the aetiological poem.

Nevertheless, these poets enhance rather than obscure the achievements of Ronsard. For Ronsard showed great skill in handling the epic miniature. He displayed a more consistent interest than other poets in the Argonautic legend; the part he played in court festivities proved that he was aware of the potential of the legend, of the way it might be used to glorify his nation. With the Hymne de Calaïs, et de Zetes, and the Hymne de Pollux et de Castor, he produced two hymns that are supreme examples of the epic fragment, combining the coherence furnished by a framework and by allegorical overtones, with more expansive motifs, which link the hymns to each other and to the epic tradition. In many cases, Ronsard provided an example for other poets to follow, and doubtless made them realize that the heroic fragment, although not the supreme genre of which they dreamed, was at the very least well worth cultivating. Some of the best instances of prophecy, retrospection, circumlocution, and extended comparison are found in Ronsard's fragments; and a writer such as Tagault is obviously emulating Ronsard and incorporating in his own work features he has found in the Argonautic hymns. By virtue both of his achievements and of his aspirations, Ronsard towers above the other writers of epic miniatures.

Ronsard thus manifested great skill in handling a poetic form that was essentially a compromise. Unlike his contemporaries, however, he was not content with this. He made a more sustained attempt than any other writer to reach the heights of the full-scale secular epic, in the belief that the fragment represented the halfway stage. He regarded the Argonautic hymns as exercises in the epic genre, as preparations for something greater. But ironically, the very deftness with which Ronsard constructed short heroic poems seems to have prevented him from completing the great

epic he had so longed to create. One may conjecture that he wrote so many exercises in the heroic style that he was finally unable to move beyond the 'coup d'essai'. He managed to form his Argonautic hymns into a little poetic universe, by suggesting the links between them: he made one foreshadow the other, he created amidst the images echoes spanning the two poems, he made both focus on a pair of legendary brothers. He proved adept at re-shaping material he had found in Apollonius, Valerius Flaccus, and Theocritus. However, Ronsard may well have become so accustomed to using familiar material, to imitating rather than truly inventing, that he was ultimately overawed by the prospect of finding a completely new epic framework. He had had so much practice at drawing on well-known epic poets that he almost certainly found it difficult to cull material from infinitely more obscure annals. He must have felt the irony of having to present the first four books of the Franciade itself as an 'eschantillon' ('Au Lecteur', XVI-1, p.5).

THE FRANCIADE

Ronsard intended to avoid all impression of the Franciade's being dependent, like so many of the fragments, on other texts. The hero of the Franciade was meant to be a character in his own right. He had to be fitted into the epic tradition (Jupiter's opening speech was composed with this purpose in mind), and yet could not be simply a copy of the Homeric heroes, of Apollonius' Jason, of Virgil's Aeneas. In some ways, Ronsard does provide Francus with individual attributes. In the combat with Phovére, derived largely from the Orlando Furioso of Ariosto rather than

from the ancient epics, and already prepared for in the Hymne de Pollux et de Castor, Francus achieves a glory of his own. He slays a cruel giant and then nobly refuses the hand of Dicaee's daughter as a reward.¹ Again, his own youthful good looks instil love into the hearts of Clymene and Hyante. The reader has before his eyes proof that Francus is to be admired. On the other hand, the passion of the two sisters is increased by the consideration that Francus is Hector's son (see, for example, Book Three, line 42, page 174). Behind him, they see his father. Likewise, Dicaee's admiration for the Francus who has saved Orée is reinforced by his remembrance of Hercules, Theseus, and Jason, Francus' ancestors (III, ll.359-64, p.189). In general, Francus in fact derives much of his prestige from the ancient epics. A whole series of references transfers to him the glory of his father, Hector. Francus must prove himself worthy of such a father by carrying out his mission; but even before he embarks upon it, he is admired not so much for his own qualities as for his relationship to Hector. Several allusions to Francus' uncle, Paris, produce a similar effect. Francus' grandeur is to be attributed more to the past, to his ancestry, than to deeds he performs in the course of the narrative.

The theme of the past is indeed central to Francus' status as protagonist and to Ronsard's attitude towards his materials. For Francus himself is constantly looking to bygone days, rather than to his epic undertaking. He seems to prefer lyricism to action. He laments dead comrades and longs for peaceful conditions that can be no more: he is characterized by the rhetorical technique

1. Francus' conduct in Book Four is less upright: he makes promises to Hyante which he cannot keep.

of recordatio. Francus' nostalgia is a creation of Ronsard; and it corresponds to Ronsard's own yearning for the epic matrix, for the themes made familiar by classical poets. Side by side with the examples of Francus' recordatio, one finds in the first three books frequent passages of retrospection which enable Ronsard to avoid having to invent new materials: for they pick up motifs from the works of Antiquity. Ronsard increases the temporal depth of his poem by recalling and re-shaping episodes from the classical epics, just as he did in the fragments. Indeed, many other of the expansive techniques found in the epic miniatures - devices both structural and rhetorical - recur in the Franciade: so often, that they tend to impede the development of the narrative.

On such grounds, the Franciade has generally been condemned. The characterization of the protagonist is considered inadequate; the poem as a whole is seen as static. Yet the initial consideration of epic miniatures whose fragmentation was intentional enables one to view the Franciade from a different angle. It is not a still-born composition isolated from Ronsard's other works. Rather, it is part of the whole corpus of Ronsard's achievements, standing at the head of his epic productions. Ronsard's expansive urges cause the poem to become a succession of fragments, which have to a large extent broken away from the main plot. Each of these fragments is carefully wrought and highly ornamented, and allows Ronsard's skill at description of movement, action, and emotions to come into play. Even the occasionally languishing succession of kings contains such an epic miniature, which B.R. Leslie has studied: the evocation of the military prowess of Charles-Martel. This is a passage which assists Ronsard in his task of bearing 'le faix de soixante et trois Rois', rendering

the parade of monarchs less tedious.¹

These passages, these fragments, are, admittedly, from a work in which the fundamental sense of purpose has been obscured. Yet the preceding study has shown how much they have in common with, in particular, Ronsard's two Argonautic hymns, pieces that glorified their dedicatee just as Ronsard intended, with the Franciade, to immortalize the monarch. And it is in conjunction with these hymns and with Ronsard's other heroic productions that the Franciade should be considered. In the best passages from the epic, the techniques central to works such as the Hymne de Calais, et de Zetes, the Hymne de Pollux et de Castor, and Hylas again come to the fore.

Similes provide an illustration of this point. In the Franciade, they may deflect one from the central epic goal by often appearing in clusters, and thus undermine Ronsard's search for coherence; but they do reinforce the impression of activity on another level (as when Francus fighting Phovére is compared to a pilot on a storm-tossed ocean). They allow one to see the events from a different viewpoint, just as they do in Ronsard's fragments. They do tend to impede the progress of the Franciade as a whole, but add to the intensity of the individual episode. They indicate that the poet prefers elaboration in depth to swift development of the narrative line; and, whilst it poses problems in the context of the full-scale epic, such a preference for ornateness, copiousness, is as valid a mode of vision as that which deals with events in rapid succession. Critics such as Leslie deplore the

1. See Leslie, pp.37-8. - For Ronsard's complaints about the number of French kings he is obliged to depict, and for his awareness of the perils of tedium, see the 'Au Lecteur', XVI-1, p.5.

effect of superfluity which the similes produce in the Franciade as a whole; the present study suggests that they contribute much to the clarity and depth of focus of the separate fragments in which they are grouped.

Whilst recognizing the value of the epic comparisons, such a statement still implies that the episodes in the Franciade exist in virtual isolation from one another. There is one obvious reason why this is not so: as shown in the early stages of Chapter 5, Ronsard has provided a plot that links one book with the next. However, it is true that he sometimes seems to lose sight of Francus' purpose, which is to found a new Troy. As one of the consequences of this, connections between the various phases of the Franciade and the epic fragments appear even stronger than the narrative line within the Franciade itself. The reader who is acquainted with shorter poems by Ronsard sees that episodes from the Franciade achieve cohesion by forming part of a closely woven web joining the epic and the fragments.

The motif of shipbuilding provides evidence of this point. In Book One of the Franciade, Helenin sees a good omen and decides that he must have ships prepared for Francus. There ensues a passage full of activity, in which trees are felled and cut up, planks transformed into craft, and masts, rigging, and sails prepared (ll.533-84, XVI-1, pp.56-8). The sense of movement is intensified by the fact that the reader hears echoes of the image used in the Hymne de Pollux et de Castor to convey an impression of the force and frequency of the blows exchanged by Pollux and Amycus (ll.450-8, VIII, p.313).¹ Just as the image depicted 'nerveux charpentiers' (l.451), so the passage from the Franciade

1. See above, Chapter 4, pages 190 to 191.

describes the arms of the workmen as 'nerveux' (1.542). The simile evokes the way hammers are heard to

redoubler de grandz coups
Quand ilz coignent à force une suite de cloux,
Pour ensemble coler les aiz d'une navire ...
(11.451-3)

The Franciade in turn focuses on one of the men,

congnant à grans coups
Dedanz les aiz une suite de clous ...
(11.559-60)

Both passages capture the sound of the hammer-blows echoing round the mountains nearby.¹ Both implicitly anticipate the comparison used during the duel between Francus and Phovère, evoking the building of a bridge (II, 11.1259-66, pp.159-60).

The duel between Francus and the giant also reveals how epic and fragments are interlaced. For it contains many elements - notably images - derived from Pollux' combat with Amycus. It acquires an extra dimension thanks to this fact. A reader conversant with Ronsard's work recognizes echoes of the earlier combat, and knows Francus will triumph as Pollux did. The fact that Ronsard practised the use of the duel motif in the Hymne de Pollux et de Castor contributes to the effectiveness of the episode featuring Phovère. One notes that the combat has, in the Franciade, assumed greater significance. It is the first real trial faced by Ronsard's epic hero in Crete, where he must prove his worth. It represents the adaptation of a borrowed motif to suit Ronsard's epic ends. Francus' status is enhanced by literary allusions involving not just the ancient epics, but another work of Ronsard himself.

1. See the Hymne de Pollux et de Castor, 11.454-6, and the Franciade, I, 11.565-70, pp.57-8.

Thus the theme of the duel connects the Franciade with the earlier Argonautic hymns. The tempest is another example of the link between these works. Images of inclement weather occurred in both the Hymne de Calais, et de Zetes and the Hymne de Pollux et de Castor. Verbal echoes united the tempest-motifs in the two hymns: and the theme of the storm was highlighted by the way the poet likened himself in the Dioscuri-hymn to lightning assailing a rock, and by the fact that Castor and Pollux were celebrated for their power of calming storms. One had, therefore, several indications that the poet was becoming aware of the storm at sea as a potential constituent of his epic. In the Franciade, the images from the fragments become reality: Francus is caught up in a storm, in which he loses many of his men. The tempest has a function in the plot: it washes Francus up on the shores of Crete, where he will combat Phovére, arouse the passion of the two sisters, and witness the procession of French monarchs. Consideration of the Argonautic hymns alongside the Franciade reveals how a theme is progressively enriched, to the point where it becomes a motive force in the action. In addition, the episode involving the tempest in the Franciade appears as a worthy product of the 'coups d'essay'.¹

Taken together, the Franciade and the other epic fragments of Ronsard hence constitute a multicoloured canvas representing most of the essential epic motifs. The prerequisite tempest and duel, the ornate objects, the glimpses of past and future were already present, at least in embryo, in the fragments. The Franciade, working to a larger scale, develops these, and adds to them prayers, sacrifices and omens, messages from the gods, banquets and songs. The hero, although no longer the demigod of the

1. The notion of the tempest was already present in Le Ravissement de Cephale. See above, Chapter 3, pp.152-3.

fragments, is placed in surroundings full of religious significance, in a context adjacent to the world of the earlier compositions and acquiring further poetic resonance from them.

This backcloth is unfurled only slowly. Rather than being drawn onwards, one is encouraged to enjoy the richness of the present moment. And the Franciade derives most of its effects from the very lyricism of its segments. The distinction between action and lyricism becomes superfluous: the action of this epic resides in its spectacular episodes, which explore emotions and situations in depth, which abandon the narrative line in order to produce clusters: of similes, of repeated words, of temporal and spatial levels, of implicit references to other works, whether classical or Ronsardian. The essential feature of Ronsard's narrative is its circularity: patterns are described around a single point in the plot, artefacts are grouped about the central line. Action and lyricism are fused: for Ronsard, evocation of activity has as its corollary the plumbing of picturesque possibilities, emotive equivalences, and rhetorical resources.

In many ways, what originally seem to be shortcomings in the Franciade prove to be virtues. One must, for example, concede that an all-embracing allegorical purpose - such as that which Dorat identified in the Odyssey - is not worked out in the Franciade, except insofar as the poem celebrates the origins of the French monarchy.¹ However, it may be fortunate that Ronsard is freed, by the fragmentary nature of his composition, from the burden of allegorization. For the intensity of the episodes in the Franciade

1. Allegorical concerns in fact occupy little space in the 'Au Lecteur' and the 'Preface svr la Franciade'; this absence is especially noticeable when the treatises are compared with the Abbregé (see Lm. XIV, p.4).

is increased by the fact that the reader's imagination is free to make of them virtually what it will.

In addition, it is clear that the links between epic and fragments indicate, like several of the devices studied in Chapter 5, Ronsard's reluctance to free himself from the sources with which he was so well acquainted. Common sources, common materials, bind the Franciade to the fragments from which it was originally intended to be totally different. The Franciade does not carve out a new area for itself. It does, as already indicated, achieve a certain kind of cohesion from this very return to themes Ronsard had already exploited. This is, admittedly, not the same as total coherence: the Franciade does not stand on its own as a rounded whole; but it is, precisely, a fragment. To view it as such, to consider it in its relationship with other episodic works, is to give it its most appropriate valuation.

Ronsard wrote only one sixth of his projected epic; but incompleteness is not to be equated with inefficacy. The examples of voluntary fragmentation studied in Chapters 1 to 4 educate the reader aesthetically: they enable him to adopt more appropriate criteria for reading the Franciade, since they indicate plainly that sixteenth-century literary standards allow for a lack of wholeness. Just as modern critics of French Renaissance tragedy have tried to break away from a negative assessment of their subject in the light of seventeenth-century Racinian drama, with its concept of classical integrality, so a reader approaching the Franciade via contemporary poetic miniatures realizes that it is in this context that the epic is best viewed. It must be judged

in terms of the aesthetics of its own day, as a fragment, and will then be seen as a pinnacle rising above the various heroic miniatures of the period.

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The second section adopts the somewhat unusual procedure of specifying, not only the collective works consulted, but also individual poems which are not necessarily mentioned in the text, but which I felt might be assigned to the category of the epic miniature. It was considered desirable to be precise in the naming and location of poems in order to show to which compositions remarks made in the text might be applied. After all, a list of collective works alone might easily have become a mere repetition of the information already provided by a bibliographer such as Cioranescu. For reasons of clarity, the main body of the thesis concentrates largely on the Argonautic cycle; the second section of the bibliography seeks to provide a wider perspective against which the conclusions reached may be viewed. It includes both epic fragments and those more specifically mythological in nature, and therefore gives exact references for the various poems mentioned in Chapter 2. Wherever possible, catalogue numbers are provided. Copies of the early editions listed will be found in one or more of the following libraries:

the library of the Taylorian Institute, Oxford, designated as T; the Bodleian, Oxford, abbreviated to Bod; the British Library, London (BL); the Bibliothèque Nationale (BN), Arsenal and Mazarine Libraries in Paris. If several editions of a book exist, the one used is the first entered in the bibliography.

Section three lists secondary sources in the normal way. It includes a very small number of works which I consulted, but found no occasion to mention in my text or footnotes.

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 VI, XIII et XIIII. Le tout par François Habert, Paris,
 D. Janot, 1549. BN: Rés. p. Yc. 1679

--- Habert's versified rendering of the complete Metamorphoses,
 produced in 1556, was published in 1557, as Les Quinze
 Liures de la Metamorphose d'Ovide interpretez en Rime
 Françoise, selon la Phrase latine. Par François Habert
 d'yssouldun en Berry, et par luy presentez au Roy Henry II,
 Paris, Jacques Keruer, 1557. The BN has an undated copy
 printed in Rouen, by G. L'Oyselet: Rés. p. Yc. 1679. See
 Leykauff, p.120

--- Trois premiers livres de la Métamorphose d'Ovide, traduitz
 en vers françois, le premier et second par Cl. Marot, le
 tiers par B. Aneau, mythologisez par allégories ... recueillies
 des bons auteurs grecs et latins ... avec une préparation de
 voie à la lecture et intelligence des poètes fabuleux, Lyon,
 M. Bonhomme, 1556. BN: Rés. p. Yc. 1269. For Aneau's trans-
 lation, see pp.185-266. Also Lyon, G. Roville, 1556. BN:
 Rés. p. Yc. 162

OVID - 'THOMAS WALLEYS' (PIERRE BERSUIRE), Cy commence Ovide, ...
 son livre intitulé Métamorphose, contenant XV livres
 particuliers moralisié par maistre Thomas Walleys, ...
 translaté et compilé par Colard Mansion, Bruges, C. Mansion,
 1484. BN: Rés. g. Yc. 1028; Rés. g. Yc. 1002. Other editions:
 Paris, A. Vérard, 1493 (BN: Rés. g. Yc. 425); Paris, P. Le
 Noir, 1531 (BN: Rés. g. Yc. 427). The Parisian editions bore
 the title La Bible des poètes.

--- Metamorphosis ovidiana moraliter a magistro Thoma Walleys,
 ... explanata, Paris, Josse Bade Ascensius, 1509. BN:
 Rés. m. Yc. 206 (2). Other editions include: Paris, Ascensius
 and Jean Petit, 1511 (BN: Rés. m. Yc. 358; and Rés. p. Yc.
 1415); Lyon, 1513; Paris, F. Regnault, 1515 (BN: Rés. p. Yc.
 707); Paris, Laisné, 1521 (BN: Rés. p. Yc. 708)

OVID - JEAN DE VAUZELLES, PRIEUR DE MONTROTIER, La Metamorphose d'Ovide figvrée, Lyon, Jean de Tournes, 1557. BN: Rés. p. Yc. 1270; and Rés. p. Yc. 1708. This translation into huitains of the first sixty-four Metamorphoses has also been attributed to B. Aneau and C. Fontaine. It contains 178 engravings.

OVIDE MORALISE, Ovide moralisé: Poème du commencement du quatorzième siècle, ed. by C. de Boer, Verhandelinger der Koninkliyk Akademie der Wetenschappen te Amsterdam, Afdeling Letterkunde (Nieuwe Reeks), Deel 15, Amsterdam, 1915

PALAEPHATUS, Palaephati scriptoris Graeci Opusculum De non Credendis Fabulosis narrationibus. Interprete Philippo Phasianiono Bononiensi (Paris, 1578). Bod: Douce. H. 171

THEOCRITUS - MODERN TRANSLATIONS, Theocritus, Bion and Moschus, translated by A. Lang, Golden Treasury Series, London, Macmillan; New York, Macmillan, 1906

--- The Greek Bucolic Poets, translated by J.M. Edmonds, Loeb Classical Library, London, William Heinemann; New York, Macmillan, 1912

--- Theocritus, edited with a translation and commentary by A.S.F. Gow, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1952. Vol. II: Commentary, Appendix, Indexes, and Plates

VALERIUS FLACCUS, C. Valerii Flacci Setini Balbi Argonauticon (ed. by Gervasius Amoenus), Paris, Josse Badius Ascensius and Jean Petit, 1512. BL: C. 107. d. 27; and 1001. b. 19 (1)

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(b) A list of authors and fragments considered

ALAMANNI, LUIGI, Opere toscane di Luigi Alamanni, al christianissimo re Francesco primo, Venice, apud haeredes Lucae Antonii, 1542. T: Vet. Ital. I. A. 44. Contains:

--- Poliphemo, Egloga sesta, I, pp.136-9

--- Adone. Daphni e Menalca, Egloga decima, I, pp.155-60

--- Favola di Narcisso, I, pp.288-314

--- Favola di Athlante di Lviqi Alamanni. Al Christianissimo Re Francesco Primo, I, pp.341-53

- Favola di Phetonte di Luigi Alamanni. Al Christianissimo rè Francesco Primo, II, pp.108-36
- Avarchide, Florence, F. Giunti, 1570. BN: Yd. 417. An epic poem. See Hauvette, pp.357-400
- AMOMO, L', Rime toscane d'Amomo, per madama Charlotta d'Hisca, Paris, S. de Colines, 1535. Bod: St Amand. 8^o. 252 (no pagination). Contains:
- Epitaphio di Adone di Theocrito
- Favola di Pyramo e Thysbe a Madonna Olympia, last poem in volume
- ARIOSTO, LODOVICO - FRENCH TRANSLATIONS, Roland furieux, composé ... par messire Loys Arioste, ... et maintenant traduit en prose françoise (by Jean Martin, published by Jean des Gouttes). First published in 1543 (Lyon). The BL has an edition published in Paris, E. Groulleau, 1555: 1073. f. 9. The edition in the BN dates from 1554 (Lyon, J. Thellusson): Rés. Yd. 41
- Le premier volume de Roland furieux ... par Loys Arioste, ... maintenant mys en rime françoise par Jan Fornier, ... avec les arguments au commencement de chacun chant ... et avec les allégories des chants à la fin d'un chacun (Cantos IV to XV), Paris, M. de Vascosan, 1555. BL: 83. f. 14. BN: Yd. 406. Also Antwerp, G. Spelman, 1555. BN: Yd. 2292
- BAÏF, JEAN-ANTOINE DE, Medanis, poema elegiacum J. Ant. Baifii (Greek and Latin), Paris, Jean Bienné, 1577. Bibliothèque Mazarine, 10 489-3, recueil
- Evvres en rime de Jan Antoine de Baïf, ed. by Ch. Marty-Laveaux, Collection de la Pléiade Française, Paris, Lemerre, 1881-90, 5 vols, abbreviated in this study to M-L.. Contains:
- Le Laurier (1553?), Premier Livre des Poemes, II, pp.43-55
- L'Hippocrene, Second Livre des Poemes, II, pp.61-71
- Les Muses (composed between 1556 and 1560), Second Livre des Poemes, II, pp.71-91
- Amymone, à Pierre de Ronsard (1556?), Tiers Livre des Poemes, II, pp.128-47
- Le Meurier, ov La Fable de Pyrame et Thisbe (1552), Quatrième Livre des Poemes, II, pp.165-82
- Salmaci, Quatrième Livre des Poemes, II, pp.190-5

- La Geneure, par Saingelais et Baif. A Monsieur de Royssi Chancelier du Roy de Nauarre, Cinquième Livre des Poemes, II, pp.231-60
 - Fleurdepine. A Monsievr de Maintenon, Cheualier de l'ordre dv Roy, Grand Marchal des Logis, Cinquième Livre des Poemes, II, pp.261-72
 - Hymne de Venus, Sixième Livre des Poemes, II, pp.279-90
 - L'Amour de Medee, Sixième Livre des Poemes, II, pp.298-304
 - Atalante, Sixième Livre des Poemes, II, pp.310-16
 - Amour de Vertun et Pomone, Huitième Livre des Poemes, II, pp.387-91
 - Le Ravissement d'Europe (1552), Neuvième Livre des Poemes, II, pp.421-31
 - Le Cyclope ov Polypheme amovrevx, Eclogve VIII, III, pp.45-51
 - Pan, Eclogve IX, III, pp.51-6
 - Poems, ed. by M. Quainton, Oxford, Blackwell, 1970
 - Le Premier Livre des poèmes, ed. by G. Demerson, Grenoble, Presses Universitaires de Grenoble, 1975
- BAÏF, LAZARE DE, La Tragédie d'Euripide nommée Hecuba, traduite de grec en rythme françoise ..., Paris, R. Estienne, 1550.
 BN: Rés. X. 2535. Contains:
- La Fable de Caunus et Biblis suyvant Ovide en sa Métamorphose, pp.77-90
- BELLEAU, REMY, Deuvres poétiques de Remy Belleau, ed. by Ch. Marty-Laveaux, 2 vols, Geneva, Slatkine Reprints, 1965, abbreviated in the present study to M-L.. Contains:
- L'Escargot (1555), I, pp.60-4. Recalls La Grenouille of Ronsard
 - Premiere Journee de la Bergerie, Eglogue, 'Toinet, Bellin, Perot'. This contains a description by Bellin of a quiver depicting the dead Adonis surrounded by 'mille et mille Amoureux', I, pp.294-6, and an evocation by Toinet of an elaborate cup, pp.296-7; these were published, with the first part of the eclogue, as the Chant Pastoral sur la mort de Ioachim dv Bellay Angevin, Paris, R. Estienne, 1560.

- 'Complainte de Prométhée. Av Seignevr Pierre de Ronsard', Seconde Iournee de la Bergerie, II, pp.12-18
- 'L'Amour ambitieux d'Ixion', Seconde Iournee de la Bergerie, II, pp.19-26
- Les Amours et nouveaux eschanges des pierres precieuses, ed. by M.F. Verdier, Textes littéraires français, Geneva, Droz, 1973, abbreviated in this study to V.. Contains:
 - Prométhée premier inventeur des Anneaux et de l'enchasseuse des Pierres, pp.31-5
 - L'Améthyste ou les Amours de Bacchus et d'Améthyste, pp.36-54
 - Les Amours de Hyacinthe et de Chrysolithe, pp.95-110
 - Les Amours d'Iris et d'Opalle, pp.122-7
 - L'Onyce, pp.140-5
 - L'Agathe. A Madamoyselle de Surgères, pp.174-83
 - La Pierre aqueuse ..., pp.239-43 (from the posthumous edition of 1578)
- BELLEFOREST, FRANÇOIS DE, La Chasse d'amour, avec les fables de Narcisse, et Cerbere. Ausquelles sont aioustés diuers sonetz, Paris, Estienne Groulleau, 1561. Arsenal: 8^o B 12022. Contains:
 - La Fable de Narcisse, et Eolia, fol. 29 verso - 54 verso
 - Allusion, svr la fable de Cerbere Chien Portier d'Enfer oste de son regne par Hercule, fol. 55 recto - 61 verso
- BELLIARD, GUILLAUME, Le Premier Livre des poemes de Guillaume Belliard, secretaire de la Roynne de Navarre, Paris, Claude Gautier, 1578. BL: C. 39. g. 23. Contains:
 - Les Delitieuses Amours de Marc Antoine, et de Cleopatre, fol. 1 recto - 15 recto
 - Les Regretz de Marc Antoine, et de Cleopatre, fol. 15 recto - 29 verso
 - Les Deplorables Amours de Pirame et Tybé, prise d'Ovide (sic), fol. 70 recto - 70 verso
 - Les Tragiques Amours de Pirame et Tysbé, prises d'Ovide, fol. 71 recto - 82 verso
 - La Triste Lamentation d'Olympe, prise du dixiesme chant de l'Arioste, fol. 90 recto - 100 verso

- La Delivrance d'Olympe, prise de l'onziesme chant de l'Arioste, fol. 101 recto - 112 recto
- La Jalousie de Bradamante, tirée du trente-deuxiesme chant de l'Arioste, fol. 112 recto - 121 verso
- Les Combatz de Bradamante, pris du trente-sixiesme chant de l'Arioste, fol. 122 recto - 133 verso

BEREAU, JACQUES, Les Eglogues et aultres oeuvres poétiques, ed. by M. Gautier, Textes littéraires français, Paris and Geneva, Droz, 1976. Contains:

- Eglogue IV, Pan. A Monseigneur de Belle-ville, Charles de Belle-ville, pp.33-40. This piece concerns Pan and Syrinx.
- Le Ravissement d'Hyllas, pp.151-60
- L'Histoire d'Hippomene et d'Atalante, pp.164-9
These pieces were first published in Poitiers, Bertrand Noscereau, 1565

BOCCACCIO, GIOVANNI, Genealogia deorum gentilium, Venice, Spira, 1472. BN: Rés. J. 831. A French version, De la généalogie des Dieux, was published in Paris, Le Noir et Jehan Petit, 1531. BN: Rés. J. 850

BOCHETEL, GUILLAUME, La Fable de Cavnus et Biblis, traduite du ix. liure de la Metamorphose d'Ouide. In Le Livre de plusieurs pieces ... (q.v.), fol. 114 recto - 122 verso

BOISSARD, JEAN-JACQUES, or BOISSARDUS, JANUS / JOANNES JACOBUS VESUNTINUS, De Pandora. In Delitiae c. poetarvm gallorvm ... (q.v.), pp.549-52. First published in Metz, A. Faber, 1589.

BOTON, PIERRE, Panegyrique sur l'avant-couronnement du Roy de Pologne, Paris, D. Du Pré, 1573. BN: Rés. Ye. 934

BOURDEL, JEAN, Description poétique de l'histoire du beau Narcissus, Lyon, Arnoullet, 1550. BN: Rés. Ye. 1614. Also attributed to François Habert and Jean Rus.

BOYSSIÈRES, JEAN DE, Les Secondes Oeuvres poetiques de I. de Boyssières de Mont-Ferrand en Auvergne. Dédiées aux princes de l'illustre sang de France, Paris, Jean Poupy, 1568.

BN: Rés. Ye. 512; and Rés. Ye. 935. Contains:

- La Complainte de la terre, brûlée par Phaeton, fils de Phoebus: imitation d'Ovide, fol. 14 recto - 17 recto

- Imitation du premier chant d'Arioste, fol. 45 recto - 63 verso
- Les Troisiemes Oeuvres de Iean de Boyssières de la ville de Montferrand en Auvergne, Lyon, Loys Cloquemin, 1579. BN: Rés. Ye. 513-17. Contains:
 - La Boyssière, pp.2-24. Boyssières here expresses his aim of writing an epic in praise of his nation. But he completed only his 'Première Cource', which he broke off at a crucial moment; and he engaged in lamentation rather than the evocation of striking events, which he professed to prefer.
 - Le Second Chant des chants de Loys Arioste. Bataille de Regnavld, et de Sacripant, ensemble la chevre de Bradamant dans un puis creux, par la trahison de Pinabel, pp.27-52
- BRICE, GERMAIN, D'AUXERRE, Germani Brixii Herueus siue Chordigeræ nauis conflagratio, Paris, Josse Bade Ascensius, 1513. BN: Rés. m. Yc. 68; and Rés. m. Yc. 671. Also in Delitiae c. poetarvm gallorvm (q.v.), I, pp.753-63.
- CONTI, NATALE, or NOËL CONTI, or NATALIS COMES, Mythologiae siue explicationis fabularvm libri decem, Venice, Aldus, 1551, and nineteen editions until 1627.
- COTEL, ANTOINE DE, Le Premier Livre des mignardes et gaies poesies, Paris, Robinot, 1578. BN: Rés. Ye. 596-7. Contains:
 - La Cigale, fol. 21 verso - 26 recto
 - Bergerie 2. Thenot à M., fol. 27 recto - 32 verso.
An adaptation of the Polyphemus fable.
- DEFFRANS, CHRISTOFLE, Les Histoires des poètes comprises au grand Olympe, en ensuyvant la Métamorphose d'Ovide, et autres aditions et histoires poétiques propres pour la poésie, Niort, Thomas Portau, 1595. BN: Yc. 738
- DELBENE, ALPHONSE, ABBE D'HAUTECOMBE, Le Premier Livre de l'Amédéide à ... Charles Emmanuel, Duc de Savoye, par A.D.A.D.H., Chambéry, Claude Pomar, 1586. Arsenal: 8^o B.L. 15432. This work resembles Ronsard's Franciade. See Maskell, pp.84-6, 198-203, 215-17.
- DELITIAE, Delitiae c. poetarvm gallorvm, hvivs svperiorisque

aeui illustrivm, ed. by J. Gruter, 3 vols, Frankfurt, in officina Ionaë Rosae, 1609. The Bodleian has volumes I and II: 8^o Z. 172 and 173. Jur.. (Pages 721 to 738 are missing from Vol. II.) The third volume may be found in the Bibliothèque Nationale (along with the first two): Yc. 8837-42; and Rés. p. Yc. 1134-9

DES MASURES, LOUIS, Oeuvres poétiques de Louïs des Masures Tournisien, Lyon, Ian de Tournes and Guillaume Gazeau, 1557. BN: Rés. Ye. 366-74. Contains:

--- Le Iev des Eschecz, translaté en François du Latin de Hierome Vida, pp.1-43

--- Biblis, amovrevse de son frere Cavnvs, prins dv neuvieme liure des Metamorphoses d'Ouide, pp.67-80

DESPORTES, PHILIPPE, Oeuvres de Philippe Desportes, ed. by A. Michiels, Paris, Adolphe Delahays, 1858. Contains:

--- La Mort de Rodomont et sa descente aux enfers, pp.324-52

DORAT, JEAN, Poëmatia, Paris, Guillaume Linocier, 1586. Bod: Crynes 609; BN: Rés. p. Yc. 1025. Contains:

--- De Eurymedonte, et Callirhoe, Poëmatum Liber II, pp.112-19. Also in Delitiae ... (q.v.), I, pp.301-6

--- Villanis, Poëmatum Liber III, pp.173-84

--- Hymns in Bacchvm, a Io. Avrato expressvs ex Gallico Ronsardi. Ad amplissimum Cardinalem ODETVM Castilio-naevm, pp.375-84

DU BELLAY, JOACHIM, La Deffence et Illustration de la langue francoyse, ed. by H. Chamard, Paris, Albert Fontemoing, 1904

--- Oeuvres poétiques, ed. by H. Chamard, Paris, Fontemoing, 1904. Contains:

--- La Mvsagnoeomachie, IV, pp.3-26. First published Paris, Gilles Corrozet and Arnoul l'Angelier, 1550.

--- Divers Jeux rustiques, XVII, ed. by V.L. Saulnier, Geneva, Droz, 1965. Contains:

--- Le Combat d'Hercule et d'Achelois, d'Ovide, pp.27-35. First published Paris, Frédéric Morel, 1558.

DU GUILLET, PERNETTE, Rymes, ed. by V.E. Graham, Geneva, Droz, 1968. Contains:

--- Conde claros de Adonis (Chanson X), pp.84-90. First

published Lyon, Antoine du Moulin, 1545; reprinted 1547, 1548, 1554.

DU MOULIN, ANTOINE (EDITOR), Deploration de Venuſ svr la mort dv bel Adonis, Avec plusieurs Chansons nouuelles, Lyon, Jean de Tournes, 1548. Arsenal: 80 B 11228. Contains:

- Deploration ..., by Saint-Gelais, pp.3-10. First published by Du Moulin in 1545.
- an 'Extrait d'Amadis', pp.76-8
- an 'Extrait dv Livre intitvle le chant des Seraines' (by E. Forcadel): Chant triste, de Medee, abandonnee de son aymé Iason, pp.107-12

DU-PEYRAT, GUILLAUME, Les Essais poetiques de Guillaume Du-Peyrat, Gentilhomme Lyonnois, Tours, Lamet Mettayer, 1593. BL: 11475 b. 16. Contains:

- Les Regrets de Bradamante et de Roger, tirez de l'Arioste, fol. 103 recto - 107 recto

DUPRE, JEAN, Le Palais des nobles dames, auquel a treze parcelles ou chambres principales, en chacune desquelles sont declarées plusieurs histoires tant grecques, hébraïques, latines que françoises. Ensemble fictions et couleurs poeticques concernans les vertus et louanges des dames. Nouvellement composé en rithme françoise par noble Jean du Pré, seigneur des Bartes et des Janyhes en Quercy, s.l.n.d. (1534). Bod: Douce D. 68

FABRI, PIERRE, Le Grand et vrai art de Pleine Rhétorique de Pierre Fabri, ed. by A. Héron, 3 vols, Société des Bibliophiles normands, Rouen, A. Lestringant, 1889-90

FLAMINIO, MARCO ANTONIO, Carmina qvinque illvstrivm poetarvm ... Additis nonnullis M. Antonii Flaminii libellis nunquam antea impressis, Florence, apud Laurentium Torrentinum, 1552.

BN: Yc. 13262. Contains:

- 'De laudibus lauri', from Carminum liber I, pp.132-4
- 'De Hercvle et Hyla', Carminum liber III, pp.244-7

FORCADEL, ETIENNE, Le Chant des Seraines, avec plusieurs compositions nouvelles, Paris, Gilles Corrozet, 1548. BN: Rés. Ye. 4021. Contains:

- Chant triste, de Medée, abandonnée de son aymé Iason, fol. 12 recto - 14 verso

- Le Baiser de la Lune et du Pasteur Endymion, sur la montaigne de Latmus en Carie, fol. 44 verso - 47 recto
- Stephani Forcatvli Ivreconsvlti Epigrammata. Ad Carolvm Lotharingum Cardinalem, Lyon, Jean de Tournes and Guillaume Gazeau, 1554. BN: Yc. 7519. Contains:
 - 'De Hercule et Antaeo', pp.15-16
 - 'De Arione et Delphino', p.16
 - 'De Orpheo, quòd oratione dulci multa perficiantur', p.32
 - 'De duplici morte Eurydices. quòd saepius peccantibus vix Dij ignoscant', pp.47-8
 - 'Transformatio Astyanactis, qui fuit Hectoris filius, in lilium', p.60
 - 'Aduersus Deum non pugnandum', p.106
 - 'De Daphnes exitu ac fructu', p.126
 - 'Ad Atlantem', pp.133-4
 - 'Alphentis pueri Casus, et transformatio in arborem', p.140
 - 'De Gorgonio', p.170
 - 'Transformatio Melissae Nymphae in Apem', pp.174-6
 - 'De Orpheo, et lyra eius coelo donata', p.178
- Deuvres poétiques: Opuscules, chants divers, encomies et élégies, ed. by F. Joukovsky, Textes littéraires français, 237, Geneva, Droz, 1977. Follows Forcadet's last edition, 1579.
- GARNIER, CLAUDE, Livre de la Franciade, à la suite de celle de Ronsard, s.l., 1604. T: Micr. 535 (1). BN: Rés. Ye. 7561
- GARNIER, ROBERT, Two Tragedies: 'Hippolyte' and 'Marc Antoine', ed. by C.M. Hill and M.G. Morrison, London, Athlone, 1975
- GARNIER, SEBASTIEN, La Henriade, et la Loyssée, de Sebastien Garnier. Seconde édition; sur la Copie imprimée à Blois, chez la Veuve Gomet, en 1594 et 1593. Paris, J-B-G. Musier fils, 1770. BN: Ye. 7460; and Z. Beuchot. 1266
- GIRALDI CINZIO, GIOVANNI BATTISTA, Dell' Hercole di M. Giovan Battista Giraldi Cinthio nobile Ferrarese, segretario dell' illvstrissimo ed eccellentissimo signore il signore Hercole secondo da Este, duca quarto di Ferrera. Canti ventisei, Modena, Gadaldini, 1557. BL: 3 copies: 638. h. 7; 83 e. 1; G. 10810

GOHORY, JACQUES, Hystoria Iasonis Thessaliae Principis de Colchica velleris aurei expeditione: cum figuris aere excusis, earumque expositione, versibus Priscorum Poëtarum. Ab Iacobo Gohorio Parisiensi, Paris, 1563. BN: Rés. J. 863. No publisher appears on the title-page. In prose.

GRENIER, JACQUES, Hymnus Calaidis et Zethae, e gallico Petri Ronsardi Latine expressus à Iacobo Grenerio Parisiensi. Versibus Gallicis è regione Latinorum appositis. Adiecta sunt aliquot eiusdem GRENERII praeludia Poëtica, Paris, Pierre l'Huillier, 1586. BN: Ye. 1051 bis; and Rés. m. Yc. 928 (3). Contains:

--- Hymnus Calaidis et Zethae, pp.5-55

--- Hercules Parvvs e Graeco Theocriti, pp.103-8

GREVIN, JACQUES, L'Olimpe de Iaqves Grevin ... Ensemble les avtres evvres Poëtiques dudict Avteur, Paris, Robert Estienne, 1560. Bod: Douce G. 397. Contains:

--- A la Fontaine dv Pied-dv-mont. Ode X, pp.180-6. This poem, in the style of the Villanis pieces, tells how a spring is born from a lover's tears.

GUILLOT, JACQUES, La Suite de la Franciade de Pierre de Ronsard ... livre sixiesme, par Messire Jacques Guillot P. Chanoine en l'eglise de Bourges ..., Bourges, Maurice Levez, 1615. Arsenal: 8^o B.L. 8813 Rés.. See Maskell, pp.75-6.

HABERT, FRANÇOIS, see also JEAN BOURDEL

--- La Jeunesse du Banny de lyesse, escollier, estudiant à Tholose ..., Paris, Denys Janot, 1541. Bod: Douce B. 535. Contains:

--- Les Visions fantastiques dv Banni de Liesse, which include an adaptation of the Venus and Adonis fable, fol. 74 recto - 75 verso

--- La Traduction des deux Fables d'Ouide en sa Metamorphose: la premiere de Pirus et Thisbe: la seconde du beau Narcissus, par le Banny de lyesse, natif D'yssouldun en Berry, escollier, estudiant a Tholose: lesdictes Fables amplifiées de son inuention en rime Francoyse. - Pirus and Thisbe: fol. 91 verso - 104 verso; Narcissus, fol. 105 recto - 111 verso. With engravings.

HARLAY, CHRISTOPHE DE, COMTE DE BEAUMONT, 'Héro et Léandre, poème de Musée, traduit en (vers) français par Christophe de Harlay, comte de Beaumont', ed. by E. Miller, Annuaire de l'Association pour l'Encouragement des Etudes grecques en France, 14 (1880), pp.69-79

HESTEAU, CLOVIS, Les Oeuvres poetiques de Clovis Hestean sieur de Nvysement, Paris, Abel l'Angelier, 1578. BL: 85. f. 20 (1).

Contains:

- La Metamorphoze du Figuier, dediee à Madame de Savve, fol. 73 recto - 80 recto
- Reproches de Medée à Iazon, fol. 80 verso - 88 recto

JAMYN, AMADIS, Oeuvres poétiques d'Amadis Jamyn, Avec sa vie par Guillaume Colletet d'après le manuscrit incendié au Louvre, ed. by C. Brunet, Paris, Léon Willem, 1878. Contains:

- Metamorphoze de la nymphee dicte Nenuphar, II, pp.293-300. From the second volume of Jamyn's poems, 1584. See Jung, pp.156-7

JAQUEMOT, JEAN, 'De Culice Globulo succino siue Electro incluso'. Ad I. Baptistam Rothanum. In Delitiae c. poetarvm gallorvm (q.v.), III, pp.370-1

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--- 'De Nisa et Favno', Liber I, fol. 16 recto - 16 verso (wrongly numbered in the edition of the Bibliothèque Nationale as folio 15)

--- 'Dianae'. In Delitiae c. poetarvm gallorvm (q.v.), I, pp.873-4. Concerns Actaeon's metamorphosis.

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--- Du Guillet's Conde claros de Adonis, fol. 66 recto - 69 verso

--- Colin's Le Proces d'Aiax, et d'Vlixes, fol. 74 recto - 99 recto

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--- 'A Anthoine Fvmée, Grand rapporteur de France'. Ode, I, pp.122-7. The beginning of this poem features Perseus and the Gorgon, thus reminding one of Baïf's L'Hippocrene.

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--- 'De morte Orphei', Epigrammaton II, xlv, p.52

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et Raymond Colomiez, 1608. BN: Rés. Ye. 2072-2078. Contains:
--- Le Tableau de Narcisse, pris de Philostrate. A
Messire Gvillaume dv Vair Cheualier et Prince du
Senat de Prouence, pp.1-16

ORDRE, L', L'Ordre tenu et gardé à l'entrée de tres hault et tres
puissant prince Charles empereur toujours auguste, en la ville
de Paris ... La description des arcz triumpans, magnificences;
theatres et misteres faictz en icelle ville pour la reception
dudit seigneur, Paris, Gilles Corrozet and Jehan du Pré, 1539/40
--- C'est l'ordre qui a esté tenu à la nouvelle et joyeuse entrée,
que treshault, tresexcellent, et trespuissant Prince, le Roy

treschrestien Henry deuzieme de ce nom, a faicte en sa
bonne ville de Paris, capitale de son Royaume, le sezieme
jour de Juin M.D.XLIX, Paris, Jacques Roffet, 1549

- Bref et sommaire recueil de ce qui a esté faict, et de
l'ordre tenue à la joyeuse et triumpante Entrée de tres-
puissant, tres-magnanime et tres-chrestien Prince Charles
IX de ce nom Roy de France, en sa bonne ville et cité de
Paris, capitale de son Royaume, le Mardy sixiesme jour de
Mars avec le Couronnement de tres-haute, tres-illustre et
tres-excellente Princesse Madame Elizabet d'Austriche son
espouse, le Dimanche vingtcinquiesme. et Entrée de ladict
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- 'Cyclops', pp.122-5

- 'Favvus', pp.128-30
- 'Lavrati', pp.133-5
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- Polyphemvs ad Galateam. Versus lyrici, I, fol. 99 recto - 100 verso
- Polyphemvs à Galatea spretvs conqueritvr in litore. Versus lyrici, I, fol. 101 verso - 103 recto
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- Le Narssis, pris d'Ovide, à François Charbonnier, Angevin, Le Bocage, 1554, VI, pp.73-83
- La Grenouille à Remy Belleau du Perche, Le Bocage, VI, pp.83-9
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