Charles Fontaine: a Bibliographical Contribution and a Study of His Concept of Poetry.

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CHARLES FONTAINE:
A BIBLIOGRAPHICAL CONTRIBUTION AND
A STUDY OF HIS CONCEPT OF POETRY

A DISSERTATION

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Louisiana State University and
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ABSTRACT

Although Charles Fontaine has been the subject of one book-length study and several articles since the 1880's, there still remains ample matter for scholarly inquiry into the life, works, and critical evaluation of this sixteenth-century poet.

As regards Fontaine's life, it appears that a reasonably strong case may be made for the theory that he may have studied law for a while before deciding to devote his full energies to writing poetry. Another biographical fact that should be considered in any evaluation of Fontaine's poetry is the evidence unearthed in 1925 by Grace Frank that as a young man, Fontaine may have been influenced considerably by the early Reformation impulse.

In the matter of bibliography, it is almost certain that a supposedly lost translation composed by Fontaine is really a version of Ovid's Remedia Amoris which occupies a place in the collection Les Ruisseaux de Fontaine.

When the primary criteria long proposed as vindicators of Fontaine's right to be placed within the ranks of the Pléiade's precursors are submitted to skeptical examination, they are seen to be tenuous at best, and it becomes apparent that a critical reassessment of Fontaine on other bases is in order.
One of the clearest intellectual features of Fontaine's poetry is a strain of chorismatic thought. The recognition of chorismatic patterns in Fontaine's poetry should allow subsequent evaluators of his work to reconcile his apparently contradictory pronouncements on the essential nature of poetry within a more coherent formula than was previously possible.

The greatest single influence from Antiquity on Fontaine's work was Ovid, and there appear to be rather profound reasons for Fontaine's choice of Ovid as a literary model. Both men seem to have shared a tendency to regard the universe as a composite of separate, mutually legitimate, yet mutually exclusive realms of reality. This tendency affected their respective styles, causing each to prefer a "low" style of poetic diction in all but his most "serious" endeavours.

For its part, the Pléiade's program was aimed at raising all poetic diction to a level commensurate with the almost divine act of poetic creation. Therefore, when Charles Fontaine's work is evaluated on the bases of its most prominent intellectual characteristic and the aesthetic implied by this characteristic, Fontaine's claim to the title of precursor of the Pléiade loses much of its validity.
CHAPTER I

In the introduction to a popular anthology of sixteenth-century French poetry, the editor, in the process of making somewhat perfunctory note of the names and accomplishments of the lesser luminaries of this period who were attacked by Joachim du Bellay in La Deffence et Illustration de la Langue Françoysë, credits Charles Fontaine with the authorship of La Jeunesse de Fontaine.¹ That Charles Fontaine never wrote a work bearing this exact title is a matter of only peripheral importance in our present context, and in fairness to our editor, we must add that in the portion of his anthology dealing specifically with Fontaine there is no further mention of the non-existent publication. Rather, this inconsequential error has been cited for the sole purpose of demonstrating as concretely as possible the low estate into which studies on Charles Fontaine have declined on both sides of the Atlantic. Not only is the editor's slip forgivable, it is completely understandable given the paucity of recent scholarly work related directly to this poet of sixteenth-century France. For instance, a thorough bibliographical investigation reveals that the latest truly original article dealing specifically with

Charles Fontaine was published by Grace Frank in 1925. In 1967, Christine Scollen devoted the fifth chapter of her study on the origin of the elegy in France to a discussion of Fontaine's elegiac production. With the notable exception of these two valuable contributions to Fontaine studies, most recent critical references to Charles Fontaine have been confined to passing allusions in texts devoted primarily to the critical evaluation of other, better known poets of the period.

The relative neglect of Charles Fontaine on the part of modern scholars is a bit curious inasmuch as the score of years spanning the last decade of the nineteenth and first years of the twentieth centuries witnessed a revival of interest in his career to the extent that scholars of the stature of Henri Chamard, Emile Roy, and Louis Clément saw fit to devote articles or portions of larger works to him. This renewed interest culminated in 1909 in the only book-length study ever devoted exclusively to Charles Fontaine. Conceived in its original form by Richmond L. Hawkins as a doctoral dissertation at Harvard University, this study was published in condensed form in 1916 as the second volume of the Harvard Studies in Romance Languages.

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2 "The Early Work of Charles Fontaine," Modern Philology (Chicago, 1925), XXIII, 47-60.

Since the appearance of Hawkins' *Maistre Charles Fontaine Parisien*, only Grace Frank's article and the chapter devoted to his elegies by Christine Scollen have come forth to stand as lonely but highly significant post-scripts to the career of a man who in his own day was widely regarded as one of the foremost of Apollo's minions.

Almost certainly, one reason for the present lack of interest in the life and works of Charles Fontaine lies in the fact that Hawkins' work is a difficult one to amplify, for its author spared no pains in collecting and evaluating both old and new materials pertinent to his subject, with the result that very little of importance escaped his discerning eye. In the final analysis, *Maistre Charles*, more than half a century after its original publication, must still be considered a work of "convincing erudition."  

In comparison to his contemporaries Marot and Ronsard, Charles Fontaine is a poet of decidedly secondary merit. Perhaps the most accurate indication of the low esteem in which he has been held by successive generations of French readers is to be found in the fact that only one 

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4 Cambridge, Mass., 1916.

of his works, an ode on the antiquity and excellence of the city of Lyons, has been reprinted since the seventeenth century; and it should be noted that this republication was frankly prompted more by the historical interest of the ode's content than by any intrinsic literary merit.6

Translated into practical working terms, the lack of easily available editions of Fontaine's poetry means that the student who is interested in his career is quite often obliged to read his subject's works in the medium of original editions, most of which are by now quite rare and contained almost exclusively in the larger European libraries. The problem of inaccessibility is compounded for the American student who, by virtue of the distance separating him from his primary sources, must rely for the most part upon microfilms and photostatic copies of Fontaine's works, provided that the condition of the works in question is sufficiently stable to permit reproduction in the first place. Therefore, although Charles Fontaine's total literary production could be termed moderately large,7 its failure to survive any test but that of the

6Ode de l'antiquité et excellence de la ville de Lyon (Lyons, 1557). A limited annotated edition of this work was published at Lyons in 1889 under the editorial direction of William Poidebard and under the auspices of the Société des bibliophiles lyonnais.

7Hawkins, Maistre Charles, pp. 244-270. Hawkins considers Fontaine's principal works, in which category he includes both translations and original verse, to comprise twenty-one volumes.
most immediate and ephemeral acclaim which greeted its initial publication has served to eclipse the fame of a poet whose work was at one time considered to be a serious rival of Ronsard's.

Such an eclipse is unjust both to Fontaine and to the poets with whom he vied for immortality, for, although a mediocre poet at best, Charles Fontaine's popularity during his own lifetime constitutes an implicit judgment on the critical standards of his contemporaries; and it is likewise a significant commentary on the degree of the Pléiade's triumph when one considers the theoretical differences which separated them from one of their most immediate rivals of the school of Marot. Consequently, it will be only when the literary theories of such secondary figures as Charles Fontaine, as well as their biographies, are taken into account that a more or less just critical perspective may be attained through which to judge the relative merits of both the school of Marot and that of the Pléiade.

It was with the stated intention of delineating and clarifying this critical perspective that Richmond L. Hawkins undertook his study of Charles Fontaine. In the preface to this admirable work, Hawkins stated his purpose by saying that "only when all the secondary writers of the period ... shall have been treated can a definitive
history of the Pléiade be written." Maistre Charles Fontaine is therefore a study of triple focus in which the author seeks to situate his subject as accurately as possible biographically, bibliographically, and critically. As solid a work as it may be, it is nevertheless our opinion that the critical conclusions and, to a lesser extent, the biographical and bibliographical data stand in some need of revision.

Biographically, Hawkins depended primarily upon the Abbé Goujet's Bibliothèque française, which is the basic source of biographical information on Charles Fontaine from the year of his birth until 1547. On his own initiative, Hawkins was able to extend his subject's biography another seventeen years, until 1564, the date of Charles Fontaine's last known publication, a salutation to Charles IX composed for the ceremonies celebrating the king's entrée into Lyons. In 1925, Grace Frank discovered in the Vatican Library a formerly unknown manuscript of Fontaine's authorship entitled Epistres, Chantz Royaulx, Ballades, Rondeaux et Dixains faictz à l'honneur de Dieu which, as the poet's earliest known

8 Maistre Charles, p. v.
9 Paris, 1741-56.
10 Regina Latina, 1630.
work, supplements the somewhat sketchy knowledge of his early years. In addition to its role as an important biographical supplement, Professor Frank's discovery contains implications bearing upon the bibliographical and critical conclusions drawn by Hawkins.

It would probably not be amiss to retrace as briefly as possible the important events of Charles Fontaine's life as they have been reconstructed by the collective effort of Goujet, Hawkins, and Frank, and as they have been supplemented by our own conjectures.

From his own writings, we know that Charles Fontaine was born on July 13, 1514, in the shadow of Notre Dame Cathedral at Paris. In one of his works which played a major role in La Querelle des Amyes, Fontaine takes great pains to underline the fact that the poem's heroine, who is his spokesman in favor of chaste love, is the daughter of an honest and prosperous Parisian merchant who devoted his spare time to the study of literature. From this rather meager piece of apparently gratuitous information, Goujet hypothesized that Charles Fontaine, like his fictional creation, was a product of the rising middle class of the sixteenth century. As we shall see in a later chapter,

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11 *Les Ruisseaux de Fontaine* (Lyons, 1555), pp. 68, 81.

12 *La Contr'amye de Court* (Paris, 1541).

13 *Bibliotheque francoise*, XI, 115.
the significance of this seemingly superfluous information concerning the background of the poem's heroine lies in quite another area than that of a sort of literary game by means of which Fontaine sought to inform his audience of the details of his autobiography. It was in all probability the apparently gratuitous nature of the insistence upon the contr'amye's bourgeois background which tempted Goujet to make his conjecture concerning Fontaine's lineage. Yet once the purpose of this insistence will have been seen in the perspective of its original intent, we will be obliged to admit that Goujet's belief that Fontaine's father was a reasonably prosperous businessman is without any real basis in fact. With the caution which characterizes his work, P. A. Becker has noted the "Möglichkeit wohl vertrüge, dass Charles ein Sohn des im Oktober im Amt ersetzen Conseiller auditeur des comptes Jean de Fontaine wäre (Actes de François l'er t. II, 64)."¹⁴

For several reasons, Becker's conjecture on Charles Fontaine's ancestry possesses more grounds for credibility than Goujet's extremely tenuous hypothesis. In the first place, we know that Fontaine had an uncle, Jean Dugué, who was a member of the Parisian parliament and that at least one of the poet's cousins followed a legal vocation.¹⁵


¹⁵Les Ruisseaux, p. 190.
We know further that a good number of Charles' acquaintances, as their individual identities are gleaned from the list of those to whom he addressed his more casual rimailles, were often designated as lawyers, members of various parliaments, or other civil functionaries whose duties required a foundation in law.

On the other hand, there are several objections to accepting without reservation Becker's avowedly slender possibility. There is the obvious question of the particule which is used in the name of the possible father, but which Charles never seems to have employed. However, this problem need not concern us to the extent which we might at first suppose, since in the sixteenth century, many of the minor offices which permitted a man to use this distinctive feature in his name were often bought and sold on a fairly regular basis. A son was sometimes permitted to succeed his father in his office upon the death of the latter, provided that the son possessed the requisite qualifications for the exercise of the office. The position of auditeur des comptes presupposed a certain legal background which, as we know from Charles' own admission, he did not acquire.\(^1\)

In addition to the question of the particule, there is the problem of Fontaine's rather strange reluctance to

\(^{1}\) Les Ruisseaux, p. 236.
mention his father. It seems unlikely that a man like Charles Fontaine, for whom royal patronage was a constant but elusive goal, would have neglected to mention in the various poems he addressed to kings and princes the services rendered to the state by his father, had his father actually performed these services.

Finally, there seems to exist a reasonable doubt that Charles Fontaine's father survived until 1531, the date of Jean de Fontaine's replacement as auditeur des comptes. Becker assumes that both of Fontaine's parents died during the plague which ravaged France in the year of 1531-1532: "Fontaines Vater und Mutter wurden Opfer der Seuche." The plague of 1531-1532, it will be remembered, served in part to inspire Clément Marot's "Epître au roy pour avoir été dérobé." There is strong, if somewhat circumstantial evidence that Fontaine's mother and father died well before his seventeenth year.

On the basis of a poem addressed to his older sister, Catherine, and which, according to Grace Frank, is anterior to 1535, at which time Charles would have been about twenty-one years old, it does not appear unwarranted to assume that both his parents died when he was quite young:

Souventesfois je pense a la mort fiere
Qui longtemps a nous osta pere et mere,
Par quoy nous feit cinq enfans orphelins
Et puis des cinq les trois elle en a prins

L'ung apres l'aultre, et les a devourez,
Et vous et moy nous sommes demourez ...
Comment ce fait qu'il [Dieu] nous a reservez
Jusqu'à present, et de mort preservez?
Mesme attendu (c'est chose merveilleuse)
Que nous avons eu peste dangereuse?18

The date of the poem in question is of capital im­
portance. Professor Frank believes that it is anterior
to 153519 since, as Fontaine informs the reader in the
elegy he composed on the occasion of Catherine's death,
she had suffered from a lingering illness for five or six
years before dying. Catherine died in 1540; therefore,
since there is no mention in the earlier poem of her ill­
ness, Frank believes that it must have been composed
before 1535. It appears safe to say also, that from the
last two lines cited above, the poem was probably com­
posed only shortly after the plague of 1531-1532. The
impression that Fontaine succeeds in leaving in his
reader's mind is that the plague is a fairly recent event,
while his parents' deaths are events already belonging to
the distant past, having occurred "longtemps a."

The very early loss of both father and mother would
also explain in large part the deep attachment which
Fontaine felt for his older sister, who, until her own
early death, would have represented for the poet the only
living link with his once large family. Finally, as

18Epistres ... faitctz à l'honneur de Dieu,
fols. 119v-120r.

Hawkins has so astutely noted, Fontaine makes little direct mention in his poetry of his father and mother, and when he does refer to them, it is with a detachment decidedly uncharacteristic of a man who wrote so many poems to other members of his family. It would seem, then, that the most plausible explanation for this odd sentimental lacuna would be that Fontaine's parents died before he was old enough to remember them well. If this assumption is correct, it would follow that the parents must have died several years prior to 1531.

In sum, all attempts to establish a definite identity or even a more or less exact profession for Charles Fontaine's father lead eventually to a dead end. Pending the future discovery of more exact information, we can only say that from all indications, such as the positions of his uncle and cousin, his circle of friends, and the good education he received, Charles Fontaine was in all probability a member of a solid, respectable, but otherwise undistinguished family whose social position hovered somewhere around the dividing line—already beginning to be blurred in the early 1500's—between the prosperous bourgeoisie and the minor nobility of the robe.

We have seen from the excerpt from the poem addressed to his sister Catherine, which we cited above, that in its

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20Maistre Charles, p. 5.
happiest days, the Fontaine household consisted of seven members--five children and two parents. Of the five children, only Charles, Catherine, and a brother appear to have survived until adolescence. The brother, since he is mentioned only once in the earliest poems by Charles, seems to have died sometime between the beginning of the early volume's composition in 1531 and the date which Grace Frank assigns as the terminus ad quem for the actual composition of the poems contained in the manuscript of the Epistres ... faictz à l'honneur de Dieu, 1536. Whatever the exact date of the brother's death, it is known from the quotation above that he was dead at the time that piece written to Catherine was composed.

Although it is impossible to situate with any degree of accuracy Charles' exact chronological relationship to his four brothers and sisters, it does appear justified to say that he was probably among the younger members of his family. From the elegy written on Catherine's death, one of the two or three poems for which Fontaine is remembered today, we learn that she died while her brother was accompanying a military expedition to Italy--"Perdue l'ay suyvant un belliqueur."

Catherine would have died, then, around 1540, when Charles was about

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21 "The Early Work," p. 56.
22 Les Ruisseaux, p. 52.
twenty-five years old. Referring twice in the same poem to his sister's age at the time of her death, he says, "Encor n'avois ton cours demy parfaict."23 The cours referred to above is probably the biblically allotted seventy years. Therefore, Catherine was less than thirty-five years old at the time of her death, but how much less is uncertain. We know further from the elegy that she was married and that she had suffered from a lingering malady under the effects of which she had "plus languy que vescu/Cinq ou six ans."24 From the Epistres ... faitz à l'honneur de Dieu, we also know that Catherine had given birth to at least one child, a son who died in infancy, and that she had been married three years before the child's birth. From internal references in the poem to the plague, it seems reasonable to infer that the date of the poem's composition is only slightly posterior to the events of 1531-1532. Therefore, it stands to reason that Catherine had been married since about 1529, approximately eleven years before her death. Given these indications, plus the fact that if Catherine had been extremely young at her death, Fontaine would probably not have insisted on the halfway mark of her life.

23 Les Ruisseaux, p. 51.
24 Les Ruisseaux, p. 49.
as his reference point, it appears justified to maintain that she died sometime between her late twenties and early thirties; thus it is possible that she could have been between five and ten years older than her surviving brother.

Of Charles Fontaine's childhood and adolescent years we have only a few definite facts. As an infant he was entrusted to the family of Jean Ticier in the Parisian suburb of Clamart, and we know from Fontaine's later writings that both Ticier and his wife were alive as late as 1547. It would be tempting to speculate that the young Charles was placed in the care of this family as the result of having been orphaned, but since the custom of putting young children in the household of a nourrice was widespread at this time, especially among the families of the nobility and the affluent bourgeoisie, it would be unwise to place too much credence in this possibility. It is interesting to observe, however, that although Fontaine never elaborates upon his relationship with this family beyond the point of calling Jean Ticier his "pere nourricier" and Madame Ticier his "gentille nourrice," it does appear that as a grown man, he continued to hold this particular household in high esteem.

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25Les Ruisseaux, p. 64.
26Les Ruisseaux, p. 64.
In 1530, Charles Fontaine was granted the degree of maistre ès artz from the Collège du Plessis in Paris; and from two short poems addressed to Pierre Danès, one of the original lecteurs at the Collège Royal, it is evident that Fontaine was for a while among those present at the early courses offered at the then new institution, which was founded in the same year that Fontaine received his master's degree. 27 The length of his association with the new school is still unknown, but it was during these days that Charles Fontaine acquired a reverence for knowledge of all kinds by which his subsequent literary production is characterized.

Hawkins has little to say about the disposition, character, or abiding interests of the young Fontaine, but Grace Frank, on the basis of the content of her more recent discovery, represents him as a somewhat morose, ascetic young man of essentially religious and moral preoccupations who at one time seriously entertained the notion of following a monastic calling. In the early poem addressed to Catherine to which we have already referred, there appear these lines:

J'eu quelque fois la pensée doubteuse,  
Si vous seriez ung jour religieuse,  
Car en l'estat vous y preniez plaisir,  
Et je croy bien qu'y aviez grand désir.

Et moy qui suis à cela si peu idoine,
A Saint Victor fuz presque rendu moyne.28

The supposition that Fontaine once considered entering religious orders may find some further support in a few enigmatic lines which appear in an epistle he wrote to a friend, Jean Orry, a lawyer at Le Mans, sometime before 1540, the date of Fontaine's first marriage, but which was not published until 1555. Responding to Orry, who in a previous epistle had complained that conjugal duties prevented him from courting the Muse as often as he wished, Fontaine speaks of the difficulties of celibacy, but concludes on a note of resignation:

Mais nous avons communément apris
De nostre estat quasi mettre à despris,
Plus estimans, et preferans un tas
Tant des egaux que des moindres estat:
De tant manger du seigneur Dieu la manne,
Et qui desire aussi de la changer
A aux puants, grant viande a manger.29

The estat mentioned is obviously the estate of celibacy, while the final attitude regarding it is very close to the rationale maintained by the more orthodox elements of the Catholic Church to this day in favor of maintaining it among the members of its clergy. It is improbable that Fontaine would have coupled the example of his own bachelorhood with a religious justification of it had he not at least considered the possibility of

28Epistres ... faictz à l'honneur de Dieu," fol. 119.
29Les Ruisseaux, p. 255
accepting tonsure.

To say, however, that Charles Fontaine was the perfect example of the young aescetic for whom the temptations of the world held no allure would be inconsistent with what he had written a few lines earlier in the same epistle, for he confides to Orry:

Toutes les nuitz me reveille ma fille
Qui vous savez, ma petite fillette
Qui a rendu ma personne faiblette.

Whether the petite fillette was a flesh and blood woman with whom Charles Fontaine engaged in amatory dalliance or merely an erotic image by means of which he sought to show Orry that married or single, there is no respite from the demons of the flesh, is unimportant. What is significant is the fact that even at the point in his life when he was supposedly most preoccupied with his religious musings, Maistre Charles had also experienced nascent appetites for the world and had not, it appears, found them displeasing. In time, he was to give himself the opportunity to indulge them at his leisure, and in this particular metamorphosis of a man of the Renaissance, we see him conform to the more general matrix of Renaissance Man.

It is abundantly clear that Fontaine never actually entered religious orders, so we must conclude that

although he thought seriously of doing so, he abandoned these plans at a relatively early stage in his career. It would be tempting to assume quite simply that the call of the world was too strong for the young postulant to resist and that he, like Demos, deserted his calling. While such an explanation should not be thoroughly discounted, it does fail to take into consideration another feature of Fontaine's earliest known work as it is discerned by Frank, and which she names the "Protestant bias" of the poems. She lists several points by which she seeks to prove the existence of this alleged bias. They are in essence the following: 1) the expression of the belief throughout the poems that faith alone can effect salvation, 2) the conspicuous absence of references to the Virgin or to the saints, as a result of which "only God and His Word are invoked," and 3) an insistence on church unity, but an equal insistence on a "purified and reformed church."31 In summarizing the religious ideas implicit in these early poems, Grace Frank concludes that Fontaine's views were closely parallel to those of the more moderate reformers of the early Renaissance such as Lefèvre d'Étaples. In short, Fontaine may have chosen not to enter the church because

31 "The Early Works," pp. 53-54.
of a degree of Protestant conscience which made it impossible for him to reconcile what he regarded as abuses within the church with his own vision of what the church should be.

Although Hawkins does not once mention religion with reference to Fontaine, it would probably be a mistake to dismiss these mildly Protestant tendencies as a passing phase in the career of a callow and idealistic young man. Although the poems contained in the early collection are undoubtedly of early origin, Frank places the date of their final compilation and dedication at some time between 1540 and 1561. The volume is dedicated to Odet de Coligny, Cardinal de Châtillon, who in 1561 formally abjured Catholicism to take his stand with his cousin, the famous Protestant admiral.

Grace Frank may be technically correct when she asserts that Fontaine's published works are silent with regard to his religious convictions; but in the light of her discovery, it is interesting to note that in 1555, the date of the publication of Les Ruisseaux de Fontaine, encomiums were addressed to Renée de France, whose court at Ferrara became something of a refuge for expatriate French Protestants, and to the Cardinal de Châtillon. In his Odes, enigmes, et epigrammes of 1557, Fontaine saw

fit to address another poem to the cardinal. The year 1554 saw Fontaine address one of the quatrains of his "Ode pour Dieu gard à la ville de Paris," contained in Les nouvelles et Antiques merveilles to Pierre de la Saulx, secretary to the liberal cardinal. This same secretary was honored with three pieces in Les Ruisseaux the following year. In each of the poems dedicated to him, Pierre de la Saulx is often praised as much for his patron's virtues as for his own good qualities, and the relationship between the secretary and the cardinal is stressed.

One other esprit éclairé to whom Fontaine addressed various portions of his works was Marguerite de Navarre, to whom a translation of Paul's epistle to the Colossians was dedicated in the Epistres ... faictz à l'honneur de Dieu. This Marguerite, it will be remembered, was well known in her younger days as one of the more open sympathizers with the early reform movement within the church. So heartily did Marguerite espouse the early evangelistic impulse that she was involved in a minor scandal when the parliament of Paris banned her book of religious meditations, Le miroir de l'âme péchéresse, on the grounds of its perniciously Protestant content. The ban on the book was lifted only after the personal intervention of its author's brother, Francis I.

Using a technique similar to that employed in the
poems written to Pierre de la Saulx, Fontaine claims in a "Petit chant de Louange," contained in Les Ruisseaux and dedicated to Marguerite de France, that the younger Marguerite's principal claim to honor and respect lies not so much in the fact of her royal parentage, but rather in that of being the niece of Marguerite de Navarre. 33

Finally, Maistre Charles greeted the arrival of Renée de France's daughter on French soil for the purpose of marrying François de Guise with no less than four short poems published in Les Ruisseaux. 34 In two of these pieces, she is compared with her mother. Although it is true that Fontaine manages to avoid explicit religious expression in any of these pieces, and although they are buried among poems dedicated to less controversial figures, it is doubtful that the presence of these dedications could have escaped the notice of the more assiduous sixteenth-century French Protestant watchers.

Regardless of the extent of Fontaine's Protestant tendencies, we know that it was probably no later than 1535 that he decided to make a career of poetry. His uncle, Jean Dugué, was a lawyer by profession and a poet by inclination, and it was to him that the young Fontaine

33 Les Ruisseaux, p. 65.
34 pp. 90-91.
turned for guidance in his chosen vocation. There is perhaps more information available on Jean Dugué than on any other member of Charles Fontaine's family. Goujet mentions that Dugué (or du Gué, according to Goujet) was a lawyer in the Parliament of Paris, and that "Loysel en fait mention dans sa liste des avocats qui suivoient le barreau avec distinction en 1524." In addition to this distinction, Jean Dugué also lays claim to the more dubious fame of having been imprisoned and fined by order of Francis I. The Journal d'un Bourgeois de Paris sous le règne de François Ier gives the following account of the incident in its list of events for the year 1529:

L'an 1529, le samedy, dixiesme avril apres Pasques, fut prononcé en la cour de Parlement, l'arrest d'un procès faict par le Roy, de huit hommes, manans et habitans de Paris, lesquelz le Roy avoit faict mettre prisonniers au Louvre la veille de Pasques devant qu'il entra à Paris, de son retour de prison au païs d'espaigne: asçavoir monsieur Merlin, ... maistre Bouchart, maistre Jean Dugué et maistre Jean Boileau, advocatz en la cour de Parlement.

Dugue's punishment was lighter than that of several of his co-defendants, for the Journal tells us, "... les dictz Dugué et Boileau païèrent chacun dix escus pour les espices, sans nulle autre amende." The cause of Dugué's

37 *Journal d'un Bourgeois*, p. 377.
incarceration and fine seems to have been his reluctance to help raise funds during Francis' imprisonment in Spain, which, according to the Journal, caused the king to be most "mal content."^{38}

In the course of an exchange of rhymed epistles which were first published in 1555 in Les Ruisseaux, Charles Fontaine set forth his plans to his uncle, who tried to discourage his nephew from following so generally an impecunious profession as poetry. Young Charles was not to be denied, however, and Dugué finally relented, offering his manuscripts and his counsel to his nephew "de bon coeur."^{39}

Commenting on Charles' decision to become a writer, Hawkins assures us that it was "without the least hesitancy or misgiving [that] he decided to be a poet."^{40}

It is true enough that once he had decided on a career in letters, Fontaine was adamant. Nevertheless, there are some indications that before making this decision, Maistre Charles had considered studying law and had possibly even embarked upon preliminary legal studies. Such a career would not have been an improbable one for him since a tendency toward a lawyer's calling seems to

^{38}Journal d'un Bourgeois, p. 378.
^{39}Les Ruisseaux, p. 301.
^{40}Maistre Charles, p. 8.
have been rather marked among the members of his family and his circle of friends. Around 1540, Fontaine, writing from Lyons to one of his Parisian lady friends, assures her that he misses her as well as the entire town, and that he is quite eager to return to the capital in the near future:

Secondement iay vn autre regret
De la Cité lequel est moins secret:
Cest asçauoir pour le terrain, & cloistre:
Et ce regret vient le premier accroistre.
Le tiers regret cest que de ce Palais
Auquel ie hante, à cause de ces plais,
Plus pres serois, & plus en cueur de ville. 41

One other isolated passage lends possible support to the theory that Charles Fontaine may actually have embarked upon a course of legal study. Writing to Eustace de la Porte, a member of the Parisian parliament, where in 1547 Fontaine had a lawsuit pending, he says:

Je suis fondé en droit, & equité
Par texte, & glose, ainsi qu'il est notoire:
Mais on m'allege vne formalité
Que je suis mal fondé au possessoire:
Qu'il soit ainsi je ne puis pas croire
Pour grand raison: mais encor qu'ainsi soit,
Le possessoire, ou bien le petitoire,
Me feront ils auoir tort, si i'ay droit? 42

From the first two lines of the huitain, Fontaine, by specifying that he is founded in law through texts and

41 La Fontaine d'Amour, p. 40.
42 Les Ruisseaux, p. 236.
commentaries (glose) seems to imply that he had at least spent some time in the study of law.

That he never completed his legal training, if indeed he ever undertook it, is clear from an epistle Charles Fontaine wrote around 1547 to Guillaume Teshault, the anagram of Guillaume des Autelz. In this rhymed letter, Fontaine admonishes his sixteen-year-old correspondent, who in a previous epistle had expressed some distaste for his legal studies, to study his law well since it is a means of pecuniary advancement in the world. Fontaine goes one step further and expresses regret that he had not followed his uncle's advice and become a lawyer himself:

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Si je pouois ieune encor deuinir,
Je voudrois bien le train des lois tenir:
Bien qu'il ne soit aucques sa pratique,
Autant plaisant que l'art poëtique,
Au ieune esprit, gaillard, & gracieux,
Mes libres artz querant champs spacieux:
Mais en hautesse il est plus honorable,
Plus necessaire, aussi plus profitable,
Et pleust à Dieu que mon oncle eusse creu,
Lors que moy ieune, ayant l'esprit trop cru
Fey grand refus de la science suiure
Qui en honneurs, & en biens le feit viure:
En quoy m'offrit, pour me mettre à bon port,
Ses liures tous, avec tout son support:
Mais c'en est fait, ietté en est le dé,
Le sort par art en doit estre amendé:
Nul remede autre y a tant soit on sage,
Y obstant l'aage, avec le mariage.43
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43 *Les Ruisseaux*, p. 236.
If we accept the possibility that Charles Fontaine may have embarked quite briefly upon a legal career, we may account, at least in part, for the argumentative tone and persuasive purpose of some of his earlier and longer works, notably the "Epistre au Roy à qui l'autheur adressesoit une sienne traduction," the "Epistre à une dame, pour la consoler de la mort de son mari," the "Epistre à une dame, philosophant sur la bonne amour." and of course, *La Contr'amye de Court.*

Within about two years of his decision to become a poet by profession, Charles Fontaine became embroiled in the first of three major literary quarrels of the sixteenth century by which his significance in the history of French literature is now largely measured. It is ironic in the light of his present obscurity that Fontaine was a participant, and, by all contemporary accounts, a major one, in the three most famous literary polemics of the sixteenth century. The first feud in which he was to participate was the well-known battle between Marot and his envious rival, Sagon, who was aided by his literary valet, La Huëterie. It will not be our purpose to give a detailed account of the feud's origin or of its progress. Hawkins, among others, has given a thorough description of it. For our purposes, it will

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be sufficient to cite Fontaine's contributions to the fray and to comment on the effect they had on his budding career.

In quantity, Charles Fontaine's contributions were modest, consisting of a dizain, an epistle in French, and certainly one—possibly two—poems in Latin. His epistolary technique, in comparison with that employed by other partisans of both camps, was considerably more objective, attacking Sagon's incompetence as a poet rather than indulging in the obscenity and invective which characterized the major works pertaining to the dispute.

The quarrel, which lasted approximately one year (1536-1537), ended in the unqualified victory of Marot's side. To bring to a formal conclusion an affair which had begun to bore everyone, the Confrérie des Conards in Rouen, an organization which seems to have shared with the more famous Enfants sans souci at Paris a penchant for satirizing current events, published a pamphlet entitled Le Banquet d'Honneur sur la paix faite entre Clément Marot, François Sagon, Frippelippes, Huëterie et autres de leurs ligues.46 The significance of the pamphlet is to be found, for our purposes, in the fact that it lists Charles Fontaine among the foremost of Marot's defenders.

In assessing the value of Charles Fontaine's contri-

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46 Rouen, 1537.
Butions to this quarrel, Hawkins states that they are "not masterpiece [s], to be sure, but ... sober criticism, of which a more experienced writer need not be ashamed." He concludes his examination of the Marot-Sagon affair by saying that as a result of Fontaine's participation in the battle "his name had already become a familiar one in the world of letters."^48

While Hawkins has nothing but praise for Fontaine's restraint in the polemic, Henri Guy criticizes the lack of gusto in his attacks on Sagon. It is common knowledge that Sagon was motivated by personal jealousy to attack Marot with the cowardly Coup d'essay while the latter was in exile as the result of his suspected complicity in the Affaire des Placards. Since Marot was already suspected of heresy, Sagon sought to discredit him further by dwelling on this fact and masking his personal ambition of becoming the official court poet by depicting himself as a concerned Christian who desired nothing more earnestly than the bringing of wandering sheep back to the fold. The ruse fooled no one. However, Fontaine, in his "Epistre à Sagon et La Huëterie," merely mentions the possibility that Sagon may have been motivated more by ambition than by true Christian charity by attacking Marot. Commenting on Fontaine's failure to capitalize to the fullest

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48 Maistre Charles, p. 40.
extent upon this point, Guy concludes:

Fontaine aurait dû insister, traiter large-
ment ce thème moral. Mais il l'indique à
peine, et préfère critiquer en détail le
style misérable du Coup d'essay. 49

Guy's criticism, coupled with Grace Frank's highly
credible theory that Fontaine was at least a moderate
reformer, leads us to ask the following question—a
question which, moreover, can probably never be answered
satisfactorily. Is it possible that Charles deliberately
steered clear of the religious issue which Sagon attempted
to inject into the quarrel because he felt that his own
position with respect to the religious question was not
above suspicion? If this were the case, then at least
one of Hawkins' conclusions concerning Fontaine's role
in the Marot-Sagon controversy must be re-evaluated.
Hawkins assigns no other motive to Fontaine's decision to
come to Marot's defense than that of professional admira-
tion and perhaps personal friendship. 50 If Fontaine's
supposed Protestant tendencies really did exist, and it
seems highly probable that they did, then the sympathy of
one man for the ordeal to which one of his co-religionists
was being subjected must be allowed to share some of the
credit for Fontaine's decision to enter the lists on the
side of Marot.

49 Histoire de la poésie française au XVIe siècle
50 Maistre Charles, p. 19.
As well known as his name might have become in the world of letters as a result of his participation in the Marot-Sagon affair, Maistre Charles had nevertheless been unable to find the one thing which was a prerequisite for any man of the sixteenth century who wished to be a serious writer—a patron. The reading public of sixteenth century, confined primarily to the aristocratic and upper middle classes, was simply not large enough to allow even a writer of great popularity the relative economic independence which we have come to assume is the natural condition of successful writers today. To offset this disadvantage and to assure the continued growth of belles lettres in the culturally status-conscious realm of early Renaissance France, an elaborate system of artistic patronage had evolved. By means of this system a hopeful author might enter the good graces of an important member of the nobility, preferably of the royal family itself, who in turn would assure the artist of receiving a sinecure—usually an ecclesiastical or diplomatic appointment—which entailed only nominal duties on the part of the recipient, and which would therefore allow him to pursue his real interests with a guaranteed annual income. Rabelais, Ronsard, and du Bellay are but three of the major writers of this period who benefitted from such an arrangement.

It was therefore with the hope of obtaining some
sort of financial assistance that Charles Fontaine presented two translations to Francis I who, along with his sister, Marguerite de Navarre, was generally recognized and loudly acclaimed as a latter-day Maecenas. One of these translations was a French version of the first book of Saint Augustine's *De Praedestinatione Sanctorum*, the actual presentation of which Hawkins places at "about 1540." It is possibly an ill-founded speculation but nevertheless it is interesting to note that even in his choice of material for translation, Charles Fontaine might have given cause to be suspected of sympathy with the reform movement. The Latin version of Calvin's *Institutes* had appeared in 1536, the French translation in 1541, and this work was also largely inspired by the Augustinian concept of predestination.

The second translation, the presentation of which was the occasion of an "Epistre au Roy, à qui l'auteur adressoit une sienne traduction," published in *Les Ruisseaux de Fontaine* (1555), and which was apparently translated at about the same time as "Le Premier livre de la prédestination des sainctz," is said by both Hawkins and Goujet to have been lost. A more detailed discussion of this translation and of the mystery surrounding its

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51 Maistre Charles, p. 45, n. 3.
52 Maistre Charles, p. 44. Bibliothèque française, XI, 127.
identity will be the subject of the following chapter.

There is no apparent record of Francis' reaction to the two translations presented to him by the young poet. It does seem safe to assume, however, that they were at best no more than nominally successful in their immediate purpose of obtaining some sort of financial remuneration, for in late 1539 or early 1540, we find Fontaine in the company of a belliqueur on the way to Italy. The identity of the warrior in whose entourage the aspiring poet made his way southward is unknown to us. Becker claims, none too convincingly, that he was in the service of Claude d'Annebaut. Hawkins maintains a bit more credibly, in view of the taste for very bad puns in the sixteenth century, that the belliqueur in question was Guillaume du Bellay.

It was in the course of his descent into Italy that Fontaine became acquainted for the first time with the city of Lyons, which was to become his home for at least a quarter of a century upon his return to France. Once in Italy, Fontaine stopped to spend some time at the court of Renée de France, the duchess of Ferrara, where it seems that he hoped to obtain the favor and patronage which had not been forthcoming from Francis I. Fontaine


54Maistre Charles, p. 47, n. 4.
appears to have fared no better in this quest than in his previous one, for in 1540, Renée was virtually imprisoned by her husband, Ercole d'Este, in an attempt to prevent her conversion to Protestantism, which he felt to be imminent. From Les Ruisseaux de Fontaine, we know that Renée's secretary, Lyon Jamet, offered Fontaine some form of financial assistance from his own funds, but that the poet declined Jamet's generosity. Lyon Jamet, it will be remembered, also aided Clément Marot when the latter was imprisoned for supposedly having failed to observe Lent.

In all probability, Fontaine's sojourn in Italy lasted less than a year, for it is certain that he had returned to Lyons by 1540. Fontaine's choice of Renée de France as a potential protectress once again gives rise to one of those questions which will probably never be fully answered: namely, is it possible that Renée's reputation as a sympathizer with the reform movement exercised some influence in Fontaine's choice of her court as a likely place to find the patronage he sought? Henri Guy seems to believe that it did, for concerning the general atmosphere of the court at Ferrara at this particular period, he says:

Ceux qui arrivaient sans le sou et malades, elle [Renée] voulait qu'on les soignât bien,
puis les renvoyât guéris et replumés. Ces hôtes, le plus souvent, étaient des hérétiques fuyant l'amende honorable et le bûcher, des artistes, des poètes. Tel Marot, tel Charles Fontaine. Beaucoup, mieux reçus ou plus hardis, plantaient leur tente, se fixaient là, en sorte que le palais se remplissait peu à peu de serviteurs qui sentaient le fagot, et devenait une île des Papefigues. 56

If Guy has any basis other than Grace Frank's article for assigning heretical tendencies to Fontaine, he is hesitant to reveal it, yet it does not seem to be an idle or improbable conjecture.

Although a disappointment in its primary purpose, the journey to Italy had several beneficial effects of a long-range nature on Maistre Charles, for it was very likely while there that he first became acquainted with the works of Petrarch and Sanazzaro, both of whom he was to imitate in his later works. 57 It is also possible that, as Grace Frank has pointed out, it was the exposure to the sunny Italian climate and the fabled gaiety of the country's inhabitants which helped to dispel the heavy gloom and asceticism so prevalent in his earliest known work, thereby opening the way for the development of the "finesse dans la raillerie" for which he was so greatly appreciated by Goujet. 58

56 Histoire de la poésie française, II, 206.
57 Ruutz-Rees, "Charles Fontaine's Fontaine," pp. 65-71
58 "The Early Work," p. 60.
In 1540, Fontaine returned to Lyons, where in the same year, according to Goujet, he married Marguerite Carme, about whom nothing certain is known except that she was a native of Lyons and that she died less than four years after her marriage. Goujet asserts that she and Fontaine became the parents of two children, yet he fails to substantiate his assertion with any proof, and it appears to be groundless. After his marriage, Fontaine was to remain in Lyons for the greater part, if not the entire part, of his adult life. The decision to remain in Lyons was to all appearances sudden, since Maistre Charles had addressed a poem obviously written during the Italian journey to a Parisian lady in which he promised to return to the capital city before long to demand her hand in marriage:

Iadis pour voir et pour avoir Hélène
Sen vint de Troye en la Graece Pâris:
Je viens pour vous d'Italie à Paris:
Je croyrois bien que ne le pensez pas:
Mais la grand cause estes de ce grand pas.

Hawkins attributes Fontaine's failure to return to Paris after his Italian journey to the unpredictable flight of Cupid's dart, which ordained that he was to marry Marguerite Carme instead of his first love at Paris. Even in this minor detail, however, the religious question

59 Bibliothèque française, XI, 123.
60 La Fontaine d'Amour, p. 55.
cannot be safely dismissed, and it may have been that the slightly more tolerant religious climate of Lyons played a role in Fontaine's decision to make his permanent home there, for although not immune to the religious disturbances which rocked France during the Renaissance, Lyons was a notably safer place for someone suspected of unorthodox leanings than was the capital city.

The years 1540 and 1541 were busy ones for Charles Fontaine. They included two translations presented to the king, a journey to Italy, marriage, and involvement in the second of his three important literary quarrels, the famous Querelle des Amyes, a debate in which one of the scholars most competent to judge has accorded to Fontaine the role of principal standard bearer for one of its sides. However, today his participation is normally remembered by a mere sentence or footnote in passing.

The Querelle des Amyes, like most other literary debates, had had a prefatory phase some years before its principal manifestation came to the notice of the public at large. This particular debate is especially rich in these preliminary skirmishes since as early as the middle ages Christine de Pisan, Jean Gerson, and Jean de Meung had aligned themselves on one side or the other of the question. In a much broader sense, many of the fabliaux

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of this period in which women, especially wives, were satirized, may be said to be contributions to the preparatory phase of the polemic. Therefore, the groundwork for the debate was already well laid by 1537, when Almaque Papillon published a poem entitled *La Victoire et triomphe d'argent contre Cupido, dieu d'amours, n'aiguères vaincu dedans Paris*, the title of which is perhaps the poem's own best summary.

In the *Victoire et triomphe d'Argent*, an allegory in the best medieval tradition, Parisian women were taken to task for their variability and venality. Almost immediately, Charles Fontaine had published a reply entitled *Responce faicte à l'encontre d'un petit livre intitulé le Triomphe et victoire d'Argent contre Cupido n'aiguères vaincu dedans Pariss*, of which Hawkins has given a rather detailed summary. For our purposes it is sufficient to note that Fontaine's reply upheld feminine honor and that he was generally conceded to have carried the day by meeting Papillon's attack on the latter's own terms, that is, by the vehicle of medieval allegory.

Professor Hawkins says that in defending Parisian womanhood against the satiric attacks of Papillon,
Fontaine had, as early as 1537, begun a break—a non-acrimonious one to be sure, but nevertheless a definite break—with the attitude toward women as it was represented by Clément Marot and his school. We feel that this is a hasty and perhaps unfair judgment on both Fontaine and the school of Marot, prompted by Hawkins' somewhat over-eager desire to find for his subject an early bond with the Platonists through which he in turn hoped to build one point of his case for Charles Fontaine as an early precursor of the Pléiade. While it is true that Marot did write some satiric verses directed against women, it is unfair to imply that he was thoroughly anti-feminist in his treatment of them. In our opinion, the significance of the preliminary round in the 1537 phase of the Querelle des Amyes lies rather in the fact that at the time of the main attack—if indeed it was an attack—Charles Fontaine had already established a reputation for himself as a defender of woman's virtue and that it was to him that more or less naturally fell the role of spokesman for the feminist side.

The first document to be launched in the principal phase of the Querelle des Amyes materialized in 1541 in the form of a satirical poem entitled L'Amie de Court.66

65 Maistre Charles, p. 76.
66 Paris, 1541.
a work written by Bertrand de La Borderie, possessing the same general tone and intent as Papillon's antecedent piece of 1537. The appearance of *L'Amye de Court* is supposed to have created an uproar in French literary circles, a reaction which in itself indicates that Platonism, or at least that part of it which concerns woman's place in the cosmos, had already become a serious and fairly widespread topic of discussion in France by 1541. As we shall see, this interpretation is open to serious question, but for the moment it will suffice to say that the first reply to La Borderie's effort was Fontaine's *Contr'amye de Court*, which Hawkins also summarizes and quotes at some length. As Gohin has said of the appearance of the *Contr'amye*, "C'est Charles Fontaine, l'amí d'Héroët et de Marot qui le premier riposta dans un poème de 1282 vers. Dès le début de sa *Contr'amye de Court*, il semble s'attribuer l'honneur de l'attaque:

Quand je congneu que l'Amye de Court
Blasmoit l'Amour, dont encor le bruit court,
Qu'amour n'est rien que fainte poesie,
Ou mesmement que folle fantasie,
Je dy en moy: Ha! n'oseray-je point
Deffendre Amour que l'on blasme en ce poinct."

Gohin further suggests that the final lines of Fontaine's *Contr'amye* may have been the inspiration for the title of Héroët's more famous work, *La Parfaicte Amye*,

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67 *Maistre Charles*, pp. 87-105.
which was to come out of the debate: 69

O Dieu Amour, cette imparfaicte amye
Qui est de toy si parfaicte ennemye

We will not dwell at any length on the progression of and various contributions to a debate whose history is already well known to students of sixteenth-century French literature. It is sufficient to say that at the time of the quarrel, it was Charles Fontaine, not Antoine Héroët, who was considered the preëminent apologist for women, and it was to him that friend and foe alike addressed their contributions to the debate. Today, of course, Héroët has claimed this title, thanks in part to Goujet who, without investigating his facts any too carefully, assumed that Héroët's Parfaicte Amye had been the first work to venture forth in the defense of women. This error was discovered in the late nineteenth century by Gohin, 70 but by then it was no longer an important matter. Although it began as the result of an error, we must admit that Héroët's claim to the title of champion for the feminist school is quite justified; for although he was not one of the instigators of the polemic, his was the most purely literary contribution to come out of it. As Gohin has quite lucidly summarized the situation:

69 Les Oeuvres poétiques, p. xxix.
70 Les Oeuvres poétiques, p. xx.
L'histoire de cette querelle montre que le succès de la Parfaicte Amye fut préparé par les circonstance [sic] et dû tout d'abord à la portée morale de l'oeuvre. Elle nous permet aussi par la comparaison des poèmes de La Borderie et de Ch. Fontaine, de comprendre les mérites littéraires du poèmes d'Héroet.\footnote{Les Oeuvres poétiques, p. xxxviii.}

There can be little doubt that Fontaine was proud of his contribution. In \textit{Les Ruisseaux de Fontaine}, published in 1555, a full fourteen years after the \textit{Contr'amy}, it is this work, more than any other, to which he refers with obvious pride and satisfaction.

In February, 1544, we learn that Maistre Charles, by now a widower, has married again.\footnote{Les Ruisseaux, p. 102.} His wife is known to us only by her first name, Flora or Fleurie, and we are told that she comes from the Lyonese suburb of Chapo-nost.\footnote{Les Ruisseaux, p. 187.} The fact that Flora was honored by her husband with many pieces of occasional verse, and the knowledge that at least eight children were born to this marriage prompts Hawkins to conjecture that it was a happy union.\footnote{Maistre Charles, p. 121.}

In 1545, there appeared at Lyons Fontaine's first major original poetic collection, entitled \textit{La Fontaine d'Amour}. The following years, 1546 and 1547, saw two
consecutive editions of the work appear in Paris. These three consecutive editions of the work would appear to indicate that it was well received by the reading public and that Charles Fontaine was well on his way to the poetic immortality to which he constantly aspired. That Fontaine was regarded as a most popular poet in his own day is further attested to by Joseph Baudrier who, in the section of his history of the publishing industry at Lyons devoted to Jean Citoys, says, "Il [Jean Citoys] a eu la bonne fortune de devenir l'éditeur de quelque-unes des oeuvres de Charles Fontaine. Leur publication paraît avoir servi de début à notre imprimeur."  

La Fontaine d'Amour, from the title of which we may see an example of the punning for which Charles Fontaine had an insufferable weakness, was dedicated to the Duke of Orleans who, if we are to believe the dedicatory epistle, appears to have encouraged Fontaine's literary efforts. Although the author's name was not published on the frontispiece of the work, it was clearly visible at the end of the dedicatory letter; therefore La Fontaine d'Amour could hardly be considered an anonymous work. This minor factual detail is of prime importance inasmuch as some attempts have been made to identify

76 La Fontaine d'Amour, p. 4.
Charles Fontaine with an anonymous poet severely lam­pooned in *La Deffence et Illustration de la Langue Françoys* e. In Chapter two of the Second book of this work, a "modern" poet is attacked in these terms:

Un autre, pour n'avoir encore rien mis en lumiere soubz son nom, ne mereite qu'on luy donne le premier lieu: et semble (disent aucuns) que par les ecriz de ceux de son temps, il veuille eternizer son nom, non autrement que Démade est ennobly par la contention de Démostène, et Hortense de Cicéron.77

Emile Roy, basing his case upon the fact that Fontaine had been an active participant in the Marot-Sagon affair as well as in the Querelle des Amyes, assigns to Charles Fontaine the dubious honor of being the anonymous poet attacked by du Bellay. 78 He substantiates his claim by saying that Fontaine had published nothing but negligible pieces under his own name prior to 1549. This is a gross error. Charles Fontaine, while he did not publish his name on the frontispiece of *La Fontaine d'Amour* in 1545, was well known as its author. For our part, we find Henri Chamard's conclusion that Jacques Boujou was the target of du Bellay's sarcasm much more satisfactory


than M. Roy's haphazard proofs. At least three editions of *La Contr'amye de Court* printed in 1543 bore Fontaine's name on the frontispiece. Finally, a small thirty-two page volume entitled *Estreines, à certains Seigneurs et Dames de Lyon*, printed in 1546 plainly named Charles Fontaine as its author. While Emile Roy's contention that this latter work, because of its smallness and purely local interest, was probably unknown to du Bellay may contain some degree of plausibility, the fact remains that Fontaine did indeed publish works under his own name prior to 1549.

The content of *La Fontaine d'Amour* may be divided into the following categories: twenty-two elegies, nineteen epistles, and two books of epigrams in the manner of Martial and Marot. With respect to the epistles and the elegies, it can only be said that the lines of distinction between the two forms are quite loosely drawn. Christine Scollen, in her discussion of the elegies contained in *La Fontaine*, is hard pressed to find the point at which

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79 *Sur une page obscure de la Deffence*, *Revue d'histoire littéraire de la France* (Paris, 1897), IV, 239-245.

80 The editions in question are those of Sulpice Sabon, Adam Saulnier, and Jean de Tournes, all printed in 1543.

81 *Lyons, Jean de Tournes.*

Maistre Charles distinguished between the formal requirements of the elegy and those of the epistle. She concludes that length, more than thematic content or technical treatment, was the basic criterion which determined the essential difference between the two forms in the mind of their author:

From the purely technical point of view, there is again little difference. Both the elegies and the epistles are written in decasyllabics, with rimes plates. When we look at the length of the two genres, here we find what is probably a better guide. The shortest epistle is a mere 16 lines, and the longest, an exceptional 90 line missive in praise of his lady's beauty. Most of the epistles are around 30 lines long. The shortest elegy is 28 lines long, and the longest 104. On an average, most of the elegies are around or over fifty lines in length. It does seem that Fontaine considered the elegy as a longer, and possibly more elaborate type of love letter. Here again, the only safe conclusion is that Fontaine's idea of what constituted an elegy was far from clear-cut. When Sebillet in his Art Poétique gives a rather muddled and ambiguous definition of the elegy, he is merely reflecting the ambiguities he finds among the poets who write elegies.

Since Flora plays a decidedly minor role in the poems contained in La Fontaine d'Amour, it seems safe to assume that the bulk of the work was composed before 1544, the date of Charles' second marriage. Fontaine does, in fact, ask the Duke of Orléans' indulgence with the work which, according to its author, was composed "en grand jeunesse."  

83 The Birth of the Elegy, p. 100.
84 La Fontaine d'Amour, p. 8.
Although it has been suggested that Fontaine pleaded youthful inexperience to absolve himself of most of the responsibility for having written what he even then recognized to be inferior poetry, it is evident that some of the poems, notably one written to Catherine, who died in 1540, do date from an early stage in the poet's career.

The nature of some of the poems contained in La Fontaine d'Amour will be discussed in a later chapter. For the time being, it will suffice to say that their content is a bit surprising when one considers that they were written by a man who less than four years before had so vigorously championed the cause of womanhood. Commenting on the general tone of La Fontaine, Caroline Ruutz-Rees has said:

The volume ... has a curious interest of its own. The tone of its first half at least is set by verses merely light or actually gross. This is a surprising development in a poet who had already proved himself a loyal defender of women by replying in 1537 to Papillon's attack on the motives of the fair sex, Le Triomphe et la Victoire d'argent contre Cupido, who was shortly to become one of the champions of the "platonic" view of love through his Contr'amye de Court, of 1541, and who was to show himself such once more in his Ruisseaux de Fontaine of 1555. Fontaine even adds to the surprise by making it abundantly clear to the reader that his fall from grace is of malice prepense.85

85 Maistre Charles, p. 104, n. 3.

Ruutz-Rees continues by citing one of the frequent pieces addressed au lecteur which, for the interesting light it sheds upon Fontaine's ability to divorce two aspects of total human experience from each other, we shall quote:

Au Lecteur.

Estre ne veulx en mesme liure spirituel et terrien,
Puis lamour puis la vertu suivre,
Brouillant le mal avec le bien, ...

The remaining twenty or so years of Charles Fontaine's life may be summarized quite briefly, with the exception of one incident. Unable to find the sustained patronage he had desired, plagued by the financial cares occasioned by a growing family and an obscure lawsuit brought against him by the members of his first wife's family—which, incidentally, he appears to have won in 1547—Maistre Charles turned to a variety of literary odd jobs. He was for a while a proofreader at the Lyons publishing firm of Guillaume Roville. To supplement the meager income generated by his work, he turned to translation, the expedient of many a penurious but reasonably literate man of the Renaissance. Since Hawkins has devoted a chapter of his study to Fontaine's translations and his theory of translation, we will not

87La Fontaine d'Amour, p. 101.
88Baudrier, Bibliographie lyonnaise, III, 193.
mention them here except to say that Ovid seems to have afforded Fontaine one of his favorite sources for translation.

The year 1549 is marked in the literary annals of France by the appearance of Joachim du Bellay's Deffence et Illustration de la Langue Françoysé, and thereupon hangs the tale of history's harshest judgment on Charles Fontaine. Du Bellay, young, impetuous, and bellicosely ardent in his desire to disseminate "Quasi comme une nouvelle poésie" throughout France, conformed to what we would probably be safe in naming the only inexorable law of literary history, that of the reaction of the members of any given generation against those of the immediately preceding one. Fontaine was almost certainly among those attacked in the Deffence, the lines reserved for him being, "O combien je désire voir sécher ces Prin-
temps, châtier ces Petites jeunesses, rabattre ces Coups d'essais, tarir ces Fontaines, bref, abolir tous ces beaux titres assez suffisants pour dégoûter tout lecteur savant d'en lire davantage."89

The allusion to the Fontaines which du Bellay would have liked to see dry up is in all probability aimed at the Fontaine d'Amour which had been published four years before the Deffence.

89 La Deffence, pp. 175-176.
Considering the number of poets who were attacked at various points in the Deffence and the stature of some of them, Charles Fontaine was in good company, and the rebuke reserved for him in this particular passage was relatively mild in view of the fact that Marot was implicitly branded as both verbose and ignorant, Héroët was labeled as a philosopher who wrote in unadorned and graceless rhyme, while Scève was dismissed as incomprehensible. On the last point at least, the Pléiade and Charles Fontaine were in agreement.

Interestingly enough, the reactions of the members of the older school of poetry who were attacked were surprisingly mild. Thomas Sebillet merely interjected a few lines in the prefatory letter of his French version of Iphigenia in defense of translations, which the Pléiade's spokesman had seen fit to attack. Guillaume des Autelz sought to play a conciliatory role between the two schools in his Réplique aux furieuses défenses de Louis Meigret. In the main, these two replies took the form of somewhat indulgent amusement at the earnestness of du Bellay as much as they did a tone of rebuke.

Within a few months, however, there was to follow

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90 La Deffence, pp. 95-96.  
91 La Fontaine d'Amour, p. 145.
a more severe reaction to the rash pronouncements made by young Joachim du Bellay. In February or March, 1550, there appeared what Hawkins has described as a "curious little volume" entitled the *Quintil Horatian*, of which Barthélemy Aneau, then headmaster of the Collège de la Trinité at Lyons and apparently a good friend of Charles Fontaine, was almost certainly the principal, or final, author, but which for nearly 350 years was attributed solely to Charles Fontaine, in spite of his lively protestations to the contrary. All copies of the original edition of the *Quintil Horatian* have long since disappeared, but subsequent editions of 1551, 1555, and 1556 were published in which the document was appended to the *Art Poétique* of Thomas Sébillet. Only in 1898 did Henri Chamard assign the credit (or blame) for the final form of the *Quintil* to Aneau.  

Since a rather thorough knowledge of the *Quintil* incident is necessary before any examination of Fontaine's poetic theories can be undertaken, we shall defer a detailed discussion of this document to a more appropriate chapter. For the moment, it will be sufficient to note that the author of the *Quintil Horatian*

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93 "La date et l'auteur," pp. 54-71.
stood directly and often scathingly opposed to all of the poetic changes and innovations prescribed by du Bellay in the *Deffence*.

One of the major results of Charles Fontaine's being assigned the entire responsibility for the *Quintil Horatian* was for 350 years his relegation to a position of limbo in French literary history, where he was remembered largely as the major obstructionist of the new program proposed by the Pléiade, and it appears safe to say that this onus was attached to him during his own lifetime, at least by the members of the offended party. It will be remembered that the major stars of the Pléiade eventually managed to come to terms with most of the living poets attacked in the *Deffence*. That Charles Fontaine's name is not among those with whom the members of the Pléiade were at least officially reconciled can only be construed as a mark of the resentment borne by these men toward the man whom they held solely responsible for having made their final victory a bit more difficult.

The remainder of Charles Fontaine's life from 1550 until its end seems to have passed uneventfully—so uneventfully, in fact, that we are not even sure of the date of his death. In 1555, the same year in which he was named interim principal of the Collège de la Trinité, he published his first major collection of poetry since *La Fontaine d'Amour* ten years before. The work of 1555,
Les Ruisseaux de Fontaine, is its author's poetic summa in which poems as much as twenty years old and dating from the earliest years of his career are mingled with newer forms such as the ode, in imitation of the Pléiade. Other shorter works of occasional verse and translations were to follow, but La Fontaine d'Amour, Les Ruisseaux de Fontaine, and the earlier Contr'amyde de Court were to remain his best-known original works, and it is upon these three works that his subsequent reputation has rested.

In 1564, Charles Fontaine was chosen to compose the Salutation in honor of Charles IX's visit to Lyons, an indication of the esteem in which he was held by his fellow citizens. In this year, he would have been fifty years old—a relatively advanced age at this epoch. It is not unlikely that he died, almost certainly poor, but hopefully less disillusioned than Hawkins would have us believe, in 1564 or shortly thereafter.\(^9^4\) Goujet suggests rather timidly that he may have been alive as late as 1588,\(^9^5\) but his reasons for doing so are based solely upon the fact that this year saw the republication of some of the poems of La Fontaine d'Amour in an edition entitled Le Jardin d'Amour, which is in its own way a testimonial to the popularity enjoyed by Fontaine three decades after

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\(^9^4\) Maistre Charles, p. 223.

\(^9^5\) Bibliothèque françoise, XI, 139-140.
the Pléiade had supposedly rid the realm of the Maro-
tiques. However, as Hawkins has reasoned, it is most
improbable that as prolific a writer as Charles Fontaine
could have endured nearly a quarter of a century of
literary silence. Since the Jardin d'Amour contains no
new poems, the only reasonable conclusion is that it was
a posthumous edition.

We have attempted to situate as briefly yet as accu-
rately as possible Charles Fontaine within the time he
lived and with respect to the major literary events in
which he was a participant. We hope to have demonstrated
that in his own day he was considered a significant figure
in the world of letters and a participant of some conse-
quence in the major polemics of his time. While he was
undeniably a mediocre poet, we believe that his standing
among his contemporaries makes him worthy of more consider-
ation than he has so far been accorded. It is now time to
turn our attention to the first major problem that con-
fronts us with respect to his career. It is a bibli-
ographical problem, and it revolves around the translation
referred to above which Hawkins considered lost.
CHAPTER II

One of the most useful features of *Maistre Charles Fontaine Parisien* is a bibliographical appendix in which Hawkins lists his subject's work in one of five general categories, lettered A through E. It is the most comprehensive and accurate bibliography of Fontaine's works ever to be compiled, containing only two apparent errors. Under the first category are listed the "Principal Works of Charles Fontaine," which include translations as well as works of original verse. Section B is reserved for "Minor Verse by Charles Fontaine Published in the Works of Contemporary Authors." The C heading is devoted to "Manuscripts" and includes two entries, one of which is the translation, "Le Premier livre de la predestination des sainctz compose par sainct Augustin." The other entry in this category is an autograph letter written by Maistre Charles to Jean Morel to which we shall have occasion to refer in the following chapter. Section D encompasses "Lost Works and Doubtful Attributions." It contains seven entries. Finally, Section E, for works "Formerly Attributed to Charles Fontaine," contains one entry, the *Quintil Horatian.*

\[1\] pp. 244-270.
In view of Grace Frank's 1925 discovery, section C, "Manuscripts," should be enlarged from two to three entries, with the third entry bearing the title of Epistres, Chantz Royaulx, Ballades, Rondeaulx et Dizains faictz à l'honneur de Dieu. As we have already noted, Frank's investigation of this manuscript led her to conclude that the poems contained in it were composed roughly between 1530-1536 and presented to the Cardinal de Châtillon at some time between 1540 and 1561.²

Section D, "Lost Works and Doubtful Attributions," contains seven entries. It will be our purpose in the first part of this chapter to prove that the number of these entries should be reduced from seven to six. The entry in question is the sixth in this particular section and is described as "An unidentified translation presented by Fontaine to Francis I."³ By means of a footnote at the end of this description Hawkins refers the reader to page forty-four of his study, where there appears a brief mention of the translation in question. Although the bibliographical entry pertaining to the "unidentified translation" does not propose a date for its presentation to the king, we find that on page forty-four Hawkins does suggest that it was presented at about the same time as

²"The Early Works," pp. 55-56.
³Maistre Charles, p. 270.
the translation of St. Augustine's *De Praedestinatione Sanctorum*; that is, at "about 1540." In our opinion, the sixth entry in Section D of Hawkins' bibliographical appendix is neither lost nor of doubtful identity, but is in reality Fontaine's verse translation of a portion of Ovid's *Remedia Amoris*, which was published as "Le premier livre du Remède d'Amours" on pages 345-387 of *Les Ruisseaux de Fontaine* in 1555.

In stating our case, we shall refer frequently to four documents of prime importance, all of which are found in *Les Ruisseaux*. Since a thorough reading of the first three of these documents in their entirety is perhaps the most satisfactory means of arriving at a balanced overview of the problem we intend to treat, these documents are reproduced without deletion in an appendix at the end of this study. For the sake of immediate convenience, the works in question are listed below. The numbers in parentheses refer to the pages occupied by each work within *Les Ruisseaux*:

1. "Epitre au Roy, à qui l'Auteur addressoit une sienne traduction." (5-12)

2. "Le translateur aux Lecteurs." (347-350)

3. "Sommaire de la principale matiere du present liure." (355-356)

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*Maistre Charles*, p. 45, n. 3.
4. "Traduction en vers François du premier livre du remède d'Amours, iadis composé par le Poëte latin, Ouide." (357-387)

The "Epitre au Roy" is the first work of any length to be found in Les Ruisseaux. It is preceded by two quatrains, a sizain, and a distich, the latter in "vers alexandrins," on page three. A huitain addressed to Jean Brinon appears by itself on page four. The theme of all these short pieces is summarized by the heading at the top of page three—"A la louenge de Poësie." The epistle to the king is the work which Hawkins cites on page forty-four of Maistre Charles to postulate the existence of a translation "of which no other trace remains." Although he quotes parts of the epistle, Hawkins deletes most of those portions of the poem which could be used to give any information concerning the translation's identity.

The first fourteen lines comprise a salutation and a preparation for the business at hand, which is an explanation of the author's reasons for presenting the king with the work in question:

Si vostre esprit autant hault en sagesse  
Que vostre haulte, & heureuse noblesse  
Est elevee en toute autorité,  
(Roy admirable à la posterité)  
5- Vient à penser qui auroit peu induire  
Ma Muse basse à ce liure traduire  
Plus tost que nul des autres de l'auteur,  
Dond le renom croist en toute haulteur:  
Secondement quelle chose soudaine  
10- A fait changer la petite Fontaine  
Qui feit courir en fin de l'autre esté  
Vers vostre grande, & hautes maisté  
Un ruisselet de source encoir plus nette:  
Souuerain Roy oyez ma raisonette.
Two references in these first fourteen lines concern us here. The first of these is contained in lines seven and eight, and deals with the identity of the author whose work Fontaine had translated. This allusion might, at first glance, cause one to believe with Goujet that the work in question was that of a Neo-Latin author who was still alive.\(^5\) Taken by itself, this seems to be a reasonable enough assumption, especially in view of the line "Dond le renom croist en toute haulteur." However, it should not be necessary to re-emphasize here what has been so frequently expounded before; namely, that the writers of sixteenth-century France were fully aware of the differences between their century and the ones preceding it, sometimes to the unjustified detriment of the latter. Theirs was an age of self-conscious rediscovery of the authors of antiquity, and while Ovid's name had not been forgotten in medieval times, the sixteenth century was beginning to reinterpret the ancients, including Ovid, on the latter's own terms, without recourse to the Christian moralizing or allegory by means of which even so generally licentious a writer as Ovid had been interpreted as a pre-Christian moralist. Therefore, it may be stated without any loss of credibility that Ovid's fame could still justifiably have been considered in the

\(^5\)Bibliothèque française, xi, 127-128.
ascendancy around 1540. It was a new kind of fame for an already well-known author, to be sure, but we can see no good reason why these lines could not have applied as aptly to Ovid in the first half of the sixteenth century as they could have to any contemporary Neo-Latin author.

A brief perusal of various bibliographical studies treating the history of printed translations of Ovid in the sixteenth century will give us an even stronger reason for asserting that Charles Fontaine would have been well within the bounds of verisimilitude in claiming that Ovid's fame was still on the rise around 1540, for until the two decades before this date, there were relatively few of the famous Latin poet's works to have been translated from their original tongue into French. Lanson makes no attempt to be comprehensive in his list of sixteenth-century French translations of Ovid; however, he does refer his reader to the more specialized study by Joseph Blanc of the translations of Italian (including Latin) authors into French. Blanc indicates that before the years 1540-1541, only four of Ovid's works had found their way into the popular domain by means of various printed French translations, and that these works were often presented in only fragmentary or highly corrupted

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6 Manuel bibliographique de la littérature française moderne (Paris, 1925), p. 89.

7 Bibliographie italico-française (Milan, 1886), 2 volumes.
The Metamorphoses had, of course, remained well known throughout the Middle Ages. It had been corrupted, however, by Thomas Waleys, under whose moralizing hand it had become generally known as the Ovide moralisé. The first printed version of this work dates from 1484. Not until 1530 was an attempt made to present the Metamorphoses in more or less original form, free from Waleys' didacticism. This translation was entitled Le Grand Olympe des histoires poétiques du prince de poésie Ovide Naso en sa metamorphose. In 1533, Clément Marot offered his version of the first book of this work, to which the second book was appended in a posthumous edition published by Jean de Tournes at Lyons in 1545. In 1536 there had appeared a translation of the tenth book of the Metamorphoses, but it was not until 1539 that anything resembling a complete rendition of the entire fifteen books of the work was offered to the reading public in the vernacular. If Hawkins is correct in asserting that Fontaine's "lost" translation was presented to the king "about 1540," we can easily see that even the best

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8Bruges, Colard Mansion.
9Lyons, Romain Morin.
10Blanc, Bibliographie, p. 1116.
known of Ovid's works had only recently appeared in a more or less complete and faithful translation.

Other works by Ovid which had been translated into French before 1540 included the *Heroides*, with which Octavien de Saint-Gelais had scored a notable success in the waning years of the fifteenth century. The first dated edition of this work, known in its translated form as *Les XXI Epistres d'Ovide*, was printed in 1500. Before 1542, it had been republished in ten separate editions. A French version of the *Ars Amatoria*, known as the *Ovide de arte amandi*, had been published at Geneva in 1510. Only one other French version of this work was published between 1509 and 1540. It was a Parisian edition of 1536.

The *Remedia Amoris*, which had been first printed in a French translation in 1509 at Paris by Antoine Verard, had been republished in translation only once since this date, appended to the 1536 version of the *Ars Amatoria* mentioned above. It is described as "... le Remède d'amour (d'Aëneas Sylvius) ... " It is not unlikely

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12 Paris, Michel Le Noir.
that by about 1540 the copies of the work from this most recent printing were exhausted and that Fontaine sought to fill what he may have felt to be a need for easier access to one of the Latin poet's most pleasing works by presenting it to the king with an eye to its future publication. That Fontaine had no qualms about translating works of antiquity which had already seen publication in versions by other translators is evident from the preface he wrote to his own version of the *Heroides*, in which he sought to defend himself against the charge of having needlessly brought forth a translation of a work already sufficiently treated by Octavien de Saint Gelais:

Notre langue n'estoit pas encore bien sortie de son enfance [à l'époque où Saint-Gelais a fait sa traduction], les arts & les sciences n'estoient pas si bien esclarcies, les esprits n'estoient ni si prompts ni si vifs, ni si pénétrans qu'ilz le furent depuys.18

Regardless of his motives in preparing the translation of the *Remedia Amoris*, it appears that the relative paucity of vernacular translations of Ovid's works before 1540 could be considered a valid enough reason for Charles Fontaine to claim that Ovid's reputation would rise even higher as his works became more accessible to the general public through the medium of translation. Finally, it should be remembered that Clément Marot's translation of the first book of the *Metamorphoses* in 1533 had rekindled

an interest in Ovid within court circles. One of the best indications of the popularity of Marot's version of the first book of the *Metamorphoses* is the fact that it had three separate editions between 1533 and 1536.\(^{19}\) Therefore, by choosing a work by Ovid for translation, Fontaine could be assured that his prospective audience would be favorably disposed toward his efforts.

The second reference from the epistle to the king to which we now need to turn our attention is that contained in lines nine through fourteen. It is clear from these lines that the translation referred to in the epistle is the second work Fontaine had presented to the king within approximately one year's time. Moreover, we are assured that the nature of the second work is in great contrast to that of the first: "... chose soudaine/A fait changer la petite Fontaine." Hawkins makes the implicit assumption that the translation of Saint Augustine's *De Praedestinatione Sanctorum* was presented after the second, or "lost" translation,\(^{20}\) yet if he has any compelling reason for assigning this particular chronological order to these two works, he is chary of revealing it. Furthermore, in the light of Hawkins' acute hesitancy in assigning an exact date to the Saint Augustine translation—\(\text{he}\)


\(^{20}\) Maistre Charles, pp. 44-45.
says only that the "work was probably translated about 1540"—and his avowed lack of information concerning the lost translation, it would appear that he could indeed have no good reason for assigning any relative order of presentation to the two works. The point we are trying to make is this: if it were possible to reverse the traditionally accepted version of the order in which Fontaine presented his two translations to the king, then lines nine through fourteen would acquire some specific meaning in relation to what we already know about the one other work which we know Charles Fontaine dedicated to the king.

If we may assume—and there is no readily apparent reason not to assume—that the "Premier livre de la predestination des sainctz" was the first of the two translations presented to Francis I, it becomes most evident that there has indeed been a fundamental change in the subject matter that Maistre Charles chose for his two different translations. The degree of polarity between Saint Augustine and Ovid would have been considered in the sixteenth century to be fully as great as the chasm separating Spiro Agnew and Abbie Hoffman today. Finally, the meaning of the line "Un ruisselet de source encore plus nette" acquires some meaning within the framework of our revised chronological order. The translation of the

21Maistre Charles, p. 45, n. 3.
De Praedestinatione Sanctorum is a prose work. As Hawkins and Guillaume Colletet have both observed, Charles Fontaine possessed a firm, intelligible prose style of which he himself was not the least admirer. Therefore, he might have been a bit prouder of the results of his effort in prose than of his verse translation, feeling that it adhered more faithfully to Saint Augustine's original intent and thought, unfettered by considerations for line and rhyme. It is also possible that the phrase "Un ruisselet de source encore plus nette" used to reflect the first work alludes to the basic difference between the general character of the respective works of Saint Augustine and Ovid.

So far, we hope to have succeeded in casting doubt on two of the traditional assumptions concerning the identity of the sixth entry in Section D of Hawkins' bibliographical appendix—first, that the translation is probably based on the work of a sixteenth-century Neo-Latin writer; second, that the translation of the De Praedestinatione Sanctorum must necessarily have preceded the unknown or lost translation in order of presentation to the king. If we are to make a strong case for any identity of the translation referred to in the "Epître au Roy," we must seek more conclusive proof. This proof is to be

\(^{22}\textit{Maistre Charles}, pp. 45-46.\)
found within the immediately following lines of the epistle itself:

15- Communement chascun fait tresbien dire,
    Que qui choisit ne doit prendre le pire:
    I'ay donc eleu ce liuret cy, pourtant
    Que de santé l'Auteur y va traitant,
    Et qu'il vaut mieux estre sain que malade:

20- Cenonobstant assez me persuade
    Qu'en autre endroit pourrois tôt bien, ou mieux
    Qu'en ce labeur qui va souz voz clers yeux:
    Lequel traitant des moyens de santé
    Par bons propos en a maints contenté

25- Et tout esprit qui bon repos demande,
    Y trouuera recreation grande.

From a cursory glance, it might appear that Fontaine is trying to tell the king that he has translated a serious medical treatise. However, the last two lines of the immediately preceding passage betray a certain amount of playful irony. A serious medical text, or for that matter, any serious work is hardly the kind of material in which the average reader could be expected to find "recreation grande" or to be made happy by the presence of "maints bons propos." If, on the other hand, we assume that the words "santé," "sain," and "malade" are used in an ironic or playful fashion, the inconsistency between the beginning and end of these few lines quickly vanishes. At this point, it is important to note that the Latin equivalents of the words cited above, along with the word remedial were used precisely in this ironic sense by Ovid in the Remedia Amoris, in which the poet depicted love

\[^{23}\text{11. 100-135.}\]
as a festering wound which, if not quickly remedied by drastic means, rendered its victims' lives unbearable. Ovid's irony stemmed from the fact that in the Remedia, he was making a half-playful, half-serious attempt to restore himself to the good graces of Caesar Augustus who had been heard to grumble that Ovid's previous works, the Amores and the Ars Amatoria, were capable of corrupting the virtue of honest Roman housewives. The principal conceit assumed by Ovid in the Remedia Amoris is that of being a doctor who, having once infected the populace with the virus of love, is now prepared to offer it the cure for the contagion he has caused. Charles Fontaine may or may not have been fully aware of the extent of Ovid's playfulness, since he mistakenly assumes that the Remedia dates from Ovid's period of exile, at which time the poet quite earnestly beseeched Augustus to recall him to Rome. Fontaine was nevertheless well aware of Ovid's principal conceit, for he contends in the preface of "Le translateur aux Lecteurs," which precedes his French version of the Remedia Amoris:

Amis lecteurs, sil vous plaist lire ce mien translat en vers François du premier liure du remede d'Amour, composé en vers latins par Ouide, j'espere que vous y trouuerez plaisir & proufit, nô moindre, mais encore plus grâd qu'en ma traduction des dix epistres

24 Les Ruisseaux, p. 351.
As we have said before, it is possible that Fontaine was not fully aware of the extent of Ovid's playfulness in assuming the role of a doctor who intended to cure the world of the distress caused by love. It is possible, however, that he was fully aware of it, but chose purposefully to subdue the playful note of the treatise in order to maintain more or less credibly that the work offered not only recreation and pleasure, but moral benefits as well. In our opinion, the latter possibility is almost certainly the more accurate evaluation of the situation, since it was necessary at this time for all works of literature to make at least a pretense of fulfilling the old Horatian prescription of both pleasure and utility.

Regardless of our interpretation of the degree of Fontaine's awareness of Ovid's irony, it is apparent from the translator's preface quoted above that the "Remède d'amours" is certainly one work which, when proposed as a possible solution to the puzzle of the unknown translation, would reconcile the apparent dissonance between the opening and closing lines of the second excerpt taken from the
"Epitre au Roy." It is the immediately succeeding section of this poem, however, upon which we base the bulk of our case for the translation of the Remedia Amoris as the "lost" translation:

Vous y verrez comme on doit s'occuper
25- Pour toute oysiue occasion coupper,
Ou en l'amour de victoire par guerre,
Ou à chacer, ou cultiuer la terre:
Qui sont trois pointz de noblesse tenans,
Qui sont trois pointz à vour appartenans,
30- Ou lon a veu le cours de vostre aage
Sur tous noz Roys emporter l'auantage:
Second Cyrus vous êtes en culture:
Le chacer est vostre propre nature:
Mais en bataille, à la lance ou espee,
35- Vous ressemblez vn Cesar ou Pompee.

From this passage, we learn that within the translated treatise, the patient is expected to keep active with a variety of activities which include a career of arms, hunting, and cultivating the land. Furthermore, we learn that these are activities befitting a man of noble station.

Let us now direct our attention to the "Sommaire de la principale matiere du present liure" which is found on the two pages (355-356) of Les Ruisseaux de Fontaine immediately preceding the verse translation of the Remedia Amoris:

Ouide, pour tendre à son but, qui est de remedier à l'amour vicieuse, dit & remontre en premier lieu, & sus tout qu'il fault fuyr oysiuete pour à quoy paruenir, il propose le plaider & le ba-
tailler: hanter les champs, iardiner, & cultiuer la terre: puis chacer, ou pescher.

The similarities between the remedies at the disposal of the lovesick swain in the prose summary of the Remedia translation and those alluded to in the dedicatory epistle
to the king are too great to be completely fortuitous, but for the sake of thoroughness, let us turn to several significant passages from the text of Fontaine's translation itself:

_Fuy moy premier oysiuete damnable:
C'est celle là qui amoureux te fait:
C'est celle là qui entretient son fait:
C'est celle là qui engendre, & nourrit
Ce tant doux mal, qui nous plaist, & nous rit.
Si tu tollis oysiuete, sans doubt
L'arc de l'amour perd sa puissance toute,
Et sans chaleur demeurent ses flambeaux.
A ton esprit, reins, & lasche, donne
Pour l'occuper quelque oeuvre qui soit bonne.
Des lieux de plaitz, des loix y a, & si
As des amis que peus defendre aussi.
Pourmeine toy parmy les beaux palais
De la justice ou se tiennent les plaitz:
Ou ta ienuesse aile de cueur bien franc
Prendre l'estat de Mars tout plein de sang.
Incontinent delices, qui sont vaines,
Te laisseront, & s'enfuiron soudaines.
Si ton s'enquiert qui Egysthe tenta
D'estre adultere, y a raison expresse,
C'est qu'il estoit homme plein de paresse:
Les autres Grecz de batailler contens.
Faisoient la guerre à Troye par long temps,
Ou toute Grece auoit ses gens transmis:
Soit dóc Egysthe aux plaitz son cueur eust mis,
Ou aux çobatz, c'estoit à luy simplese,
Combatz ny plaitz ne se tenoient en Grece:
Ce qu'il a peu il a fait, c'est qu'il a
Aymé, au lieu de ne rien faire là.
Aussi les champs recreent les espritz,
Et le labeur, duquel le cueur espris
Facilement laisse tout autre cue.
Fay que taureaux, robustes de nature
Prestent leur col, qui souz le ioug se rende,
Si que le soc la dure terre fende:
Seme ton blé, & en ton champ l'enterre,
A grand profit te le rendra la terre.
Tout aussi tost que ces plaisirs des champs,
Sont de tout point le coeur d'homme touchans,
Amour vaincu d'occupations telles,
Part, & s'enuole avec ses foibles ailes.
Ou si tu veux, tu pourras pourchasser
Le passetemps, & deduit de chasser:
Souvent Venus, laidement prenant fuite,
Est par la soeur de Phebus desconfite.
From this rather extended citation, we see that of the five remedies proposed to the lovesick patient by Dr. Ovid through the good offices of his linguistic paramedic Charles Fontaine, three are explicitly enumerated within the dedicatory epistle of the lost translation addressed to the king. It was quite natural for Fontaine to associate two of these three diversions—fighting and hunting—with Francis. The appropriateness of the third, gardening, is a bit more dubious, or at best elusive.

In the matter of fighting, or warring, Francis was and still is acknowledged as a past master, and although he was possessed of the rather infelicitous capacity for snatching defeat from the jaws of victory, we would be quite justified in stating that Francis' favorite pastime was warmongering. In his own day Francis was considered, at least in official references, to be the paragon of the chivalric warrior. It is not improbable that Charles Fontaine, by inserting the comparison of Francis to a Caesar or Pompey, sought to flatter his sovereign into awarding a sinecure of some description.

As a huntsman, Francis was also acknowledged as pre-eminent. So devoted was he to hunting that there still
exists a persistent legend, which to our knowledge is un-
documented, but which nevertheless maintains that one day
while in residence at Blois, Francis, always the innovator
in court amusements, caused a wild boar to be loosed in
the palace courtyard, much to the consternation of the
several unarmed men and women who were occupying this
area at the time. A wild boar is a singularly dangerous
creature, but according to the legend, Francis, unmounted,
dispatched the animal with a single stroke of his trusty
broadsword, quite a feat for any man—even the king of
France.

Thus it seems that Fontaine was justified in drawing
parallels between Francis as a warrior and Francis the
hunter in his dedicatory epistle and two of the remedies
proposed by Ovid in the Remedia Amoris. The third figure,
that of Francis the farmer, is a bit more difficult for a
modern reader to imagine, yet it deserves some elaboration,
if for no other reason than to demonstrate that Charles
Fontaine's reading in the body of ancient literature was
exceptionally varied. The line which concerns us at this
point is that in which Francis is compared to a "Second
Cyrus ... en culture." The word "culture" poses no prob-
lem. Then, as now, it was used to mean agriculture. The
problem arises with the allusion to Cyrus as a master
farmer.

The reference in question almost certainly has its
point of origin in one of two works by Xenophon. In Book Five, Chapter Four of the *Cyropaedia*, there is recounted an incident in which Cyrus, while engaged in one of his wars against the Assyrians, makes a pact with the enemy king to exempt the agricultural workers on both sides from military harassment. The Assyrian king assents to this arrangement, thus permitting the fields to be tilled and harvested in peace while war rages all around.

Another, and in our opinion, more probable source of the allusion to Cyrus as a patron of agriculture occurs in the fourth chapter of one of Xenophon's minor prose works, the *Economicus*, which, as its title implies, is a treatise on the proper husbandry of material resources. It is composed in the form of a dialogue between Socrates and a young man named Critobullus. The latter has sought Socrates' advice on the choice of a life's career, and after several pages in which various vocations are proposed and then for one reason or another rejected, Socrates and his young protegé come to the conclusion that a sedentary occupation renders the mind dull and the body effeminate. Therefore, two honorable and useful professions remain open to Critobullus, soldiering and farming. The young man is inclined toward the latter, and Socrates appears to encourage this leaning. To persuade Critobullus that an agricultural career is every bit as honorable as a career of arms, Socrates has recourse to two anecdotes drawn from Persian history. The first of these re-
volves around a figure identified only as the "king of Persia," who, according to Socrates, rewarded good farmers and good soldiers equally well and punished both classes with equal severity, maintaining that one was as important as the other in the conquest and maintenance of his empire.

On the heels of this anecdote, there follows another centering around Cyrus the younger. According to Lysander, who was sent on a diplomatic mission to the young prince, he found Cyrus the younger walking in his garden. Lysander, always conscious of his role as a diplomat, complimented Cyrus on his garden, which he found pleasant as much for the configuration of the rows of plants and trees as for their size and robust appearance. Cyrus acknowledged the praise by saying that he was glad that Lysander had noticed the graceful disposition of the garden, since he, Cyrus, had not only planned the garden's layout, but had also set each plant personally. It is possible that Fontaine, without bothering to check the exact source of his reference, confused the "king of Persia" and Cyrus the younger, since their identities are so closely interwoven in Socrates' narrative. It is also possible that Fontaine was not an extremely good student of Greek and had therefore read the *Economicus* in a Latin translation which, unlike the Greek original, did not differentiate clearly between Cyrus the younger and his more
illustrious father. Unless the reference to Francis as a "Second Cyrus ... en culture" is an allusion to some aspect of the king's personal activity in designing the gardens and courtyards of some of the magnificent palaces he built, we are at a loss to explain its appropriateness. Fontaine's reference is the first we have encountered which treats Francis as an accomplished agronomist.

We have demonstrated that three of the five remedies prescribed by Ovid for the cure of love are to be found in the dedicatory epistle to the king. What of the other two—practicing law and fishing? The answer seems quite simple. They were neither noble nor kingly occupations. In contrast to its present-day status, the practice of law in sixteenth-century France was considered an appropriate enough career for a bright young member of the upper bourgeoisie who wished to rise within the social and political circles of his country, but neither law nor any other business which could be classified as a "trade" by the practice of which a man supported himself was considered worthy of the male members of the social class whose duty by right of birth was the direction of the greater destiny of France. Therefore, it would have been considered indelicate at best to suggest that law was a career which the king of France should pursue. As for fishing, there was apparently no distinct onus attached to it in the Renaissance, but there was nevertheless something in its more sedentary aspect which was not at all in keeping with the ethic of physical
activity espoused by the ideal Renaissance Gentleman. In Book Two of *The Courtier*, Castiglione apparently does not proscribe fishing in the same manner in which he does wrestling or tumbling, but neither does he place it on his list of approved leisure time activities which includes hunting, jousting, falconry, and dancing. In a more modern compendium of the attributes of the Renaissance Gentleman, W. L. Wiley, although he dwells at some length on the techniques and ritual associated with hunting, does not have anything to say about fishing. Finally, there is something dissonant between the image of Francis sitting placidly on the banks of the Seine or the Loire with a fishing pole in his hand and that of the vigorous man of action which he obviously tried so hard to promote during his own lifetime.

To this point, the dedicatory epistle of the "lost" translation has been quoted without deletion in three separate excerpts. We now skip twenty-six lines, the bulk of which is a digression in praise of Francis' establishment of the "college trilingue," to the next portion of the letter which concerns us:

> Or maintenant touchant le second point, Tresnoble Roy, nier ie ne veulx point Qu'il n'y ait bien assez grand'difference 65- Aux deux traictez, de stile, & de sentence: Mais tout esprit à l'estude arresté

Est recrée par maint divers traicté, 
Vray est que l'vn à corriger s'applique 
Vn vice ou deux souz stile Poëtique 
70- L'autre corrige, & maintz vices efface 
Souz un esprit plein de divine grace.

The "second point" touched upon by Fontaine in the opening lines of this passage harks back to the ninth and tenth lines of the epistle: "Secondement quelle chose soudaine/A fait changer la petite Fontaine ..." Here we find even stronger proof than before that the translation of the Remedia Amoris antedated that of the De Praedestinatione Sanctorum in its order of presentation to the king, for the "deux traicetz" are obviously the two translations which Fontaine had at this point presented to the king. The first one mentioned is clearly a light work in poetry whose primary purpose is diversion or recreation, which is the motive Maistre Charles employs to justify choosing his two translations from such widely differing sources. Its light nature is further accentuated by the tone in which Fontaine refers to its purpose of correcting only "Vn vice ou deux souz stile Poëtique." The vast difference between it and the other translation ("L'autre"), which he had previously presented, is emphasized in the last two lines of the immediately preceding citation. From the description of "l'autre" translation with which he had first honored the king, there can remain little doubt that it is the prose translation of Saint Augustine, which Hawkins for some unknown reason assumed to have been presented after the "lost" translation. While this evidence is perhaps
not completely conclusive in itself, we do believe that it is valid for purposes of substantiation to cite it here. It will be noted that Fontaine makes a point of the great difference between the styles of the two works. The "lost" translation is in poetry; therefore "l'autre" must be in prose, as is the "Premier liure de la prédétermination des sainctz." Finally, while the translation in question in the epistle to the king corrects only a casual vice or two in poetic style, the other work proposes to correct and erase many vices in a spirit full of divine grace.

Another piece of substantiating evidence which deserves to be cited is found in the lines immediately following the last excerpt examined. In these lines, Fontaine actually names the author he has translated for the king's recreation:

Combien pourtant (sans que desplaise en rien
Au hault esprit rempli de si grands biens)
A bien parler qu'est-ce que Poesie
75- Fors vne ardante, & saincte phrenesie?
Comme bien lire en nostre Ouide on peult,
Dieu est en nous, qui nous eschaufe, & meut.

There does of course exist the perfectly logical objection to naming Ovid as the author of the translation in question, since the fact that his name is mentioned in the epistle is in itself no guarantee that it is a translation of one of his works which Fontaine is in the process of presenting to the king. However, the fact that Ovid is mentioned in the dedicatory epistle is no good reason to assume that he was not the author of the work in question,
and we have several reasons to believe that he was. First, there is the question of why Charles Fontaine cited Ovid as an authority on the idea of poetic frenzy when there were so many other sources to which he could have appealed for the same commonplace. Finally there is the question of the conspiratorial sense in the wording of "nostre Ouide." Why should Fontaine say "nostre Ouide" if the work he was presenting to the king had not in fact been written by Ovid? It seems unmistakable that in this passage, taken from a poem which is representative of Fontaine's early oratorical style in which the three-point method of exposition is employed, there is a definite attempt made by Charles Fontaine to unite the various specific points of his discourse to a single dominant idea or person. In this case, the specific point deals with the nature of poetry, and the dominant person invoked to unite it to the rest of the poem is Ovid, the author of the work which Fontaine has translated and presented to the king. On the basis of the evidence brought forth in this chapter, we feel that there can no longer exist any reasonable doubt that Fontaine's translation of the Remedia Amoris, which remained unpublished until 1555 and which has heretofore been assumed to be lost, is the mysterious translation presented to the king around 1540.

In solving the mystery of the lost translation's identity, however, we are immediately faced with a second
riddle, less amenable to solution by purely logical deduction than the first, and it is ultimately this mystery which foiled scholars for over four hundred years in their attempts to identify the lost translation if, in fact, they ever made any serious attempts to do so. The riddle we refer to is that of Charles Fontaine's strange coyness in not explicitly naming the work referred to in the epistle and his failure to make any overt association at some point in _Les Ruisseaux de Fontaine_ between it and the letter to the king. Any attempt to answer this riddle must, barring the discovery of new documents relevant to it, remain to some extent within the realm of speculation, yet even speculation may be reinforced with concrete data.

We can only regard as highly uncharacteristic of Charles Fontaine that he did not tell his readers the circumstances surrounding his translation of the _Remedia Amoris_, for there was in his nature a strain of egotism, more amusing than sinister, which prompted him at times to talk about himself and his accomplishments at length. There are at least two more or less plausible explanations of Maistre Charles' behavior with respect to his timidity in associating the "Epître au Roy" with his "Remède d'amours," and the first is a direct outgrowth of his vanity. It is entirely possible, given Fontaine's own high estimate of his literary gifts, that he felt no explanation necessary, since his reading public, who he may have
supposed hung on his every word, would make all the necessary associations. This explanation has its merits and would be completely acceptable were it not for the fact that Fontaine apparently had recourse to several measures designed actively to mask the association between his epistle to the king and his "Remède d'amours." The first of these obfuscatory measures was the separation of the dedicatory epistle from the actual translation of the Remedia Amoris by nearly 350 pages. The second means used with the apparent intention of confusing the reader was a note included in the prefatory paraphernalia of the translation which is entitled "Le translateur aux Lecteurs," portions of which we have already cited. In this note, Fontaine compares the "Remède" to his translation of ten of the epistles of the Heroides.

Amis lecteurs, sil vous plaist lire ce mien translat en vers François du premier livre du remède d'Amour, composé en vers latins par Ouide, i'espère que vous y trouverez plaisir & proufit, nô moindre, mais encorres plus grâd qu'en ma traduction des dix epistres du mesme Ouide, que vous auez veue ces iours passez.

Without actually saying so, Fontaine seems to be implying that his translation of the Remedia Amoris was the result of the warm reception which had been accorded to his translation of the first ten epistles of the Heroides which had first appeared in 1552. This particular work proved so popular that it was again published in an
augmented version in 1556. Since the "Remède d'amours" is almost certainly the work presented to the king, and since we know that it was presented at approximately the same date as the translation of the De Praedestinatione Sanctorum, which Hawkins places at "about 1540," we can easily see that Fontaine is implicitly misleading his readers by as much as fifteen years regarding the date of the translation's inception. From this, it seems to follow that Fontaine was deliberately trying to mislead his readers, or if not actually to mislead them, at least to gloss over the circumstances surrounding the "Remède's" original composition, and that, contrary to the first explanation of his conduct regarding his translation's publication, he was hoping and apparently willing to gamble that the public would not see a connection between the dedicatory epistle to the king and the "Remède d'amours." If this were the case, he succeeded admirably in his gamble. In retrospect, it was perhaps the most brilliant speculation Fontaine ever made, considering the prolonged failure of subsequent investigators to place the pieces of the puzzle together. Of course this failure must also be credited to the general lack of any great interest by subsequent scholars in Fontaine's career, an eventuality which he does not seem to have anticipated.

26 Les XXI Epitres d'Ovide (Lyons, Jean de Tournes).
Another false clue Fontaine left behind him was the insertion of two dedicatory pieces of the "Remède" to Jean Brinon, a Parisian parliamentarian and amateur poet, in whom, if we can rely on the number of poems Fontaine addressed to him, Maistre Charles may well have found an encouraging admirer and perhaps even a minor patron. Brinon died in 1555, the year that Les Ruisseaux de Fontaine was published, although he must have been alive at the time the book went to press, since it contains no mention of his death—as it almost surely would have had Brinon died in time for it to be inserted.

On the basis of the several false clues we have noted, we feel that it becomes increasingly obvious that Charles Fontaine actually wished to deceive his public with respect to the circumstances in which the translation of the Remedia Amoris originated. The question which now must be answered in the remainder of this chapter is just why Charles Fontaine felt this deception necessary; and in order to provide the proper background for the solution to this problem, it is necessary for us to have a clear understanding of the essential nature and purpose of Les Ruisseaux de Fontaine.

From the "Extraict du privilège" which appears on page two of Les Ruisseaux, we learn that the license to print the book was granted on January 16, 1552, that it was to be valid for four years from that date, and that
a translation of the *Remedia Amoris* was to be included in the volume. The date of the privilege is important in deciphering the essential intent of the work, for it will be remembered that *La Deffence et Illustration de la Langue Francoyse* had appeared in 1549, and that the most important response to it, the *Quintil Horatian*, had been published in 1550. After the date of the latter document's appearance, Charles Fontaine, as its supposed author, found himself in a delicate position. Apparently feeling that he had shared and actively practiced some of the more basic of the Pléiade's ideas, Fontaine was faced with the ticklish problem of making an appropriate response to the new school's doctrine.

As we have seen, Fontaine was unsuccessful in his attempt to disown authorship of the *Quintil Horatian*; he was simply not believed. Therefore, for Fontaine to have come forth with unqualified praise for the Pléiade's program in *Les Ruisseaux* would have smacked in popular opinion of so much insincerity as to make him appear ludicrous. On the other hand, he could hardly regress to a stance of blind intransigence to the new school's theories, since this would have played him false to some of his own poetic theories. Instead of taking either absolute stand, Charles Fontaine appears to have settled on a compromise solution and the elements of this solution are to be found in the content of *Les Ruisseaux de Fontaine*. 
The Ruisseaux has already been described as a *summa* of Fontaine's poetic theories. As such, it is a work of which the main intent seems to have been a tacit demonstration that Charles Fontaine had anticipated some of the more basic ideas of the Pléiade as early as 1535, the probable date of some of the poems contained in the volume. It is no accident that the subject of poetry forms the thematic basis of the first pages of the collection, for if the Pléiade liked to prattle about the divine origin of poetry, Charles Fontaine could show that he had entertained the same idea no later than the early 1540's in epistles to the king and to his uncle, Jean Dugué. 27 If du Bellay and Ronsard passed pronouncements upon the oracular or priestly function of the poet, Fontaine could demonstrate that he had approximated these ideas in his elegy on the death of his sister, Catherine, 28 If the two principal members of the new school really saw their Olives and Cassandras as beacons to guide their ascension of the celestial ladder, Fontaine could in turn point to his own "Epistre philosophant sur la bonne amour" 29 as a work anterior to any of the younger poets' musings on the divine origins of earthly love. If the Pléiade chose to

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27 *Les Ruisseaux*, pp. 5-12, 293-297, 302-311.
underline the importance of careful craftsmanship and their disdain of hasty versifiers, Maistre Charles could point in Les Ruisseaux to his epistle entitled "Responce" to E. H. and to his "Epistre à Nicole le Iouure" (who died in 1549), in order to maintain that he, too, had held these ideas at least concurrently with the young du Belay.30

As curious as it may seem, neither Hawkins nor Raoul Morçay appears to have sensed this attempt at self-vindication within Les Ruisseaux. Instead, each has seen in this collection little more than a reactionary return to the style of Marot in the face of the triumph of the new school's theories. Hawkins, for instance, deliberately minimizes the extent of the Pléiade's influence on Fontaine:

In short, although Fontaine must be regarded as a precursor of the Pléiade, the Pléiade had no influence on him, except that it suggested to him the use of the ode and of a few metrical structures. Strangely enough, his ideas and his works before 1549 were more original and more like those of the Pléiade than were his works after 1549. After 1549 he became a "pure disciple" of Clément Marot (except in his odes); before 1549 he was a disciple of Marot and a forerunner of the Pléiade.31

Morçay generally concurs in this evaluation, saying of the residual effects of Marotisme after 1549:

31Maistre Charles, p. 237.
Il reste des Marotiques; on en rencontre en province et même à la cour qui ne paraissent pas se douter que l'étoile de Marot a pâli, qui restent fidèles au dieu de leur jeunesse et continuent de rimer sur les rythmes grêles et précieux. Tel ce Charles Fontaine, à qui, durant longtemps, on a attribué le Quintil Horatian et qui, après avoir ouvert en 1545 une Fontaine d'amour contenant élégies, épitres, épigrammes, les genres chers aux anées précédentes, laisse couler après 1550 des Ruisseaux (Lyon, 1555) inspirés du même idéal.32

In view of Hawkins' tendency to extreme qualifications and reservations and the witty M. Morçay's own precisely worded admission that Marot was not without honor after 1549, we might well question the wisdom of applying such facile and categorical terms as "precursor" to any group or individual, but a discussion of the dangers inherent in this practice will be the subject of a later chapter. For the moment, it is important to remember that both Hawkins and Morçay consider the Ruisseaux to be a reactionary regression from the ideas of the Pléiade toward those of the school of Marot. Where the question of specific poetic forms is concerned, both men are probably right, since many of the more prominent poems contained in Les Ruisseaux were written perhaps as early as the late 1530's, and only so much can be expected of a precursor. However, given the position of most of these theoretical poems at the beginning of the volume, there can be little doubt that

Fontaine was indeed influenced by the Pléiade to the extent that he sought to answer them by attempting to demonstrate implicitly that regardless of some of the differences of opinion separating the old and new schools concerning the exact poetic forms and style to be used, there was little if any difference between the opinions of the two groups on the basic nature of poetry. He may have been mistaken in this assumption, but it is no less significant that he seems to have thought that these differences were small. Therefore, *Les Ruisseaux*, or at least parts of it, must be considered as a response to the *Défense* in which Fontaine attempted to vindicate himself of some of the charges made against him both as an individual and as a member of the school of Marot.

By accepting the role of *Les Ruisseaux* as a response to the Pléiade's manifesto, the place of the translation and of Fontaine's own deliberately sown seeds of confusion surrounding it become somewhat clearer. As one of the most prolific translators of his day—Hawkins notes that roughly half of Fontaine's total literary production consists of translations—Charles Fontaine must have been at least as stung by du Bellay's disparagement of translations and those who produced them as he was by the more specific rebuke reserved for him in the "O combien je

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33 *Maistre Charles*, p. 197
désire voir ... tarir ces Fontaines" passage, especially when, as a reasonably well-read and intelligent critic, he was no doubt aware that the distinctions between translations and the Pléiade's theory of imitation were in practice often slight indeed.

It is important to emphasize at this point that Fontaine's approach to his own self-defense in *Les Ruisseaux* is always implicit. By including the two "pitoyables élégies" in *Les Ruisseaux*, by including a poem which expounded a vaguely Platonic approach to love, by inserting pieces in which he acknowledges the role of divine inspiration in poetry, and finally, by including epigrams modeled to some extent after Martial, some of which were in all probability written before the advent of the Pléiade, Fontaine tacitly gives his approbation to several facets of the new school's program, saying in effect that he had adhered to these ideas since the beginning of his career some fifteen or twenty years before. Fontaine is hesitant to speak explicitly in his own defense, and as a result of this reticence, there are only two passages in the 400 page bulk of *Les Ruisseaux* in which there is found any open criticism of the Pléiade. We feel that it is not insignificant that one of these passages was written not by Charles Fontaine, but by one of his admirers, Bonaventure du Tronchet. In an ode written to Fontaine which appears on pages 335-339 of *Les Ruisseaux*, du Tronchet begins by praising Maistre Charles in the generally hyperbolic terms
common to that era. He then settles on some specifics, asking:

Tairay-ie ses beaux sixains mis
Deuant Pallas? ses diuins Vers,
Vers qui sont de Mort ennemis,
Vers qui ne craignent point les vers?

Tairay-ie son Ouide aussi
Qu'il fait reuiure en plusieurs parts?
Par sa Muse, son doux souci,
Et par ses beaux et diuins arts?

Puis tairay-ie le loz & bruit
De son Artemidor François,
Qui m'a si bien montré le fruit
Des songes que vains ie pensois?

Tairay-ie sa prose, & recueil
Du Promptuaire precieux?
A qui Pallas fait grant accueil
Pour labeur tant laborieux?

Du Tronchet's ode is interesting for several reasons. First, its position in the collection is quite near the translation of the Remedia Amoris and was undoubtedly placed there for the purpose of propaganda in favor of translations, which had previously been so rudely attacked in La Deffence. The second interesting feature of this ode is the use of the repetitive "Tairay-ie" which can only be interpreted as a backhanded slap at du Bellay's "O combien je désire voir ... tarir ces Fontaines."

The final significant point of the passage under examination is the identity of the works praised by du Tronchet. The "beaux sixains" of the first quatrains undoubtedly refer to a piece of literary hackwork produced by Fontaine in 1554 entitled Les Figures du Nouveau
This book consisted of ninety-five woodcuts depicting prominent personnages and events from the New Testament. Of these ninety-five designs, sixty-nine were annotated by Fontaine's sixains. Hawkins has concluded that "the chief interest of the *Figures du Nouveau Testament* lies in the ninety-five woodcuts by Bernard Solomon."\(^{35}\)

The reference to Ovid in the second quatrain concerns Fontaine's 1552 translation of the first ten *Heroides*. It will be remembered that this work proved to be so popular that it was republished in 1556 and augmented to include all twenty-one of the original epistles. Fontaine's "Artemidor François" was a translation of the Italian version of Artemidorus' *Otrzymałikó*, a treatise on the interpretation of dreams, which was published in 1546.\(^{36}\) Finally, the "Promptuaire précieux" was Fontaine's translation of a Neo-Latin work by Guillaume Roville, *Promptuarium iconum insigniorum a seculo hominum*,\(^{37}\) in which the author purported to give a short history of all the illustrious men since the beginning of recorded history. Of the four works for which Fontaine is praised by du Tronchet, we see that three were

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\(^{34}\) Lyons, Jean de Tournes.

\(^{35}\) *Maistre Charles*, p. 255.

\(^{36}\) Lyons, Jean de Tournes.

\(^{37}\) Lyons, Guillaume Roville, 1553.
translations. The implication seems clear: For Maistre Charles and for many of his contemporaries, translations were assigned as much pride of place as original works.

Where the matter of original verse was concerned, Fontaine could, as we have seen, accede to some of the more basic of the Pléiade's theories and point to some of his own works as practical applications of certain tenets of the Pléiade's thought. In the question of translations, however, his position was necessarily unequivocal. He was acknowledged as one of France's leading translators, and it was on the side of translations that he was obliged to take his stand. It should be further noted that this particular stand was neither an especially dangerous nor costly one to take.

Émile Roy has speculated that the Pléiade's contempt for translations stemmed from the mere fact that translations had been held in such high esteem by the school of Marot and by their theoretical spokesman, Sébillet. As we shall see in a later chapter, M. Roy's speculation is perhaps too facile an evaluation of the situation, for the Pléiade had fundamental philosophical reasons to disparage the worth of translations. However, we shall also see that these more profound reasons were strangely those least clearly articulated by the new school in voicing its

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opposition to translations. Therefore, Emile Roy's contention that the Pléiade's opposition to translations was largely a matter of petty jealousy on the part of the younger poets is significant in spite of its inaccuracy inasmuch as it is perhaps a rather good evaluation of the situation as it seemed to exist in the minds of the adherents to the school of Marot.

Indeed, it was the Pléiade's stand on translations and translators which came under the most serious critical attack within the few months immediately following the publication of the Deffence. Fontaine thus went into battle with a considerable amount of sympathy for his position, plus a good critic's knowledge that he was attacking one of the Pléiade's weaker points.

The second explicit criticism of the Pléiade's theories contained within the Ruisseaux takes the form of a rather harsh critical blast placed in the prefatory remarks of the "Translateur aux Lecteurs" preceding the Remedia Amoris translation. It is remarkable as a demonstration of Fontaine's polemic skills:

Or quant à ceux qui sont si grands ennemis de toute traduction, à leur bon commandement; mais que ce pendant ilz ne perseuerent point à desrober (qu'ilz appellent imiter) plusieurs vers, sentences & periodes toutes entieres ... qu'ilz s'attribuent: car ilz ne sauroient si bien se couvrir de ce qu'aucuns Poëtes renommez ont fait le semblable, ce pendant lon ne les puisse, & lô ne les doive à bon droit renuyoyer au jugement que feit Aristophanes devant le Roy Ptolomee, & à la punition que ledict Roy feit
By associating his translation of the Remedia Amoris with his one original work which had found the greatest popular acclaim and with which perhaps even the Pléiade could find the least fault, Fontaine could begin to attack the new school's credibility. It is interesting to note that the original work, La Contr'amye de Court, and the translation of the Remedia Amoris are placed on footings of approximately equal value. For Fontaine, the criterion of a work's value seemed to lie not so much in its originality, but (at least for official purposes) in its ability to make virtue amiable. The Pléiade had also at least in theory espoused the same ideal of commoditas and voluptas in balanced proportions; therefore, Fontaine attempted to entrap the new school in their own doctrine. By attacking rather vehemently the Pléiade's oftentimes too-servile imitation of their classical models, Fontaine

attempted further to destroy some of the new group's credibility with the members of his audience.

With the background of Les Ruisseaux now properly delineated, we may return to the basic problem posited some time ago, which is that of Charles Fontaine's apparently willful misleading of his audience concerning the actual circumstances surrounding the original translation of the Remedia Amoris. From "Le translateur aux Lecteurs," we have seen that Fontaine made himself the champion of translations, implicitly assigning to them a value equal to that of original works. We can now fully appreciate the problem with which Fontaine found himself faced with regard to the translation he was obliged to present his public in defense of the genre.

If he were to assume the stance of a defender of translations, Fontaine's practical product would have to conform to the high place he accorded it in theory. In simple terms, it would have to be good. A good translation, especially a good translation in verse, requires a great amount of time to produce, and time was a commodity with which Fontaine, financially pressed by the demands of a growing family, was not especially blessed during the time he was preparing Les Ruisseaux for publication. We know from the information contained in the "Extraict du privilège" accompanying the volume that as early as January 16, 1552, Fontaine proposed to include a
It is therefore more than probable that Fontaine, pressed for time and money while preparing his Ruisseaux for publication, resorted to the stratagem of placing an old but formerly unpublished translation within the body of the work, attempting all the while to lead his public into believing that it was a relatively recently composed version.

It is almost certain that the "Remède d'amours," which he had translated around 1540 was, in Fontaine's opinion, a work of sufficiently high quality to match the honored place he had reserved for it in his literary theory. After all, he had quite literally conceived of it as an offering fit for a king. Not only did Fontaine believe it to be good, he had presented it to the king in the hope of obtaining some concrete reward; therefore, his opinion of it must have been high indeed.

With the preceding considerations firmly in mind, we can see why Maistre Charles could hardly have afforded to go before his readers and say in effect that as a shining example of the worthy genre which had been so unjustly maligned by the Pléiade's spokesman, he was presenting a translation which he had made as a young man some fifteen years before, and which, although it had been presented to the king, was apparently judged by Francis to be of no great consequence. Such a totally candid approach would have made him look ridiculous and would
have gone a long way toward vindicating du Bellay's opinion of the value of translations. Some harmless dissimulation was obviously in order. The result of this necessary dissimulation was that the dedicatory epistle to the king, which Fontaine nevertheless wished to include in Les Ruisseaux as proof of some of his own early enlightened views on the divine origin of poetry, was separated from the main body of the Remedia translation and placed near the beginning of Les Ruisseaux. Next, the translation was relegated to near the end of the volume where it was prefaced by new dedicatory pieces. Francis had been dead for eight years by the time Les Ruisseaux was published and could hardly be expected to return from the grave to set such a trivial matter straight. Jean Brinon, to whom the new dedicatory pieces were addressed, was soon to die and was probably none the wiser about the Remede's origin since it is improbable that Charles Fontaine ever boasted of having his efforts go unnoticed by the king.

By including the dedicatory epistle to the king and the translation to which it was originally appended within the same work, Fontaine was admittedly taking a risk, but he had hedged his bets. As subsequent centuries have proved, his gambit was eminently successful.

It occurs to us also that Charles Fontaine probably had a secondary but decidedly more human reason for choosing to include the Remedia Amoris translation in the Ruisseau de Fontaine. Endowed with the persistent faith
in himself and in his abilities, which is perhaps the strongest common denominator between the successful salesman and the unsuccessful artist, Maistre Charles was in all probability piqued and a bit hurt that Francis I had failed to grant his effort at translation more than a nominal reward, and possibly not even that. If, however, the "Remède d'amours" were to be published to great popular acclaim, then Charles Fontaine would be vindicated in his judgment of its merit and of his abilities as a translator. In early 1552, when he first began to compile the contents of Les Ruisseaux, Fontaine had no means of gauging public reaction to his translation of the Remedia Amoris. If it were cool, he had really lost nothing, and he could rationalize its lack of success in the same way that unsuccessful poets of all ages have occasionally salved their bruised egos; that is, by claiming to be a prophet without honor in a land of Phillistines. By the time of the appearance of the Remedia translation in 1555, however, Maistre Charles had every reason, on the basis of the fine reception given to his translation of the first ten epistles of the Heroïdes in 1552, to expect that the same enthusiastic reception awaited his "Remède d'amours."

A particular branch of modern psychology maintains that there are really no such things as "accidents" or "slips." Whether or not we agree with this tenet, there remains the distinct impression after all is said and done
that Charles Fontaine would probably not have been unhappy to be found out in his duplicity regarding the "lost" translation. That until now he was not is more of a testimonial to the lack of interest in his career than to Fontaine's skill in dissimulation, for the essential sign posts—similarities of phraseology, the same references repeated several times in different documents—are still evident, present in a single volume, claiming the attention of even the most casual reader. If Fontaine were completely honest in his desire to obscure the relationship between the "Epitre au Roy" and the "Remède d'amours," his efforts at dissimulation were at best amateurish, or at worst indicative of what can be described as an almost cynical evaluation of his audience's perspicacity. This rather cavalier evaluation may in its turn be taken as an eloquent if implicit statement on Charles Fontaine's conception of poetry, and it is this conception of poetry which we propose to examine in the remaining chapters of this study.
CHAPTER III

For nearly four centuries Charles Fontaine was considered by critics as little more than a peripheral member of the school of Marot who had the misfortune to run afoul of the members of the triumphant Pléiade by publishing the Quintil Horatian. As a result of his investigation, R. L. Hawkins felt constrained to insist that Fontaine should be considered at least as much a precursor of the Pléiade as he had formerly been considered a Marotique. In the process of building his case for Fontaine's right to be included within the ranks of the Pléiade's precursors, Hawkins cited four specific criteria which are Maistre Charles' erudition, his imitation of Italian models before 1549, his Platonism, and the fact that before 1549 he anticipated some of the ideas of the Pléiade and practiced some of the poetic forms advocated by du Bellay in the Deffence.¹

Above all, however, the prerequisite condition for the acceptance of Hawkins' specific points must reside in our willingness to relegate the entire responsibility for the Quintil Horatian to Barthélemy Aneau, for until such a step can be taken with some measure of good conscience, Charles Fontaine's right to be remembered as a precursor

¹Maistre Charles, p. 233.
of the Pléiade will remain at best only dubious, regard­less of the specific criteria which will be brought forth as proof of this right. Hawkins was naturally eager to convince his reader that not only did Charles Fontaine not write the Quintil, but that he could not possibly have had any connection with it since the views expressed in this document were supposedly at irreconcilable odds with Fontaine's poetic theories. To make his point, Hawkins drew heavily on the article written in 1898 by Henri Chamard, who maintained that Aneau, not Fontaine, was the final author, or redacteur, of the Quintil Horatian. However, a close examination of Chamard's reasons for assigning the Quintil to Aneau alone might well cause us to question, if not the factual accuracy of Chamard's findings, at least the conclusions he and Hawkins drew from them.

The Quintil Horatian is unique among the responses to La Deffence et Illustration de la Langue Françoys in that it undertook to answer du Bellay in much the same tone he had employed in disparaging the accomplishments of French poets prior to 1549. In addition to its scathing tone, the Quintil is not without its amusing passages, written usually at the expense of du Bellay's exaggerated classical pretensions. Commenting on the signature employed by du Bellay in the original edition of the Deffence, the

author of the Quintil says:

Par I. D. B. A.-- A quel propos ces quatre lettres? C'est (diras-tu) mon non, mon surnom & païs, mis en lettres antiques abrégées, des- quelles a écrit Valere Probe: & ce à la maniere des anciens, desquels je suis admirateur. Or bien soit: mais aussi à l'imitation des anciens, tu devois mettre le surnom gentil de ta lignée tout au long sans rien requérir, sans cuider bailler à resver ceux qui n'ont point le cerveau viude, & qui te diront (ce qu'on feit à Vergile, sur son oximore) qu'ils n'ont que faire de curieusement s'en enquerir. Par- quy pour estre cognu, tu devois escrire au long ton surnom, attendu mesmement qu'il est honneste & bien noble (comme je croy), car il y an D. Ou autrement, si tu ne voulois par ton surnom estre cognu, ne falloit que lasser le beau papier tout blanc. Mais j'enten bien: tu veux faire comme la blanche dame Vegiliane, qui aient jette la pomme, s'en fuit cacher derriere les saulx, mais toutesfois veult bien premièrement estre veuë & cognuë. Pour ce suis je d'avis que tu l'escrire au long: afin que quel­que lourdault ne interprete ces quatre lettres I. D. B. A. en quelques autres noms sotz & ridicules, tels que je ne veux pas dire: ainsi que feirent Scaure, Rutel & Cauin Romains ces quatre lettres A. F. P. R. Et le venerable Beda, la marque des Romains, S. P. Q. R. Stultus. Populus. Querit. Romanum. Combien qu'il sceust icelles signifier Senatus Populus que Romanus.3

In the question of more serious critical matters, the author of the Quintil, resenting what one critic has called the "behold-I-make-all-things-new" attitude of the Deffence, points out the fact that many of the so-called innovations of the Pléiade were actually the contribu­tions of some of the poets attacked by du Bellay. No less an admirer of the Pléiade than Henri Chamard has felt

3La Deffence, p. xiii.
himself obliged to admit that in some respects, the Quintil Horatian "ne manque après tout ni d'à propos, ni de bon sens, ni même de finesse." The Quintil received a warm reception at the time of its publication, and was reprinted at least four times between 1550 and 1556. As late as the eighteenth century, the usually acerbic Goujet could find some words of praise for it:

Ce petit écrit de Fontaine se fait lire encore avec plaisir. Vous apercevés aisément quand le critique s'amuse à vétiller, & quand sa censure est bien fondée; ce qui arrive assez souvent. Il reprend également le style, les preuves, les autorités, et les raisonnements.

The broad lines of Chamard's argument in assigning the final responsibility for the Quintil Horatian to Barthélemy Aneau are as follows: Aneau, a dabbler in verse, although not a prominent poet himself, was for some reason offended by du Bellay's wholesale condemnation of the immediately preceding generation of French poets, and was moved to defend them. As a poetic unknown, however, his response would carry little weight unless it could be associated with the name of another, better known poet. To achieve this end, Aneau is supposed to have involved Charles Fontaine in his effort. Although the Quintil Horatian is unsigned, there appears this quatrain at its

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4"La date et l'auteur," p. 54.
5La Deffence, p. viii.
conclusion:

La Fontaine à I. D. B. A.

Jamais si tost ne tarira
Claire eau de ma fontaine vive,
Que légère feu estinict sera
De l'huyle obscur de ton Olive.

According to Chamard, several clues point conclusively to Aneau as the author of this riposte. Chamard cites the discovery in 1883 by Pierre de Nolhac of a letter written by Charles Fontaine to Jean Morel in which the author specifically denied having written the Quintil, and in which he asked Morel to help dispel the common belief that he was its author. In addition to denying having written the Quintil, Fontaine went so far as to name Aneau as its author. Apparently realizing, however, that Fontaine's letter could be an example of the efforts of a man to extricate himself from further involvement and embarrassment in an affair which had taken a sour turn, Chamard passes quickly to several other points.

The first of the major points through which Chamard seeks to prove that Charles Fontaine was not lying when he assigned the responsibility for the Quintil to Aneau is the apparent discrepancy between the work's theories on the elegy and Fontaine's practice of the form. Chamard insists that the author of the Quintil rejects the elegy

7Pierre de Nolhac, Lettres de Joachim du Bellay (Paris, 1883). Hawkins also reproduces the salient parts of this letter on pp. 150-152 of Maistre Charles.
D'abord, l'auteur du Quintil rejette l'Elégie. "Tu nous renvoyes, dit-il à Du Bellay, à ces pitoyables Elégies (helas) pour, alors que demandons à rire, nous faire plorer, à la singeerie de la passion Italienne". — Plus loin il ajoute: "le vouldroye mieux apprendre des Epistres à parler, et escrire, et enrichir mon vulgaire, et ma langue illustrer que de tes Elégies larmoyantes". — "La Poésie, dit-il encore, est comme la peinture. Or la peinture est pour plaire et ressourir, non pour contrister. Parquoy la triste Elégie est une des moindres parties de Poésie". Cette formelle condamnation de l'Elégie serait inexplicable de la part d'un homme dont la Fontaine d'Amour (1546 [sic]) contenait vingt-deux élégies. D'autant plus qu'à tout prendre, le talent modeste de Fontaine était à l'aise dans ce genre: c'est peut-être là qu'il a le mieux réussi: on peut compter parmi ses œuvres les plus heureuses les deux pièces qu'il composa sur la mort de sa soeur Catherine et sur le trépas de son fils René. Il serait étrange, avouons-le, que Fontaine eût montré ce dédain pour un genre qui devait si bien l'inspirer. 8

On the surface, Chamard's argument is above suspicion. Further reflection, however, raises several questions which even Chamard's careful reasoning seems unable to answer in a totally satisfactory manner. First, it does not appear that the rejection of the elegy is necessarily as categorical or as formelle as Chamard insists. It will be noted that in the passages of the Quintil which Chamard cites in order to prove the Quintil's bias against the elegy, and which in fact constitute the sum total of the Quintil's commentary on the genre, it is not

8 "La date et l'auteur," p. 62.
the elegy itself, but rather a particular kind of elegy which is condemned. In each instance it is the sad (pitoyable, larmoyante, triste) elegy which is disparaged. As we have already seen, the elegy was far from being completely defined in the mid-sixteenth century, and it seems to be the idea of the elegy considered only as an essentially sad poem against which the author of the Quintil Horatian rebels. While it is true that the elegies of La Fontaine d'Amour are highly conventional works in which the lover's pain and sadness as well as his mistress' beauty and cruelty are described at length and in hyperbolic terms, they are not really sad poems. Rather, they might more accurately be defined as love poems in which the Petrarchan tendencies toward exaggeration have become part of a highly stylized jeu d'esprit. As such, it would seem that these poems have the real purpose of pleasing the reader with their felicity of expression. They are not vehicles for the expression of the very personal grief and sense of desolation which characterize, for example, the Ex Ponto and the Tristia of Ovid. The elegies of the latter works, according to Chamard himself, were the models which du Bellay had in mind when he proposed the pitoyables Elégies as models for emulation by the aspiring young poet addressed in the Deffence. In the main

\[9\] La Deffence, p. 111.
the elegies of *La Fontaine d'Amour* are much closer
descendants of the lighter *Amores* in which, according to
the best modern authorities, Ovid was parodying the tra-
dition of the sad love elegy, thereby reducing its com-
ponent parts to the level of a game played tongue-in-cheek
with the reader.  

In connection with this point, there remains one last
and rather nagging inconsistency in Chamard's argument.
In the few lines immediately preceding those cited above,
Chamard, summarizing the content of Fontaine's letter to
Morel, says:

Peut-être aussi le croira-t-on fâché de ce
que l'auteur de la *Défense* semble s'en prendre
à lui quand il s'écrie: "Ô combien je désire
voir secher ces Printens ... tarir ces *Fontaines*! ..." Mais, outre qu'il [Fontaine] n'est
pas certain que ce passage vise bien sa *Fontaine
d'Amour*, il ne fait point tant de cas de cette
œuvre qu'il la juge à l'abri de toute cri-
tique.  

The inconsistency we refer to is simply this: If
Fontaine were sincere in his own appraisal of *La Fontaine
d'Amour* in his letter to Morel, and Chamard seems to be-
lieve that he was, would it be too presumptuous to say
that Charles Fontaine did in fact reject the elegy à la
*singerie de la passion Italienne* after 1545? Indeed, this
does appear to be the case, for the only elegies published

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10 Brooks Otis, *Ovid as an Epic Poet* (Cambridge, Eng.,
1966), pp. 11-16.

11 "La date et l'auteur," pp. 61-62.
by Fontaine after this date are the two mentioned above by Chamard on the deaths of Catherine and René. These two pieces, although they commemorate two deaths which to all appearances occurred around 1540 and 1547 respectively, were first published only in 1555 when it was becoming apparent that the literary theories set forth in the "Deffence" were beginning to find general acceptance in France. These two later pieces conform admirably to the pattern of the "pitoyables élégies" recommended by du Bellay in 1549. The elegy on the death of Catherine, if it were composed at the time of her death or only shortly thereafter, would have been written in ample time for inclusion in La Fontaine d'Amour.

There are two conclusions which we may justifiably draw from the preceding brief history of Charles Fontaine's elegiac production. First, Fontaine seems to have favored the light, pleasant elegy until at least 1545, after which he may well have rejected it. In our discussion of La Fontaine d'Amour, we shall see how Maistre Charles may have felt himself obliged by popular taste to adopt the elegy, regardless of his personal preference for it. If the subsequent lack of elegies written in the vein of those found in La Fontaine d'Amour may be taken as a concrete indication of Fontaine's rejection of the form, we can go so far as to say that the matter of rejection of the elegy moves from the realm of conjecture to that of fact. Second, it appears that Fontaine's reluctance to publish the two
later elegies until 1555 may have reflected serious doubts on his part that the "pitoyable élégie" would be well received by his audience. Once these two conclusions are accepted as at least tentatively admissible, we may next assume that it is entirely possible that Fontaine's opinion of the elegy in 1550 may not after all have been so dissonant with that of the author of the Quintil Horatian.

Chamard next calls his reader's attention to the fact that the author of the Quintil states that he had translated Horace's Ars Poetica into French verse: "il y a plus de vingt ans, avant Pelletier et tout autre."\(^1\)\(^2\) This statement means, of course, that the translation in question would have been made around 1530, when Charles Fontaine would have been only about sixteen years old, an age at which Chamard maintains that Fontaine would still have been much too young for such an undertaking, yet at which time, Aneau, born in the late fifteenth century, would have been at the height of his intellectual powers.\(^1\)\(^3\) At first glance, this seems to be one of Chamard's most convincing arguments, yet we should not forget that Fontaine was only sixteen years old when he became a maistre ès artz. Finally, it is passing strange that none of Charles Fontaine's contemporaries seems to have sensed

\(^{1,2}\) *La Deffence*, p. x.

\(^{1,3}\) "La date et l'auteur," p. 63.
any great discrepancy at the disclosure of the twenty-year old translation of Horace and Fontaine's own age at the time of the appearance of the *Quintil Horatian*. That they were not put on guard by this disclosure would seem to indicate that they found nothing unusual in the fact that a sixteen-year old schoolboy might undertake and even complete a respectable rendition of the *Ars Poetica*, especially when the schoolboy had, by virtue of his subsequent record as a translator, proved himself to be a Latinist of some competence.

As a final means of substantiating his other assertions, Chamard makes the point that the author of the *Quintil Horatian* was both a schoolmaster and a man versed in legal terminology, since he wrote in a pedantic and legalistic style. Aneau, in addition to being the principal of the Collège de la Trinité, is also known to have studied some law at the University of Bourges under the direction of Melchior Wolmar. In the course of his research, Hawkins rediscovered the previously forgotten fact that for a few months in 1555, Charles Fontaine had served as interim principal at the Collège de la Trinité, where Aneau had been headmaster, and to which he was to return at the expiration of Maistre Charles' appointment. In assessing this particular part of Chamard's argument,

14 "La date et l'auteur," p. 65.
Hawkins was forced to admit that it might not be so strong a point as Chamard had originally supposed, because if Fontaine had been sufficiently versed in grammar, rhetoric, and dialectic to have been chosen even as an interim principal of this prestigious school, there is no reason to assume that he would have been incapable of employing the scholastic vocabulary which Chamard so correctly observed in the style of the author of the *Quintil Horatian*. The second part of Chamard's argument might also be weakened if we admit the possibility that Charles Fontaine had also studied law at some early point in his career.

Correlative to his stylistic discussion of the *Quintil*, Chamard undertook a painstaking comparative analysis of the style of this document in relation to that of the extant prose works known to have been written by Barthélemy Aneau. This study, originally intended merely to put the finishing touches upon his primary arguments, is perhaps in reality the most satisfactory point Chamard makes, for there is no evidence in the writings of Charles Fontaine of many of the words for which both the author of the *Quintil Horatian* and Barthélemy Aneau shared a common fondness. Many of these words reflect a rather thorough background in Greek, which Aneau would certainly have possessed. Some of the words in question are *aetiologie*.

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15 *Maistre Charles*, p. 152, n. 4.
In addition to inserting the quatrain which concludes the *Quintil Horatian* and which, if we are to take Fontaine at his word, is spurious, Aneau, according to Chamard, sought further to dupe his readers into believing that Charles Fontaine had written the *Quintil* by employing the word *Fontaine* twice in places where the lower case form of the word would have been more appropriate. With respect to the quatrain, we must remember that the sixteenth century was the era of a multitude of unauthorized publications, with Marot and Rabelais having suffered considerable discomfiture at the hands of Etienne Dolet as the result of this practice. It is indeed possible that Aneau seized upon a poem privately circulated by Fontaine and published it in the hope of associating its author with the *Quintil Horatian*. In his letter to Jean Morel, Fontaine denied that he wrote the quatrain, insisting that it "ne sent ma veine." We must disagree with Maistre Charles in this particular, for even in so short a piece one is able to discern two characteristics of Fontaine's veine: a ready wit marred by a distinct taste for inane punning and word play. If the quatrain is a forgery, we can only say that it is quite intelligently done.

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16 "La date et l'auteur," p. 67.
17 "La date et l'auteur," p. 68.
It is impossible to ascertain with any degree of certainty the exact role played by Charles Fontaine in the composition of the *Quintil Horatian*, if in fact he played any role at all. Chamard, while assigning the major part of the responsibility for the work to Barthélémy Aneau, is nevertheless realistic enough to suspect that even if Fontaine had been unaware of the document's existence until after its publication, he was perhaps not extremely distressed at the fact that it was generally attributed to him:

Peut-être qu'à tout prendre, Fontaine, malgré ses protestations d'innocence, n'était pas si fâché qu'il le disait à Morel: peut-être qu'au fond de lui-même, et sans bien se l'avouer, il n'en voulait pas trop à l'auteur du *Quintil* du rôle que ce dernier lui faisait jouer et qui le posait en défenseur souverain d'une école dont il avait été l'une des gloires, après Marot, à côté d'Héroët, de Saint-Gelays et de plusieurs autres.¹⁹

We know that the relationship between Aneau and Fontaine hardly seems to have suffered because of the incident of the *Quintil Horatian*, for as late as 1555, Fontaine was still addressing laudatory poems to the principal of the Collège de la Trinité.²⁰ Given these indications, plus the fact that on the question of the elegy there may not have existed the dissonance between the views of Aneau and those of Fontaine that critics have previously assumed to

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¹⁹ "La Date et l'auteur," p. 72.

²⁰ *Les Ruisseaux*, p. 205.
exist, it does not seem that the idea of some collaboration between Fontaine and Aneau in the composition of the Quintil Horatian should be categorically discounted. W. F. Patterson, without citing his sources, implicitly assumed some degree of collaboration between the two men:

More detailed criticisms of the Deffence are found in Le Quintil Horatian (1550) of Barthélemy Aneau, written perhaps with some knowledge and possibly also with some active collaboration from the Lyons poet Charles Fontaine, despite his denial of responsibility.21

Since the question of Charles Fontaine's religious leanings has been so pertinently raised by Grace Frank, it would probably not be inappropriate at this point to add a postscript to our remarks on Fontaine's acknowledged friend and possible collaborator, Barthélemy Aneau. As we have seen, the two men were still on cordial terms as late as 1555. In 1560, in the course of a religious procession through the streets of Lyons, several large stones were thrown into the throng of participants from behind the walls of the Collège de la Trinité, of which Aneau was still the principal. An unruly mob soon formed at the site of the incident. In the ensuing violence, the college was stormed and Aneau, long suspected of heretical tendencies, was slaughtered. According to Patterson, this coup was engineered by the Jesuits, who for some years had been trying unsuccessfully to gain control of the school. After

Aneau's death, its direction was entrusted to this group. Although it is certainly not enough to convict a man of Protestantism merely to show that he was on good terms with a known Protestant, the case of the close ties between Fontaine and Aneau does add some weight to the circumstantial evidence which points to Fontaine as being what we can perhaps best define as a secret Protestant.

Hawkins, prompted by the motive of finding a secure niche for Charles Fontaine among the ranks of the early precursors of the Pléiade, tends to represent his subject as the completely innocent victim of Barthelemy Aneau's machinations. However, in view of the total evidence, which should be expanded to include Chamard's own reservations concerning the extent of Fontaine's real displeasure at having his name associated with the Quintil Horatian, Patterson's assessment of the situation appears to be the much more likely one. While it is probably safe on the basis of Chamard's painstaking stylistic analysis to assign the final draft of the work to Aneau, it is not unwarranted to suppose that he undertook his task with at least the tacit consent and perhaps the active approval of Charles Fontaine.

We hope to have suggested in our examination of the Quintil Horatian that Charles Fontaine, although he probably was not its final author, could quite possibly have held many of the views expressed in this pamphlet. Therefore, we believe that Hawkins' central assumption, which
must be accepted before any of his four specific criteria acquire any substantial validity, is seriously weakened. Furthermore, we believe that an examination of these criteria will open them to serious enough question to justify a fundamental reappraisal of Charles Fontaine's poetic theory.

Since the question of Fontaine's Platonism is perhaps the most complex of the four points Hawkins raises, we shall examine it first. As we have seen in our first chapter, it has been traditionally accepted practice to regard the Querelle des Amyes as a bitterly waged literary battle whose primary participants belonged to one of two highly polarized camps, led by Bertrand de la Borderie on the anti-feminist side and by Antoine Héroët and Charles Fontaine on the side of the feminists. This traditional interpretation of the event known as the Querelle des Amyes takes a part of its justification from a single meager passage found in a poem written by Charles de Sainte-Marthe, in which the poet places Héroët and Fontaine on a seemingly equal footing with regard to the question of women and love. Enumerating the poetic stars of Francis I's reign, Sainte-Marthe exclaims:

Et là auprès Héroët le subtil,
Avecques luy Fontaines le gentil
Deux en leurs sons une personne unie,
Chantants auprès de l'haulte Polymnie.22

22La Poesie francoyse de Charles de Sainte-Marthe (Lyons, 1540), p. 203.
Within this structure, Charles Fontaine's role has been viewed as that of a recruiting sergeant for his side. Although this interpretation has the weight of historical acceptance in its favor, it does seem to fail to take into consideration at least one inconsistency which was to come to light in 1555 with the publication of *Les Ruisseaux de Fontaine*. In this volume there is found an exchange of two rhymed epistles between Guillaume Teshault (Guillaume des Autelz) and Charles Fontaine which date from around 1547. Des Autelz had been so disturbed by Paul Angier's base reply to Fontaine's *Contr'amye de Court* that he felt moved to ask the older poet for permission to take up the cudgels in Fontaine's favor against the *Expérience de M. Paul Angier Carentenois, contenant une briefve défense en la personne de l'Honneste Amant de Court contre la Contr'amye*:\textsuperscript{23}

\begin{quote}
Donq en lisant l'oeuvre tant gracieux,
De cet amant, fol, & audacieux,
D'ardent despit mon courage s'allume,
Et par troys foys ie mis es mains la plume,
Pour luy respondre à mon petit pouvoir,
Et enuers toy faire le mien deuoir.
Mais ie pensay honneste, ou necessaire
(Plus tost que d'estre en cela temeraire)
T'en aduertir: ma basse Muse aussi
Me conseilloit qu'il falloit faire ainsi,
Quoy qu'elle fust d'ire esprinse, & rauie,
Et de respondre eust merveilleuse enuie.\textsuperscript{24}
\end{quote}

Fontaine expressed gratitude for des Autelz's willingness

\textsuperscript{23}Paris, 1544.

\textsuperscript{24}*Les Ruisseaux*, pp. 231-232.
to intervene, but declined his services with the following disclaimer:

A ce que quiers si response dois faire
A cet avant de tant mauvais affaire:
Et qui son nom trop lourdement efface,
D'aulx ne suis que ta Muse las face:
Car s'il en fut en quelque sort digne,
D'autres amis de leurs grace bénigne
L'eussent la faite: ou le Jouure ou le Sage 25
Mais il conuient estre en sa Muse sage,
Et ne se doit un poète auanser
En vn tel cas, sans long temps y penser
Et sans conseil auec ses amis prendre
(Comme tu fais) auant que d'entreprendre.
   Et si tu dis qu'à l'amie de Court
I'ay respondu: ie te dy, brief, & court,
Qu'elle a propos, & grace trop meilleure
Que cet amant qui pour elle labeure
Et ie voyant qu'elle estoit en hault pris.
A la response appliquay mes espritz,
Querant l'honneur qu'vn Poëte doit guerre
Qu'est par ses vers aux plus grans liure guerre

25 The identity of Le Sage has long been a mystery. Hawkins confessed his inability to identify him (Maistre Charles, p. 117, note 2). In view of Hawkins' habitual thoroughness, this confession is tantamount to proof that Fontaine never had a friend by this name. The passage in which Fontaine mentions Le Sage to des Autelz is found on p. 237 of Les Ruisseaux. Just two pages later, on p. 239, Fontaine, addressing another epistle to Jean Orry, counsels his friend to be of good cheer, citing the following authority for his injunction:

Et pourtant dit le Sage, que tristesse
Seiche les os: c'est mauuaise maistresse.
The Sage referred to in the last passage is obviously Solomon, who was commonly known to the men of the age by this epithet. The particular passage which inspired Fontaine seems to have been Proverbs 17:11: "A merry heart doeth good like a medicine, but a broken spirit drieth the bones." It may be possible that a typesetter's error on p. 237 resulted in the transposition of Le Sage where another name was supposed to have been placed, and that Sauvage may well have been the name originally intended for the lines on p. 237. Denys Sauvage would certainly have been a logical source of support for the Contr'amye, since it was he who wrote prefatory notes to two editions of the work, in which he praised it highly (See Hawkins, pp. 247, 248.)
It is strange that Fontaine should have refused the proffered assistance of des Autelz had the real circumstances surrounding the Querelle des Amyes been consistent with the traditionally accepted version of its origin and progress, for surely Fontaine would have welcomed any aid if the battle had been as bitter as we have been led to believe it was. Furthermore, Maistre Charles' assurance that all of the major participants in the polemic had remained good friends rings false within the framework of the quarrel as we have come to understand it. It was only in 1959 that M. A. Screech proposed an alternative to the accepted view of the debate which would satisfactorily resolve these two inconsistencies. In Screech's opinion, the Querelle des Amyes was not at all a highly pitched battle, but rather a colloquium or friendly debate among La Borderie, Fontaine, and Héroët in which each writer expounded his ideas on the nature of love, and in which the long-accepted idea of philosophical polarization did not exist. In general, Screech maintains that the contributions of La Borderie and Fontaine even complemented each


other, since the main intent of each work was the disparagement of the conventions of love then in vogue within the courtly circles of France. The entire affair supposedly took a bitter turn when Angier, an uninvited interloper, committed his thoughts to vituperative verse and injected them into the debate. Screech's alternative thus has the advantage of explaining why Fontaine refused des Autelz's offer of assistance and why Maistre Charles could conscientiously say that he, La Borderie, and Héroët had remained friends throughout the debate. Angier's unsolicited contribution and the dismay it evoked might also serve to explain why we have come to regard the entire affair as a bitterly contested polemic.

Within the structure of Screech's revised interpretation, La Borderie's poem, L'Amye de Court, is regarded as a satire directed against a certain type of woman who traveled in the court circles of the time and who used smatterings of voguish knowledge as rationalizations for her own mercenary and self-interested conduct in matters of the heart. In no way should it be considered an indictment of women in general, as has often been assumed. Fontaine's Contr'amye de Court, for its part, is interpreted by Screech as a work in some ways complementary to La Borderie's in that it too encouraged a turning away from the elaborate and exaggerated conventions of love then in fashion among members of the aristocracy toward a view of love more in keeping with the Medieval French tradition.
For this reason, it is significant that Fontaine chose as his heroine a young woman of the Parisian bourgeoisie whose father was a literate merchant who spent his spare time reading philosophy. Pauline Smith has said concerning Fontaine's choice of a young bourgeoisie to act as his spokesman that "the insinuation is clearly that a young lady of the aristocracy has much to learn about nobility of mind and character from a young lady of the bourgeoisie." It is for this reason that we feel that Fontaine's choice of a merchant's daughter as his protagonist in the Contr'amye has an entirely different significance from that of autobiographical information proposed by Goujet.

As far as Fontaine's supposed Platonism is concerned, Screech maintains credibly enough that it amounts to little more than a superimposition of the then-fashionable Ficinian ideas on love to a concept which remained in essence quite close to that of the Middle Ages. Fontaine's Platonism was especially jarring to the sensibilities of the Platonists of his own age because he sought to make marriage the logical end of love:

He [Fontaine] of course only adopted ideas from Ficino, as many other "platonists" did, in order to do violence to them. His love is not only reconcilable with marriage, as Ficino's lower love is; it has marriage as its natural corollary. Ficino's lower love is the desire to procreate children; Fontaine is really indifferent to the desire and duty of having children. This is due

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to the fact that poets like Fontaine only really used Ficino, to adorn a concept of love which still remained very close to Medieval romantic views, which do not have the birth of a child as the desirable end of a passionate liaison. Fontaine keeps this attitude even when applying himself to married love. He seems content to exploit Ficino in order to make love in marriage more gentle, more optimistic, more concerned with personality than physical desire. It was also a means of rejecting *folle amour* but keeping love as a theme of poetry and an ideal.

Screech continues:

In opposing *folle amour*, Fontaine had set himself a moral task. Yet his remedy of making love (loosely defined) the basis for marriage seemed to many of his contemporaries dreadful. Despite the obvious excellence of Contr'Amye de Court herself, it was her poem that seemed immoral to some. ...

There is an interesting testimony both to the stimulus of Fontaine's "platonism" and the way in which it nevertheless fitted snugly into Medieval poetic love traditions, in P. du Bal's preface to the Puy du souverain Amour. ... The God of Love appears at the Puy as a composite figure, owing much to the Medieval ideas but much also to others, including perhaps S. Paul. What he owes to Fontaine is not a matter of conjecture. Du Val writes, "Ainsi ce Dieu tant amyable, bien joyeulx de les veoir assemblez en concorde pour discuter des haulx faictz que Nature fact par luy, il propose ung discours de ses magnificences de semblable sorte comme il est descript aux livres de nouveau imprimes, tant de la Contre Amye comme de celuy intitué le Nouvel Amour: mais pendant cest amoureux devis, l'un des dictz enfans, en s'approchant des traictz d'iceluy Amour, changea incontinent propos, voulant exalter Hymenus, dieu des nopces: et fut cela de semblable sorte comme la transformation de la pucelle Seringue en roseau, ou de Daphné en Laurier, ou de Castor et Pollus en ung signe stélifère."29

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As the preceding citation shows, Screech does not deny the existence of certain ideas of a vaguely Platonic flavor in Charles Fontaine's *Contr'amye de Court*, for they are undeniably there, and their presence should not astonish us. In fact, we should perhaps be more surprised by the absence of at least traces of Platonism than we should be by their presence, so thoroughly did these ideas permeate the culture in which Charles Fontaine lived. We do, however, question Hawkins' interpretation of the direction these ideas assumed when they were adopted by Fontaine.

In addition to using the "new" Platonic ideas which were in the air at the time merely to adorn and to make more compatible with sixteenth-century thought a concept which Screech has maintained was "very close to Medieval Romantic views," it appears that Maistre Charles may have come rather close to espousing the Pauline rationale for marriage. For the *Contr'amye*, the resolution of her passion was marriage to her beloved. It was marriage which Fontaine proposed as a foil to *folle amour*. This idea approaches closely the first of two justifications in Pauline doctrine for marriage; that is, as a means of avoiding fornication: "For it is better to marry than to burn."30

Screech is correct in maintaining that for the

30 I Corinthians 7:8.
Contr'amye the purpose of marriage is not one of procreation, which was the second of Paul's justifications for the institution of matrimony. However, in the tenth epistle of _La Fontaine d'Amour_—an epistle which is striking for its individuality when compared with the others of the collection—Fontaine comes to the point of espousing this justification:

_Sil est ainsi quon se mect en mesnage,_
_Et quon eslit lestat de mariage,_
_Plus pour auoir lingee que autrement:_
_Et que souldain, voire bien caultement,_
_Le feu damour deux cueurs ensemble mesle,_
_Si quon engendre enfant masle our femelle:_
_Comparer puis cest estat: vertueux,_
_Bien dignement à larbre fructueux:_

The remainder of the poem is devoted to developing a comparison between the relative blessedness of the states of maternity and virginity. Although Fontaine finishes by awarding preference to virginity in some respects, he also finally reconciles himself to the idea that matrimony and parenthood may be entered into with God's blessing:

_Dautant lestat de mariage passe_
_Virginité, si les deux compasse._
_Car le premier est fertile de soy:_
_Le second non. En ce ne me deçoy,_
_Et ne desplaise à prieure, ou abbesse,_
_Ne crient ia que leur honneur i'abaisse,_
_Le scay tresbien que la virginité_
_Aproche plus de la diuinité._
_Sans le premier ne fussent ilz à naistre:_
_Mesme vn chacun tant soit il puissant maistre._
_Sans le second, qui est vn haultain bien,_
_Lon peult pourtant à Dieu complaire bien._

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31 p. 76.

32 p. 77.
It is evident from these lines that for Charles Fontaine, the question of love (loosely defined), marriage, and feminism were interwoven to no small degree with religious questions, as well as with literary and moral considerations. Furthermore, these religious questions seem to have been direct echoes of the Pauline doctrine of marriage. In the Pauline system of marriage, woman is constantly admonished to be humble. It is interesting to observe in the Contr'amy de Court that the virtues recommended to the women of various early churches are those employed by the Contr'amy: modesty in dress and conduct and humility in her general demeanor. It is indeed the Contr'amy's humility and modesty which seem to have been the deciding factors in her lover's choice of her: "Et me voyant tant humble tant m'ayma/Que pour amye et femme prise m'a."33 An attitude on the part of the woman such as the Contr'amy would seem to indicate that a much more just appraisal of the Contr'amy would be to say that it is a curious amalgam of Platonism and Medieval tradition, both of which are pressed into the service of the Pauline ideal of woman and her place in society.

Caroline Ruutz-Rees has expressed perplexity at the apparent dissonance between the "Platonism" of the Contr'amy de Court and one of the principal themes of the

33Opuscules d'Amour par Hercoet, La Borderie, et autres divins Poètes (Lyons, 1547), p. 190.
Fontaine d'Amour, which Fontaine himself summarized in the following couplet:

Aussi la femme est créature faicte
A fin que l'homme elle récree et traicte.  

Ruutz-Rees expresses her dismay at the change in Fontaine's manner of regarding women in the following terms:

This [La Fontaine d'Amour] is a surprising development in a poet who had already proved himself a loyal defender of women by replying in 1537 to Papillon's attack on the motives of the fair sex, ... who was shortly to become one of the champions of the "platonic" view of love through his Contr'amy de Court, of 1541, and who was to show himself such once more in his Ruisseaux de Fontaine of 1555.  

Ruutz-Rees proposes to solve her dilemma by theorizing that many of the poems of the Fontaine d'Amour are above all exercises in style in which Maistre Charles tried his powers of imitation, taking Sannazaro, in addition to Ovid, Martial, and Petrarch as models. Since these pieces are mere stylistic exercises, Ruutz-Rees seems to draw the implicit conclusion that Fontaine could hardly be expected to adhere very closely to "the 'platonic' view of love" of the Contr'amyde, and that there is, after all, no essential divergence on the poet's part from the views expressed in those poems of a more Platonic flavor. While we agree that La Fontaine d'Amour does present a problem to critics, we do not feel that this problem is centered in the realm

34p. 88.

of Fontaine's Platonism or lack of it, since we feel that Fontaine's ideas on women were more thoroughly influenced by religious and moral considerations than they were by Platonism. When viewed as a statement of Pauline doctrine, the lines "La femme est créature faicte/A fin que l'homme elle récree et traiyte," is less an abandonment of Platonic doctrine than a reinforcement of essentially Pauline ideas. In connection with the question of Fontaine's espousal of basically Pauline ideas on love and marriage, it is of more than just passing interest to note that Charles Fontaine, of all the French poets of the sixteenth century, was the only one who addressed the vast majority of his love poetry to Flora, his wife.

Hawkins himself seems to have had misgivings about awarding Fontaine credentials as a Platonist on the basis of the Contr'amye alone. He therefore points to the existence in Les Ruisseaux de Fontaine of a poem entitled "Epître, philosophant sur la bonne amour: à vne dame." We agree that this poem is much more thoroughly Platonic in spirit than the Contr'amye, showing the direct influence of Castiglione's Il Cortegiano and perhaps the influence of Leone Ebreo's Dialoghi. We further agree that, judging from the rhetorical method of exposition which was a marked influence on Fontaine's early style, and which is

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36 Les Ruisseaux, pp. 13-16.
employed throughout the poem, this epistle probably dates from the early years of Fontaine's career as a poet. However, we feel that one single poem, culled from a relatively large poetic production and not published until 1555, hardly suffices to place Charles Fontaine within the front ranks of the early French Platonists.

Finally, with regard to Fontaine's Platonism, we must say that the acceptance of the validity of even this slender link between Fontaine and the Pléiade depends entirely upon the assumption that the members of the Pléiade were as thoroughly Platonic in their ideas on love as Hawkins and his contemporaries believed they were. At least one more recent critic has cast doubt on this traditional assumption:

Bien que les dialogues de Léon Hébreu aient été fort lus en France et traduits dès 1555, il ne faudrait point exagérer leur influence directe sur la poésie française. Ils contribuent à l'orientation générale vers l'exaltation de l'amour pur, que l'on rencontre chez Héroet, Scève, Marguerite de Navarre et Fontus de Thyard, bien plus qu'ils ne leur fournissent des thèmes précis. Quant aux poètes de la Pléiade, ils subissent, beaucoup moins que les précédents, l'influence du platonisme. Sans doute, dans L'Olive et surtout dans les Treize Sonnets de l'Honneste Amour, rencontre-t-on un certain nombre d'images ou de thèmes empruntés à Platon, peut-être par l'intermédiaire de Ficin, et quelquefois par l'imitation de certains sonnets pétrarquistes italiens ou de certains sonnets de Fontus de Thyard; mais souvent du Bellay ne retient du thème platonicien que l'image, et la détourné de son sens mystique.37

The justice of this observation is admirably reinforced by remembering that for the poets of the Pléiade, the physical practice of love was every bit as important a poetic theme as was love's more spiritual aspect.

At this point, we seem to have reached a state of what we may term mutual negation in which we must face the possibility that neither the members of the Pléiade nor Charles Fontaine were quite the thorough Platonists with regard to the question of woman that earlier critics have portrayed them to be. In the face of this apparently good possibility, we believe that the most judicious step would be to hold the question of Platonism as a connecting link between Charles Fontaine and the Pléiade in abeyance, and to assign it a neutral value, for as Screech has observed, Plato's name and his ideas were often invoked in the sixteenth century to support causes which were often directly contrary to each other: "It is wise to recall that Plato was called upon to support the cause of Christian marriage, as well as both to attack and defend women in the fifteen-forties in France."

We return now to the remaining three criteria established by Hawkins as justifications for counting Charles Fontaine among the precursors of the Pléiade. With regard to Maistre Charles' learning or erudition, we willingly

grant that he was indeed a cultivated man. However, we must at the same time remember that learning and culture were as early as the fifteenth century accepted articles of faith in any treatise on the Second Rhetoric. In fact, Grahame Castor has performed a valuable service in reminding us that an almost inordinate reverence for learning and classical erudition is one of the tightest bonds which links the Pléiade to the school of the Grands Rhétoriqueurs:

In mitigation of this damning judgment [by Chamard on the poetry of the Grands Rhétoriqueurs] one should make it clear that these men took a very serious view of their task as poets, even if very little of the poetry they actually produced repays the trouble of salvaging it from its present near-oblivion. They demanded that poets should be well-read, erudite with the science of their time, and they made something of a cult of the mythology of Latin antiquity. In these two respects we may perhaps regard the grands rhétoriqueurs as genuine forerunners of the Pléiade.39

Taken to its logical conclusion, Hawkins' insistence on Fontaine's erudition as a measure of his stature as a precursor of the Pléiade would appear to end in the necessity of including the Meschinots, Crétins, Chastellains, and Molinets in the ranks of the Pléiade's poetic forebears. While we have no objection to this arrangement, we do feel that it would rob the term "precursor" of any substantial meaning, at least as it is applied to Charles

Fontaine.

In making his case for Fontaine's use of Italian models before 1549, Hawkins cites borrowings on two occasions from the *Cortegiano*, four epigrams borrowed from Sannazaro, Petrarchan style and *concetti* in some of the elegies and epistles of the *Fontaine d'Amour*, plus an *Eclogue marine*, probably composed before 1549 (but not published until 1555) in imitation of Sannazaro's piscatory eclogues. In addition to this concrete evidence, Hawkins reminds us that Fontaine spoke kindly of Alberti's *Deiphira*, and that he translated Suetonius from Italian into French.\(^{40}\)

We feel that Hawkins strains unduly hard to find traces of Italian influence in Fontaine's work, and he must have felt this strain himself, for he attempts to rectify it by making the qualifying assertion that although Fontaine admired the Italians, he did not do so to the extent that he "scorned the French Minerva."\(^{41}\) While we grant the accuracy of all of Hawkins' specific enumerations of Italian influences in Fontaine's works, we cannot help reflecting that the absence of any sonnets in Maistre Charles' poetic production at a time when they were being composed by both Marot and Saint-Gelais constitutes a serious deficiency in this portion of Hawkins' case. As

\(^{40}\) *Maistre Charles*, p. 235.

\(^{41}\) *Maistre Charles*, p. 235.
a final indication of the apparent fervor with which Hawkins sought to reinforce a rather weak point, we observe that he refers us to a footnote in which the authoritative opinion of Paul Laumonier is arbitrarily invoked: "M. Laumonier (Ronsard, poète lyrique, p. 20, note 1) thinks that the Fontaine d'Amour suffices to make Fontaine 'un précurseur de la Pléiade,'"42 That Laumonier had misgivings about including Fontaine within the first ranks of the Pléiade's precursors is evident from the following passage:

Lui [Jacques Peletier] seul est vrai précurseur. Non pas que les idées qu'il émet lui appartiennent en propre et qu'il soit le premier à les exprimer; non pas que les formes d'art qu'il adopte soient tout à fait nouvelles; car on trouve déjà les unes et les autres chez Jean Lemaire, Clément Marot, Hugues Salel, Charles de Sainte Marthe, Charles Fontaine, Antoine Héroët, Mélhin de Saint-Gelais. Mais elles sont chez eux éparses et vagues, tandis qu'il est le premier à les rassembler, à les préciser. Avant lui lueurs incertaines et simples velléités; avec lui, feux clairs, résultats voulus et coordonnés. Il est leclaireur, l'entraîneur définitif.43

We come finally to the fourth of Hawkins' points—that of Fontaine's anticipation of some of the ideas and forms advocated by the Pléiade. In elaborating upon this specific point, Hawkins states that of the poetic forms censured by du Bellay, Maistre Charles wrote only the familiar and domestic epistle. As a result of Grace Frank's

42Maistre Charles, p. 235.
more recent findings, we must revise Hawkins' statement to include rondeaux, ballades, and chants royaux. As late as 1545, in the Fontaine d'Amour, Maistre Charles says twice that he is contemplating writing a rondeau on a particular topic, so it appears that even at this relatively late date, Fontaine does not seem to have especially eschewed this form.

Of the forms which were advocated by du Bellay and which Fontaine practiced before 1549, Hawkins lists elegies and epistles in imitation of Ovid, epigrams imitated from Martial, and "probably" a marine eclogue in imitation of Sannazaro. Once again, we agree with the factual accuracy of Hawkins' statement, yet we must remember that of all the forms advocated by du Bellay in the Deffence, these are perhaps the most minor, and with the possible exception of the marine eclogue, were already in existence in French poetry before the advent of the Pléiade. Commenting on the gap between the theoretical recommendation of these forms in the Deffence and the failure of the Pléiade to produce them in practice, Henri Chamard says:

A l'égard des ... autres genres pratiqués par les marotiques, l'attitude de du Bellay fut moins entière et trahit plus d'embarras. Fauvait-on [sic] rejeter des formes dont les anciens avaient donné de très authentiques modèles? L'auteur de la Deffence les recommanda donc, mais à condition qu'on les transposât, en les rapprochant de l'antiquité plus

44 pp. 30, 75.
Chamard continues, devoting a rather long section to proving his proposition that the epigram, the elegy, and the epistle, forms in which Marot had already excelled, fell into general desuetude for several years following the publication of the Deffence, and that it was not until relatively late in the history of the Pléiade that its members deigned actually to practice these forms. It would be easy enough to say that because they perhaps feared failure in an area where Marot had so well succeeded the Pléiade shied away from these forms, and it is this argument that Scollen makes with regard to Ronsard's hesitation to employ the word élegie to describe some of his poems which are elegies instead of épitres as he chose to name them. Such an explanation undoubtedly contains some measure of truth, yet we hope to demonstrate in a later chapter that the Pléiade had more fundamental philosophical reasons for avoiding these forms. For the moment, it is sufficient to note that they did avoid them in practice, if not in theory, for several years after 1549. It would seem, therefore, that when performance by the Pléiade is compared with its theory, Hawkins fourth point

45 Histoire de la Pléiade (Paris, 1940), IV, 161.
46 The Birth of the Elegy, pp. 150-152.
is seriously weakened. As for the marine eclogue, Chamard calls our attention to the fact that it was Rémi Belleau alone, one of the most minor members of the Pléiade, who wrote in this particular form.\(^7\)

Beyond Hawkins' four points, there still remains a basic assumption in his method which causes us as much concern as his specific criteria. It is indeed this assumption which in our opinion raises the most serious question of all with regard to his evaluation of Charles Fontaine and his influence on French poetry of the sixteenth century. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the Renaissance was regarded as a simple return to the ideals and values of pagan antiquity—as one French critic has termed it, \textit{un retour direct à l'antiquité}—and it is in this perspective that Hawkins largely weighed Charles Fontaine's contribution to the evolution of French poetry. While we do not deny that a return of sorts to the motifs of classical antiquity took place in the sixteenth century, we do believe that this view alone is an uncomfortably narrow one, incapable in itself of taking into account the total significance of the literature produced by Frenchmen of the Renaissance. For example, the question of religion and the events of the Reformation certainly shaped in their turn the literary

\(^7\text{Histoire de la Pléiade, IV, 163.}\)
and artistic production of the times with the result that for the modern student, the Renaissance is no longer the simple, two-dimensional return to antiquity that it was once assumed to be. It has come instead to be regarded as what one critic has called "a balance of contradictions." Any attempt to do justice to the work of a writer of this period must therefore necessarily attempt to reconcile these apparent contradictions, or, failing in this goal, must at least candidly admit their existence. The work of Charles Fontaine certainly contains its share of these apparent contradictions, and one of the purposes of our study will be to show them and to reconcile them with each other in the light of the spirit which produced them.

In the remainder of our study of Charles Fontaine, we shall attempt first to study his work as a direct manifestation of the general philosophical currents of its time. We believe that the net result of this procedure will be to show that there is perhaps less inconsistency in his development as a poet than there has heretofore been presumed to exist. We refer specifically to the difficulty which the rather frivolous and licentious nature of some of the poems of La Fontaine d'Amour would cause critics who would attempt to cite Fontaine as an early and thoroughly consistent exemplar of the concept of the more elevated Orphic concept of the poet's mission.
Second, we shall attempt to trace the principal influences of antiquity on Fontaine's poetic theory for the purpose of determining why the philosophical currents of his time impelled him to adopt these particular theories and models instead of others available to him. Only when a generalized statement of Charles Fontaine's poetic theories will have been formulated along these broad lines shall we be justified in our third step, which will be to situate him as accurately as possible with regard to the Pléiade.
CHAPTER IV

We begin our study of Charles Fontaine's concept of poetry with the assumption that no writer or other creative artist, as universal as his work may be considered, has ever completely escaped the influence of the general philosophical currents of his era. Even a figure like Pascal, who rebelled against the values of his time, still submitted to the influence of these values inasmuch as they may be said to have shaped his development negatively. Because we believe that Charles Fontaine, his literary production, and his theories of poetry are above all products of their times, we shall preface this chapter with a brief resumé of the general philosophical motifs of the first half of the sixteenth century.

The beginning of humanistic studies in Italy, and later in France, was occasioned by a break with the scholasticism of the Middle Ages. However, this break was not the result of the early humanists' disagreement with the substantive content of scholasticism, but was rather the result of a desire to find within the literature of antiquity models of greater formal beauty within which the truth of Christian dogma might be more appropriately clothed than in the jargon into which scholasticism had degenerated. Both Ernst Cassirer and V. L. Saulnier have been quite explicit in their portrayal of this early phase
of the Renaissance. Cassirer reminds us that Petrarch's initial opposition to scholasticism took its form in the "new cultural idea of 'eloquence.' Humanist criticism turned against the style, not the content of Aristotle's works."¹ Saulnier quotes Rodolfo Agricola and Jean Trithème as eyewitness testimony to the ends of early humanist criticism:

L'humanisme n'était pas dès son principe une discipline révolutionnaire, mais un complément ou même un auxiliaire des études de théologie chrétienne. Rodolphe Agricola (1442-95) écrivait: "Les Anciens ne connaissaient pas le but véritable de la vie. L'étude des classiques doit surtout servir à nous donner une claire intelligence des saintes Écritures," et Jean Trithème (1462-1516) qu'il fallait chercher "à l'exemple des saints Pères, des fruits mûrs pour l'amélioration de la science chrétienne." D'où le renouveau des études hébraïques (Reuchelin, 1455-1522). Il s'agissait alors, tout en respectant le domaine de la scholastique, de lui ajouter des études de lettres antiques; et, sans toucher à ses dogmes, de lui donner quelque élégance formelle.²

The method of philological examination employed by these early humanists soon revealed, however, that while Aristotle may have been far more eloquent in the original Greek than they had at first assumed, accepted Christian dogma was not nearly so unshakably true as they had formerly believed. It was at this point that humanistic


criticism, which had begun as an adjunct of the religious organization represented by the Catholic church, began to diverge from it. With this divergence, humanists, especially those within the church, began to seek an alternative world view with which to replace the one which had supported the system of religious dogma in which their faith had been so severely shaken.

It was in this manner that two opposed philosophical systems came to vie for pre-eminence in men's minds: the essentially Aristotelian system which had maintained and nourished the world view of the Middle Ages, and the basically Platonic system, stripped of its medieval additives, as it was conceived by Nicholas Cusanus, among others. To understand the significance of this opposition, it is necessary first to understand the fundamental differences which separated, and in fact polarized them. It was perhaps Ernst Cassirer who gave the most succinct expression to the outstanding and irreconcilable differences embodied in each view. In the Aristotelian system:

The "sensible" and the "intelligible," the "lower" and the "higher," the "divine" and the "earthly" are joined by a single, steady nexus of activity. The world is a self-enclosed sphere, within which there are only differences of degree. Force flows from the divine unmoved mover of the universe to the remotest celestial circles, there to be distributed, in a steady and regulated sequence, to the whole of being; to be communicated, by means of the concentric celestial spheres, to the sublunar world. No matter how great the distance between the beginning and the end, there is no break, no absolute "starting" or "stopping" point in the path from the one to the other. It is a finite and
continuous space, measurable in distinct and determinable stages, separating the beginning from the end, only to connect them again.\textsuperscript{3}

In contrast to the "steady nexus of activity" from the divine to the human in the Aristotelian system, there existed in the Platonic system an absolute separation of the two:

Appearance and Idea, the world of phenomena and noumena, can be related through thought; the one can and must be measured by the other. But never does any kind of "mixture" take place; never does the nature and essence of the one go over into the other in such a way that there could be some kind of boundary line at which the one fades into the other. The separation, the \textit{kuppleus}, of both worlds is irrevocable. The \textit{ôevra}, the \textit{logi}, and the \textit{upajmatā} can never be given as a particular existent, and simple essence does not in itself possess an ideal significance, a permanent sense, or a value content.\textsuperscript{4}

The implications of the latter system upon theological conjecture of the time are several, and have, in our opinion, a direct bearing upon the development of poetic theory in the sixteenth century, for the bond between religion and poetry at the time can hardly be overemphasized. In the first place, if the worlds of phenomena and noumena, or if one prefers, finite and infinite, human and divine, body and soul, were to be irrevocably separated, there could no longer exist the possibility of purely rationally derived human knowledge of the divine as there had existed in the

\textsuperscript{3}The Individual and the Cosmos, p. 18.

\textsuperscript{4}The Individual and the Cosmos, p. 17.
Aristotelian system. The rational theology of the Middle Ages was dead, or at least dying. In its place was to arise a mystical theology, but a mystical theology still based upon empirical human knowledge, since this was the only knowledge available to man, the microcosm, cut off from the cosmos, yet who contained all its elements except one—potential to attain the absolute. In the new Platonic system, the more precise man's empirical knowledge, the closer he might approach, but never attain, perfect knowledge of the divine. All man's knowledge of this sphere was therefore imperfect, or as Cusanus termed it, "conjecture,"\(^5\) which was destined in its turn to be superseded by even more precise conjecture.

The role of knowledge, this *visio intellectualis*, as the basis of Cusanus' mysticism now becomes clearer. If the divine was to be fathomed, however incompletely, it must necessarily be fathomed in human terms, in terms of the palpable and the sentient:

> Far from denying the validity or the essential goodness of the senses, the new system encourages their use, for the divine can only be understood in their terms. The end of Cusanus' mysticism was to spur the will toward the absolute, in and of itself inaccessible to knowledge, in a single act, one in which man puts himself in an immediate relationship with God.\(^6\)

For sixteenth-century man, then, the universe became

\(^{5}\textit{The Individual and the Cosmos}, p. 24.\)

\(^{6}\textit{The Individual and the Cosmos}, p. 14.\)
a divided, dualistic one in which he could never again touch the absolute, however tangentially, through reason alone. Man turned in on himself and his experience as the source of his knowledge, but a final mystic impulse became necessary to put him in an immediate relationship with the absolute. He was made in God's image, yet separated from God in much the same manner as Michelangelo's Adam, and it was to the image alone that man had recourse.

In retrospect, it seems inevitable that, given the climate of a world view such as that outlined above, Calvinism and Lutheranism should have risen in the sixteenth century to rival seriously the established religious orthodoxy of the Catholic church, in spite of Luther's and Calvin's official disdain of antique philosophers. Above all, Calvinism underlines the separation of man from God through Adam's fall and the mystical process of election through divine grace. Finally, it emphasizes the necessity of individual and direct mediation of God in Christ, not through the intermediary services of a hierarchy of saints. In at least one other instance, the reform movement of the sixteenth century reflected the concept of a universe in which the phenomenal remained permanently and resolutely divided from the noumenal. In the doctrine of transubstantiation, the Catholic church postulated the dogma that the bread of communion actually became the body of Christ when consumed by the communicant. In
opposition to this dogma, Lutheran theology maintained that the communion wafer merely called to mind Christ's passion; the wafer was only a symbol, imperfect in itself, representing a divine fact, yet totally apart from that fact.

On a more secular plane, the view of an irreconcilably divided, dualistic universe is reflected in the writings of private individuals of the time, an eloquent testimony to the pervasiveness of this concept. For brevity, we cite only one example here, drawn from Guicciardini's Ricordi:

Never say "God helped so and so because he is good, and that so and so was unsuccessful because he was evil." For we often see that the opposite is true. But neither must we say God is not just. His ways are so past finding out, that they are rightly called abyssus multa. 7

With these admittedly sparse examples, we hope at least to have suggested in outline form how the view of the universe described by Nicholas Cusanus became in the sixteenth century the archetypal structure around which analogous structures came to exist in other areas of human endeavor, including poetic theory.

The bonds between philosophical and religious thought and several aspects of poetic theory have been examined in some detail by Patterson, Clements, Weber, Castor, and

7Maxims and Reflections of a Renaissance Statesman, tr. Mario Domandi. (New York, 1965), p. 64
others, so it will not be our purpose to retrace these bonds in detail. We should like, rather, to demonstrate the existence of two areas of correlation between religious and philosophical thought of the first half of the sixteenth century and the poetic theory of Charles Fontaine. The first of these areas includes the concept of poetic inspiration as a divinely instigated intervention in human affairs. Second, we believe that it is possible to relate Fontaine's insistence on the use of the vernacular as a legitimate means of poetic expression to a particular phenomenon of the reformation impulse of the sixteenth century.

We have observed in the first chapter of this study the existence of what Grace Frank has called the "Protestant bias" of many of the poems in the volume of Fontaine's earliest known work, Epistres, Chantz Royaulx, Ballades, Rondeaulx et Dixains faitz à l'honneur de Dieu. We have further seen that the Contr'amye might well be a cleverly, yet in the final analysis, thinly veiled defense of the stern Pauline doctrine of marriage written to defend the institution of Christian marriage against the insidious influences of courtly "Platonism" so much in vogue at the time. We do not propose to prove that Charles Fontaine ever actively or openly espoused the reform movement in France. It is sufficient to observe that as a young man, Maistre Charles was apparently preoccupied with thoughts of a primarily religious nature,
and the mere existence of the work discovered by Grace Frank in the Vatican Library is ample proof of this tendency. The significance of the knowledge that Charles Fontaine was seriously concerned with religious questions seems to us to be two-fold. First, it would tend to indicate that whatever Charles Fontaine's early theories of poetry might have been, they were perhaps more closely related to the general currents of religious and philosophic thought of the time than we have previously assumed. Finally, the knowledge that Fontaine was personally involved in these areas of thought would seem to indicate that his poetic theories can no longer be ascribed to the simple formula in which they are seen merely as a direct return to the ideals of purely pagan antiquity.

In the late Middle Ages and early Renaissance, prose and poetry were both classified as rhetoric, with prose belonging to the realm of the first rhetoric, poetry to the second. In critical and theoretical treatises of the time, the two were often treated together under the heading of *la pleine rhétorique*. We would do well to remember that this method of classification was so thoroughly accepted as late as 1549 that Joachim du Bellay felt it necessary at the beginning of the *Défence* to explain to his readers that if he chose to speak only of poetry in his pamphlet, it was because Etienne Dolet had treated the matter of prose composition so adequately in the *Orateur*.
While this explanation was possibly more a pretext than a genuine reason, it is nevertheless significant that du Bellay felt that an explanation of his omission was not out of order. In the various arts of full rhetoric published in the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, the essential difference between prose and poetry was seen simply as one of craftsmanship, or of the relative degree of skill necessary for the successful undertaking of prose writing versus poetic expression. Both verse and prose were therefore viewed as a fundamental unity. They were not considered as separate entities, and this fact is of capital importance in understanding the developments in poetic theory during the last half of the sixteenth century.

In the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, one of the principal justifications for the existence of poetry was that of its position as an adjunct of religion. Henri Chamard has noted that in addition to religious and moral themes, two other general themes completed the repertory of the Grand Rhétoriqueur school of poetry. These poet-historians also recorded "les faits historiques et politiques," and, perhaps in conjunction with their role as court poets, "sujets amoureux et galants." 

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8 *La Deffence*, p. 84.

Of the three general themes treated by the Grands Rhétoriqueurs, it was especially those poems written on "sujets religieux et moraux" which served, at least in theory, as the most "serious" of poetry's reasons to exist. Poetry of the early sixteenth century was in no small degree an adjunct of religion.

In the Aristotelian concept of the universe, the idea of poetry as a second rhetoric which required only more demanding technical skill for its successful execution was acceptable enough, for in this system, human reason alone was considered competent to comprehend truth through its gradual progression along the "steady nexus of activity" which related the human and the divine. After all, the technical demands of Grand Rhétoriqueur poetry were nothing more than the derivatives of human reason, applied in a reasonable manner. That the technique of Rhétoriqueur poetry was viewed by those who practiced it as eminently reasonable is evident in the fact that most of their theoretical writings seem to assume that any man who worked hard enough was capable of becoming a competent poet. With the increasing acceptance of the Platonic, or dualistic, system of the universe, however, human reason, as necessary and as desirable as it remained, became by itself insufficient to comprehend divine truth. The two areas—human and divine—were henceforth separated. In order for poetry to retain whatever legitimacy it had
enjoyed as an interpreter of the divine, its very nature had to change, and this change had to take into account the separation of the human and the divine. At this point, the myth—pre-Platonic in origin—of poetry as a divinely inspired frenzy began to be resurrected in France.

It would of course be patently false to pretend that the myth of poetic frenzy was generalized into an integral part of poetic theory in sixteenth-century France only when it became apparent that poetry could remain justifiable in moral terms only if man's conception of its essential nature changed. As early as 1501, L'Infortuné (Regnauld Le Gueux?) had mentioned in passing the idea of poetry as divine frenzy, and as late as 1539, Gracien du Pont referred to poetry as simple Rhétorique métirifiée. However, if we consider general trends instead of specific manifestations, it should be apparent that the concept of poetry as both the result of divinely inspired frenzy and as an adjunct of religion was becoming imperative for the survival of poetry in the first half of the sixteenth century.

Although Grace Frank may have been technically correct when she stated that Fontaine's published works are silent with regard to his religious convictions, it should have been possible even before her discovery to postulate the existence of at least some religiously oriented writings by Fontaine at an early point in his
career. In a *huitain* first published in the *Fontaine d'Amour* (1545), but obviously written before his sister Catherine's death around 1540, Maistre Charles admonishes her:

*A toy ma soeur, ma seule soeur à toy*  
Qui as esprit assez digne de moy,  
Voys descourant toutes les oeuvres miennes,  
A seule fin que louer Dieu tu viennes.  
Sus donc ma soeur, ma seule soeur or sus,  
Loue sans fin le haut Dieu de la sus,  
Dequoit tu voys durant tes iours maint liure,  
Qui apres mort fera ton frere viure.*

Of the *maint liure* which Fontaine implies that he has written in praise of God, only two, the *Epistres, Chants Royaux, Ballades, Rondeaux et Dixains faictz à l'honneur de Dieu,* and his translation of Saint Augustine's *De Praedestinationem Sanctorum* have come down to us today. It may be that other religious works by Fontaine will one day be discovered in a musty corner of some library. On the other hand, Maistre Charles may just be indulging in a bit of Renaissance hyperbole.

In an early poem which remained unpublished until 1555, Charles Fontaine does suggest that he had composed verses of a religious nature very early in his career. This suggestion is found in an apistle which Fontaine wrote to his uncle Jean Dugué. In this epistle, the young Fontaine declares his intention of abandoning—or perhaps never embarking upon—a legal career, a calling

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10 p. 138
which, as we have previously noted, seems to have been a popular one with his friends and members of his family.

In defending his plans against his uncle's objections, Fontaine lists the advantages of a poetic career, not the least of which was its place as an adjunct of religion.

Reassuring his uncle that any vices to which he may be addicted are the result of his own base earthly nature rather than that of the sacred fire which burns within him the young poet says:

Mais, ie vous prie, Cretin & les Grebans
Ont-ilz suivi du monde les babans?
Ont-ilz traicté de plaisirs, & delices?
Ont-ilz escrit pour exciter aux vices?
N'a Arator homme Christian, des nostres,
Mis en beaux vers les actes des Apostres?
N'a Iuuencus avec vn tres beau stile
Tourné en vers nostre sainct Euangile?
Dont sainct Ierome en l'eglise docteur,
De son esprit estime la hauteur?
Dauid & Iob, personnes authentiques
N'ont-ilz escrit en vers cent beaux cantiques,
Au nom de Dieu bien faictz & inuentez
Qui sont souuent en l'eglise chantez?
N'a pas Marot aucques renommee
De toutes pars espandu, & seme,
Et, qui plus est, par commandement
Du plus grand Roy dessous firmament,
Maint psalmes mis d'Hebreu, & de Latin,
En vers françois, qu'aurons quelque matin?
N'ont pas plusieurs, dont maint enceres vit
Mis doctement, & Sainct Pol, & Dauid
En vers latins, que chascun loué, & prise?
O gens heureux, que Dieu tant favorise!
A celle fin que ne parle de moy,
Qui n'ose ici me nommer, & ne doy:
Mais avez veu qu'en mes oeuvres tient
En maintz endroit l'honneur, & nom de Dieu.11

11 Les Ruisseaux, pp. 308-309.
Although it is impossible to date with any great precision the epistle from which this citation is taken, Fontaine implies that Marot's translation of the Psalms had not yet appeared. If this is true, we know only that the epistle to Dugué is anterior to 1541, the year in which the first edition of the thirty translated Psalms was published. How much anterior it is to this event is uncertain; we know only that Marot was in the process of preparing them for publication at the time the epistle was written. Therefore, the letter could date from any time between 1532 and 1541.

In addition to demonstrating Fontaine's early penchant for religiously engaged poetry, the passage cited above is significant as an indication of the high esteem in which Fontaine held translations even as a young man. This seems to be one part of his theory which remained fairly constant. In this instance, the translations mentioned in the epistle seem to be accorded a value equal to that of the original works produced by Crétin and the Grebans. We know further that Maistre Charles' appreciation of Marot's translation of the Psalms extended beyond the single notice given to it in the epistle to Jean Dugué, for in the Fontaine d'Amour of 1545, we find the following quatrain written in honor of Marot, who had died the year before the volume's publication:

Quand David voyons en mainte Psaume,
Parlant Français par le Royaume,
A qui en dirons grand mercy?
A Marot qui traduit ainsi. 12

It seems evident, then, that in some of his early writings Charles Fontaine was at least partially inspired by a religious impulse. In the epistle to Jean Dugué, he makes it clear that religious considerations played some role in his decision to become a poet. In these matters, he is certainly not different from his predecessors, nor is he perhaps too far distant from some of the ideas of his successors, the members of the Pléiade.

Just as Charles Fontaine was not the first French poet to espouse a quasi-religious justification of poetry, he was not the first to define poetry in terms of divinely-inspired frenzy. For him, like many of his contemporaries, the idea of poetic fury did indeed have religious and moral connotations, for if poetry was to be associated with the moral and religious functions ascribed to it in Fontaine's early poems, the poet was to become an increasingly important figure. This new importance was to carry him far beyond his earlier function as a purely court poet who recorded the historical and political events of his time and who celebrated the various prowesses of his patron. Indeed the poet as an oracular figure is seen by the young Fontaine as a being set entirely apart from other men at the moment of his inspiration.

12p. 139.
Si l'orateur doit estre homme de bien
(Tel les auteurs l'ont défini) combien
Mieux le sera le diuin poëte,
Qui prent son vol plus haut que l'aloete,
Porté du vent, & inspiration
D'une celeste, & haute invention
Qui est fait tel de Dieu, & de nature,
Plus que par art, & humaine culture? ...
Platon diuin les dit tant accomplis,
Vides de soy, & de Dieu tout remplis,
Et que vne part de leur divinité
S'esprend au coeur du lecteur excité,
Puys les compare aux mouches à miel gentes,
Qu'on voit par champs voleter, diligentes
D'en rapporter le doux miel des florettes:
Tout ainsi font (dit Platon) les Poetes,
Car des iardins des Muses tressacrées
De leurs ruisseaux, leurs fontaines, & prees,
De leurs vergers, leurs tertres, & buissons
Vont rapportans leurs diuines chansons:
Et par dessus l'oraison, ou epitre,
La poësie emporte ce haut titre
D'estre appellee, & diuine, & hautaine:
Autre science est appellé humaine.13

In the course of studying the progression of sixteenth-century French poetic theory, Henri Weber has linked the more ennobled view of the poet and his function to a particular and easily discernable sociological phenomenon. Weber maintains that each generation of sixteenth-century French poets was progressively more aristocratic by birth and temperament than the preceding one. He thus concludes that the tendency of the more aristocratic members of French society to undertake a poetic career resulted in their insistence that poetry and poets be accorded an ever-increasing prestige more nearly commensurate with the

nobility of mind and spirit which was conceded to be theirs by birth. Weber is specific enough to name the major poets of the three generally recognized schools of poetry in the first half of the sixteenth century to support his case. While Weber's point is a convincing one, and while it is tenable in its particular points, we cannot help wondering if it does not fail to take into account other, larger currents of thought prevalent at the time. We are tempted to ask if Weber may not have missed the essential point. Is it at all possible that the young aristocrats of the Pléiade were not in some respects induced to become poets because poetry was already becoming regarded in the early 1540's as a worthy vocation for any young man of wit, skill, and inspiration? No later than around 1540, Charles Fontaine, bourgeois probably by birth, certainly by temperament and personal inclination, praised the poet and his special gift in terms with which even the haughty Pléiade could have heartily agreed. Fontaine maintains that not only was the poet divinely inspired, he was also predestined to follow his vocation, and that no amount of coercion was capable of turning him from it. As a specific example of his belief in the foreordination of poets, Fontaine cites the case of Ovid:

14 La Création poétique au seizième siècle, I, 63 ff.
Le naturel d'un enfant n'obtempere,  
Et ne se vainc par oncle, ne par père:  
Car la nature est toujours la maîtresse,  
Et, la chassant, retrouvera sans cesse.  
Ce qui aduient à Ouide, car lors  
Que de quitter les vers feit ses efforts,  
Cuidant escrire en prose, de sa plume  
Couloient les vers par nature, & coutume.  
Soymesme ainsi sans y penser se trompe:  
Adonc sentant qu'en rien ne se corrompe  
Le naturel, & que la plaisiderie  
Estoit grand faix, & trop grand facherie  
Pour son esprit, né à mansuetude,  
A paix, respos, & à plus douce estude,  
Se retira, ses Muses poursuyuant,  
Et de son temps les Poètes suyant:  
Les quelz si bien honora en tout lieu,  
Q'il estimoit chascun d'eux estre vn dieu,  
Ainsi qu'il dit luymesme, & le confesse:  
Tant honora Poesie sans cesse:  
Battus hanta, Properse auec Macer,  
Horace graves à ses vers compasser.  
Voilà comment le naturel d'Ouide  
Ne peut iamais aux Muses tourner bride:  
Il n'auoit pas son inclination  
À l'auarlce, & à l'ambition.  
En tout estat y a peine, & souci:  
En tout estat on peut tromper aussi,  
Fors qu'en cestuy de noble Poësie,  
Dont par sus tout l'ay aymée, & choisie:  
Si au contraire elle ne m'a choisi,  
Et inspiré auant naistre quasi.15

In still another early poem, Fontaine maintained his insistence on the divine origin of poetry and the predestination of the poet to his vocation. In the epistle to king Francis I, which we have already reviewed in Chapter Two and which was written, according to Hawkins, around 1540, we find Fontaine saying:

Comme bien lire en nostre Ouide on peult,  
Dieu est en nous, qui nous eschaufe, & meut.

15Les Ruisseaux, pp. 296-298.
Et de là vient cette fiction belle
Que de Bacchus font feste solennelle
Poètes saintz, à a obtenu lieu
D'estre appelé des Poètes le dieu:
Pource que quant le saint Nectar s'apreste
A leur monter en leur sacrée teste:
Divinement, & si bien les enlyre
Qu'on les diroit ailleurs penser et viure,
Tant sont hors soy elevez à raus. ...

Si à cet art i'estoye destine
Des que sur terre enfant petit fus né,
Pourrois-ie bien de coeur trop endurci
Combatter Dieu, & la nature aussi?
Lon dit tresbien, tout esprit d'autre estoffe,
Soit d'Orateur, ou soit de Philosophe
Se fait par art, sollicitude & cure,
Mais le Poète est faict tel de nature.16

Further evidence of Fontaine's belief in the divine origin of poetry, the sacred nature of the poet, and some parallels between religious ecstasy and poetic inspiration is to be found in an epistle addressed by the young Fontaine to Jean Orry, a lawyer of Le Mans and an amateur poet:

Car Dieu n'a pas ou en vous ou en moy
Mis le tresor de tant belle science
Pour le cacher, ou garder en silence
Mais pour louer son nom premierement
Puis pour escrire a ceux la mesmement
Qui ont le nom d'y sauoir, & connoistre
Qui ne le fait se met en danger d'estre
Ainsi traité que celuy nonchalant
Lequel en terre enfouit son talent.
Vous en avezz l'exemple en l'Evangile,
Comment puni fut ce serf inutile
N'estce pas donc injuire & deshonneur,
Tant peu priser les graces du Seigneur?
C'est lascheté, & grand ingratitude
De n'exercer son stile, & son estude:
Ce que saint Paul a appele estraindre
Le saint esprit, l'empescher, & restraindre
Quand il def fend à tout homme d'esprit

16Les Ruisseaux, pp. 8-10.
The immediately preceding passage, in which poetry is quite explicitly associated with a religious justification of its existence, is further evidence of what Grace Frank would call the Protestant bias of some of Fontaine's early poems, and it is notable for its references to the Evangiles and the writings of Saint Paul, both of which were often quoted by Protestant apologists. It is interesting to note that Fontaine never refers to the Virgin Mary nor to the Saints in this poem, a characteristic noted by Frank in the manuscript she discovered. In a later epistle to Orry, Fontaine again returns to his penchant for describing poetic theory in theological terms. This time he draws unmistakable parallels between the concept of poetry as divine inspiration and the phenomenon of Pentecostal glossolalia:

Or pour entrer des lettres en propos,
L'escrit premier fait un meilleur repos,
Quand ne sentois tel mal, en somme toute,
Sentoit vn peu son tour de Penteacoustes:
Aussi ainsy comme le sainct Esprit
Multiplia (aux Actes est escrit)
Dedüs maintz coeurs ses dôs, & sainctes graces.
Et par dehors dons de langues, efficaces,
Miracles hautes, puissances, & vertus,
Dont furent maintz ornez & reuetus,
Ainsi ces iours sa grand grace accomplie,
Par deuers moy voz lettres multiplie.
Que i'en reçooy oitltre mon pensement:18

Charles Fontaine was not alone in mingling the classically derived formula of poetry as divine inspiration with a religious motive for its existence. In the dedicatory preface to the thirty Psalms he had translated at the behest of Francis I, Marot depicts David's soul ravished by Apollo, who in this case is identified with Jehovah:

O donques, Roy, prens l'oeuvre de David,
Oeuvre plus tost de Dieu qui le ravit,
D'autant que Dieu son Apollo estoit,
Qui luy en train et sa harpe mettoit.
Le sainct Esprit estoit sa Calliope;
Son Parnassus, montaigne à double croppe,
Fut le sommet du haut ciel cristalin;
Finalement son ruisseau cabalin
De grace fut la fontaine profonde,
Où à grans traictz il beut de la claire unde,
Dont il devint poète en un moment.
Le plus profond dessoubz le firmament,
Car le subject qui la plume en la main
Prendre luy feit est bien autre qu'humain.19

In addition to the example of Marot as the spokesman for the identity of religious ecstasy and poetic fury,


19Préface, au Roy Très chrétien Françoys premier de ce nom sur la traduction des Pseaumes de David (Paris, 1541).
there is Richard Leblanc, who in 1546 honored Ambroise de Vieu­pont with this prefatory letter to his translation of Plato's *Ion*:

Recordant en moy mesme, que quelque jour, Monseigneur, comme j'estoye avec vous, ensemble plusieurs de vos amys, là se trouva (comme sou­vent il advient) un medisant de poésie, qui mesprisoit les carnes faictz aulcunes foys par les poètes modernes à l'honneur et célébration du nom de Dieu, et qu'il n'estoit licite d'alleguer lesditz poètes, ny entremesler les compositions d'icelux principalement es Sainctes Escriptures, J'ay souvenance que vertueusement, comme esprins de fureur divine, vous luy contredites son dict par l'authorité de ce haut apostre saint Paul, lequel au quinzieme chapitre de sa permiere epistre aux Corinthiens n'a esté scrupuleux, et n'a faict refus d'amener au propos de sa sentence le Poete Menander, disant que les paroles lascives et maulvais devys corrompant les bonnes moeurs. Et non seulement en ce pas­sage, il produit les poètes, mais en plusieurs lieux. Pareillement contre ce medisant, et autres semblables, en l'exhalation de poesie peut estre valable (non pas egale­ment) l'autorité de Platon, philosophe divin, lequel enquerant diligemment des choses humaines et divines, prouve par subtils raisons en ce pre­sent dialogue intitulé *Io*, que poesie est ung don de Dieu, et en ceste probation il fait deux especes d'aliénation de pensée, l'une par maladie et intemperance de vivre, qui est preturbation d'esprit et folie. L'autre est par une fureur procedant de Dieu, qui est une inspiration divine: et par telle fureur Vergile, à son sixieme, introduit la Sybille parler à Aeneas. Or, en ce petit dialogue, Socrates dit que fureur poetique n'est autre chose que telle inspiration de Dieu, par laquelle l'entendement humain est eslevé oultre le pouvoir de l'homme.20

We believe that the citations drawn from Charles Fontaine's early poetry have been sufficient to demonstrate

that at a very early stage in his career, he had derived a system of poetry which was inseparably bound to a certain religious and perhaps mystical impulse. Within this system, sources from classical antiquity and religious writings were co-mingled with sometimes startling and even disturbing results. Yet some of the sense of incongruity we experience upon reading these poems and apologies for poetry might be banished if we possessed a clearer understanding of the role of classical mythology in sixteenth century writing.

In the system of poetry which Charles Fontaine and his fellow poets derived, motifs and figures drawn from classical mythology came to enjoy a significance far beyond that of mere embellishment. If the divided universe was to be comprehended in terms of man's experience in it, then man's knowledge would necessarily have to be represented in anthropomorphistic terms. Classical mythology does nothing if it does not humanize, or at least anthropomorphize the unseen and only dimly understood forces which shape man's existence and limit its duration in time. Therefore, figures taken from classical mythology, intended at the inception of humanistic studies in Europe to serve as formal embellishment for Christian writers, became nothing less than "vehicles of logical thought".  

21 Cassirer, *The Individual and the Cosmos*, p. 80.
for Frenchmen of the middle sixteenth century. As such, these mythological figures were only symbols of the powers attributed to each of them, not the powers themselves, and this is a distinction which one should bear in mind when he is tempted to speak of the Renaissance as a direct return to antiquity. Zeus, Apollo, Venus, et al did not exist for the man of the sixteenth century as they had existed for the very early Greeks, who had believed in their literal existence, and for whom these gods and goddesses, portrayed in human form, represented the fundamental unity of the universe. For Renaissance man, these classical deities served just the opposite function. They underscored the basic division or dualism of the universe in that they were a constant reminder of his conscious effort to fathom the absolute in the only terms available to him—figures drawn from his own finite experience. When the "pagan" influences which abound in the poetry of the sixteenth century are seen in this perspective, it seems that some of the feeling of dissonance that the modern reader may experience in reading a work where they are mingled indiscriminately with Christian motifs should be largely resolved.

It appears safe to say that the particular part of Charles Fontaine's poetic theory in which the Christian and Pagan were so often and so thoroughly mixed was the logical product of the world view of an age in which man
had begun to feel himself separated from the absolute and could hope to gain some limited access to it only through a mystical process which took human knowledge as its starting point. For Nicholas Cusanus and other more rigorously philosophical Platonists, this process had its origin in the study of mathematical relationships. For John Calvin and his followers, this process depended upon a stringent application of human logic which resulted in the doctrine of mystical election and predestination. Finally, for Charles Fontaine and the other poets of his time, it was the myth of the poet as an oracular, divinely inspired figure who was nevertheless thoroughly immersed in the culture of his age and preceding ages, which was to provide the necessary direction and impetus for the correlation of human knowledge and mysticism posited in the world view of his time.

By around 1540, the split between Protestantism and Catholicism had begun to appear irreconcilable. It is perhaps significant that this date coincides fairly closely with the latest probable date at which Charles Fontaine wrote poetry of an easily discernible religious tone. Henri Weber has characterized the increasing polarization between Catholics and Protestants at this time:

Entre les années 1540 et 1550, la précision théologique et l'organisation rigide du calvinisme vont provoquer une séparation de plus en plus nette entre les humanistes et les partisans de la Réforme en France. Erasme était mort in 1536, l'année même où Calvin publiait en latin une première édition.
encore sommaire, de L'institution de la religion chrétienne; la première traduction française de ce texte, déjà considérablement augmenté paraîtra en 1541. Avec une logique impitoyable, Calvin débarasse le christianisme de tous les restes de la liturgie traditionnelle, de toutes les traces de l'influence scholastique qui avaient survécu chez Luther. Le dogme de la prédestination anéantit le libre arbitre, plus catégoriquement encore que celui du salut par la foi. Pour Calvin en effet, la foi n'est pas directement la cause de notre salut, mais seulement un effet de la prédestination, la preuve interne que nous sommes élus.

Pareillement à ce raidissement du calvinisme, va s'opérer un raidissement du catholicisme, avec la fondation et le développement de la Compagnie de Jésus et le Concile de Trente dont les sessions s'échelonnent de 1545 à 1563. La politique royale en France, encore quelque peu hésitante vis-à-vis des évangélistes sous François Ier, s'orientera plus délibérément vers la persécution pendant le règne de Henri II.

Les humanistes doivent choisir, et leurs intérêts gravitent autour de la cour, soit qu'ils aspirent à une chaire de lecteur royal, soit qu'ils se contentent de pensions ou de bénéfices distribués par le roi ou par les grands. Le rigorisme moral de Calvin fait d'ailleurs éclater la contradiction latente chez Erasme et chez Rabelais entre l'amour de la vie, la sagesse épiscopienne inspirée par l'antiquité et les exigences plus sévères d'une morale rigoureusement chrétienne. Dès 1544, dans son Excuse à Messieurs les Nicodémites Calvin, s'élevait violemment contre les tièdes de la Réforme, les gens de lettres prudents dans la manifestation de leur foi et peu disposés à lui sacrifier leur désir de bien dire, il parlait avec mépris de ces "lucianiques ou épiscopiens qui font semblant d'adhérer à la parole et dedans leur cœur s'enmoquent et ne l'estiment plus qu'une fable." Ces "lucianiques" son probablement Des Periers et Rabelais dont la condamnation sera plus expresse encore dans le De Scandalis de 1550.22

If Charles Fontaine's poetry after 1540 was to bear progressively fewer marks of obvious religious engagement,

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22La Création poétique au seizième siècle, I, 31-32.
we propose that the increasing polarity between Catholics and Protestants which Weber has so well described was one of the causes. It had become too dangerous for a completely sensible man to take too firm a stand on either side of the religious issue, and we can only conclude that Charles Fontaine, faced with the moment of choice, elected to follow the humanists who continued to gravitate around the court. It is interesting to note that Charles Fontaine made a great point in the dedicatory epistle to his translation of the Remedia Amoris of describing the vast difference between the latter translation and the one which had preceded it in order of presentation to the king. If our reasoning has been correct, the first translation that Fontaine had presented to Francis I had been that of Saint Augustine's De Praedestinatione Sanctorum, a work that had certainly influenced Calvin. Is it possible that Fontaine, by choosing to present the king with a work which could be considered so greatly different from the Augustinian treatise, was seeking to reassure officialdom that he was not really an insidious Protestant, but merely a happy-go-lucky court poet? We believe that such a gambit was indeed his probable intention. We do not mean to imply that Fontaine's basic views of poetry as an adjunct of religion or as a divinely inspired gift were completely stifled after around 1540, for his subsequent production continues to be characterized by insistence
the great moral worth of poetry. Also, the fact that as late as 1555 Fontaine would commit to publication poems of a vaguely religious flavor which were probably written in the late 1530's and early 1540's would tend to belie any hypothesis which would seek to maintain that Maistre Charles had completely renounced his early religious inclinations. It does appear, however, that after 1540, Charles Fontaine became much more discreet in publishing any associations he held between poetry and religion. Not only did Fontaine become more discreet in linking religion and poetry in his theoretical pronouncements, but he appears also at the time of the appearance of *La Fontaine d'Amour*, to have reversed himself completely on the issue in practice.

Henri Guy, in the concluding remarks to his study of Clément Marot, has posed a problem which has continued to intrigue students of Marot's life and works. Summarizing his study, Guy concedes of Marot, "Il appartient, et ses oeuvres le prouvent, à plus d'un monde." The implied question Guy asks in his aphoristic style is this: Who was the real Clément Marot? Was he the devout and pious translator of the Psalms and other religious meditations? Was he the cheerful, mordant, and occasionally obscene court poet whose *élégant badinage* was so thoroughly

appreciated by successive generations? Or was the real Clément Marot both these men? Obviously, he was both a court poet and a religious poet, and the question now becomes one of reconciling these apparently divergent extremes within a coherent formula large enough to contain them.

These same questions might well be asked with regard to Charles Fontaine, for in 1545, he was to diverge from his earlier role as a divinely inspired poet who insisted on the moral and religious salubriousness of poetry to play a part which looks suspiciously like that of the court panderer. The volume which brought about Fontaine's fall from grace, *La Fontaine d'Amour*, was published after its author's contributions to the Marot-Sagon fray, his *Response* to Papillon's *Victoire et Triomphe d'Argent*, and his *Contr'amye de Court*, respectively. Caroline Ruutz-Rees was kind yet exact when she appraised many of the pieces of this collection as "merely light or actually gross." In reality, they tend more toward grossness than toward lightness. The two following epigrams could be considered representative of those of the first half of the volume:

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\begin{align*}
\text{Tu tesbahis quen champs & villes} \\
\text{Le me ry tant avec les Filles} \\
\text{Plus mesbahis de tes facons} \\
\text{Qui tant ris avec les Garsons.} \quad 24
\end{align*}
\]

\[24\text{La Fontaine d'Amour, p. 95.}\]
As we have seen, Ruutz-Kees saw the problem of *La Fontaine d'Amour* as one of Fontaine's falling away from his earlier Platonic ideas in the question of feminism. Since we do not believe that Fontaine was ever very thoroughly Platonic in his views on women, we do not feel that this is the problem posed by *La Fontaine d'Amour*. Rather, the real problem of *La Fontaine d'Amour* is in our opinion one of Fontaine's diverging from earlier, more elevated ideas of the poet and his mission—ideas which are only rarely suggested in *La Fontaine d'Amour*. That Fontaine himself must have felt some compunction at abandoning his earlier notions of the poet's and poetry's dignity is evident in the long and rather defensively worded preface in which Fontaine reminds the Duke of Orléans, to whom the work was dedicated, that the poet's own life is not necessarily reflected in his light verses, which are intended only for the Duke's recreation. To strengthen his case, Fontaine cites the examples of Martial, Catullus, and Ovid as precedents of moral men who wrote immoral verse.

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25 *La Fontaine d'Amour*, p. 98.
26 *La Fontaine d'Amour*, pp. 4-6.
Hawkins, who wrote his study several years before the appearance of Ruutz-Rees' article in 1912, originally took Fontaine at his word and assumed that the contents of *La Fontaine d'Amour* were indeed the product of a youthful, yet undisciplined poet in the first flowering of his powers. For this reason, he is rather indulgent in his assessment of the obscenities in this work. With the publication of Ruutz-Rees' findings, which pointed to the very likely possibility that at least some of the contents of *La Fontaine d'Amour* date from after the Italian journey, Hawkins was happy to amend the 1916 version of *Maistre Charles* to include the discovery that Fontaine had imitated Sannazaro in more than the marine eclogue recommended by du Bellay. In short, the *Fontaine d'Amour* does not pose the problem for Hawkins that we should have reasonably expected it to. In the first place, Hawkins does not postulate the existence of any early religious influence which directly influenced parts of Fontaine's poetic theory. Hawkins preferred rather to treat the notion of the divine origin of poetry as a purely historical phenomenon, as a part of the general return to the ideas of antiquity prevalent at the time. In the second place, he is pleased to be able to cite the work as anticipatory of the Pléiade in its return to antique sources of inspiration. He goes so far as to propose that the *Fontaine d'Amour* may have had a direct influence on
Ronsard's own licentious Livret de folastries. Finally, drawing some implicit line of equivalence between licentiousness and paganism, Hawkins says of La Fontaine d'Amour:

When the definitive history of the revival of pagan ideas in the French Renaissance is written, Fontaine's elegy on the death of his sister, as well as the Fontaine d'Amour must be taken into account.  

In his insistence on the paganism of Fontaine's work, Hawkins was visibly influenced by the dogma that the Renaissance in France was a simple, unequivocal, direct return to antiquity. We have questioned the validity of the simplest interpretation of this dogma, and we shall soon examine it in more detail. With regard to the question of reconciling the licentious nature of some of the epigrams of La Fontaine d'Amour with their author's early statements bearing on the almost sacerdotal dignity of the poet and his works, Hawkins has nothing to say, preferring to dismiss the statements of belief in the divine origin of poetry as topics about which Fontaine liked to prate.

While we have already examined to some extent the basic attitude toward women as it is expressed in La Fontaine d'Amour, it is necessary to examine it here in another perspective, for we believe that this attitude

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27 Maistre Charles, p. 186.
28 Maistre Charles, p. 186
might very well serve to shed some light on Fontaine's poetic theories and the circumstances which influenced their development.

It is interesting to note in La Fontaine d'Amour a phenomenon which we might term the tonal duality existing on the one hand in the elegies and epistles contained in the volume, and many of the epigrams of the same collection on the other. In the former pieces, Fontaine can indeed be sensual in appreciating his lady's beauty. He is even capable on occasion of employing the équivoque obscure favored by the Grands Rhétoriqueurs; yet his attitude is generally one of the patient petitioner, awaiting his beloved's beck and call. In sum, he is the despairing slave of love and the capriciousness of a heartless mistress in the best tradition of the Latin elegists and their latter-day descendant, Petrarch. In the epistles and elegies, he is an exponent of courtly love in its most decorous tradition. In the epigrams, however, he is often the grossly sensual and obscene observer of woman's venality, variability, and lasciviousness, a not too distant relative of the men who mocked these same deficiencies of the fair sex in the medieval fabliaux:

La Dame qui tant te farfouille,
(Si de ses ıeux entends la source)  
Cherche si tu as bonne bourse,
Non pas si tu as bonne couille."^{29} 

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^{29}La Fontaine d'Amour, p. 106.
Vn mercerot troussant ses hardes,
Se fiche au doigt quelques eschardes:
Et dit, lorsqu'il sen trouuoit mal,
Petite chose faict grand mal:
Sa femme respond, aussi bien
Petite chose faict grand bien. 30

This duality of tone, or attitude, toward women causes us to wonder if the following hypothesis might not be taken as a first step in understanding more clearly the poetic theories of Charles Fontaine. If we have correctly interpreted the Contr'amye de Court as belonging to the tradition of anti-court literature, and if, as the poems found in works published by Fontaine after 1545 indicate, Fontaine remained essentially true to the ideas on love and marriage which he expressed in La Contr'amye, we must assume that Maistre Charles felt at least some repugnance in committing to print poems—in this case elegies and epistles—which, although they may have been quite well done, were nevertheless so directly contrary to Fontaine's own ideas on love; that is, poems which were so thoroughly courtly. Is it at all possible that in sacrificing his true feelings to current literary fashions among those who could afford to buy books, he sought to restore some sort of overall balance to his work by inserting obscene epigrams which were, in spite of their grossness, no further removed from his own views on women than were the epistles

30La Fontaine d'Amour, p. 109.
and elegies? Stated more succinctly, is it possible that Fontaine promised himself to give his readers what they wanted in the elegies and epistles, but to take his revenge in the epigrams? This hypothesis is of course conjecture, but in view of our revised estimate of Charles Fontaine's role in the Querelle des Amyes, it does not appear unwarranted.

If our conjecture is plausible, it might serve as a further indication that the attitude of the author of the Quintil Horatian toward the elegy "à la singerie de la passion Italiene" was perhaps not too far removed from Charles Fontaine's. In the section devoted to comments on the Quintil proper, we have seen that it appears probable that Fontaine, in spite of Chamard's assertion that his modest talent was perhaps best suited to this form, grew disenchanted with the Petrarchan elegy at some time between 1545 and 1549. If our last conjecture is accurate, we might take one last step and suggest that in spite of his success with it, Charles Fontaine may never have been very fond of the elegy.

If Fontaine were not particularly fond of the courtly love elegy modeled on the works of Petrarch and the Latin elegists, why did he practice it? There appear to be two plausible reasons for his conduct, each of which is blatantly pragmatic, and each of which will probably have to share at least a portion of responsibility in explaining
Fontaine's action.

The first explanation revolves around the closely related matters of economic necessity and literary modishness. Although he had become famous as a defender of chaste love and of Marot, we have no indication that Charles Fontaine had been successful in obtaining the substantial patronage which was necessary for a writer of his time. We suggest that one reason for the lack of financial assistance lies in the nature of the works published by Fontaine prior to 1545. His own original works, the Contr'amye and, to a lesser extent, his response to Papillon's Victoire et triomphe d'Argent, belonged to the tradition of anti-court literature, and as such they could hardly be expected to have pleased circles in which vaguely Platonic doctrine was often employed as a rationalization for immorality. Fontaine's unpublished translations of Saint Augustine's De Praedestinatione Sanctorum and Ovid's Remedia Amoris seem likewise to have failed to please the king sufficiently to move him to grant appreciable remuneration. It may well be that in his search for a patron from within court circles, Charles Fontaine decided to become more modish in his poetry, to follow the formula which Marot, Sainte-Marthe, Saint-Gelais, and others had found so successful. We would do well to remember that La Fontaine d'Amour is after all dedicated to the Duke of Orléans. The power of the court to pressure writers to
produce works pleasing to its members rather than those which might have been the result of the poet's following his more natural inclinations was indeed formidable in an age when the sale of books was still limited largely to only the most prosperous members of society. Michel Dassonville has given a good illustration of the court's power to use poets to its own ends by comparing the work of Maurice Scève, who remained at Lyons apart from court circles, to that of other sixteenth-century poets:

N'est-il pas significatif que Marot, prince des poètes de Cour, n'aït jamais pu atteindre à une haute conception de la poésie, sauf peut-être dans les Psaumes où il est soulevé par une conviction religieuse bien plus que par un dessin esthétique? N'est-il pas significatif qu'il n'aït pu dépasser l'élégant badinage des courtisans, pauvres d'esprit et de coeur? Toutefois, l'engouement gréco-latin était tel dans le microcosme parisien que Marot, victime de la mode, n'a pu résister à "translater" les Métamorphoses d'Ovide. N'est-il pas significatif que Pierre de Ronsard, si fortement convaincu de la dignité sacerdotale du poète, n'aït pas toujours été lui-même à l'abri des simagrées de la Cour? Les goûts du public mondain, la "demande sociale" n'ont-ils pas amené l'ancien élève de Dorat à produire cartels, mascarades et bergeries? Ne fallait-il pas que l'opinion publique soit efficace pour que l'humaniste écrive des petits vers et pour que le courtisan se fasse traducteur?31

The second factor which may have prompted Maistre Charles to become more mundane in his poetry is related to a point we have previously mentioned. Between the years 1540 and 1545, the lines between religious dissenters and

reactionary Catholics were becoming increasingly well defined. With the growth of mutual intolerance, it was becoming increasingly dangerous to be suspected of heretical tendencies. Also, the moral rigidity of Calvinism had begun to repel many of those who sincerely desired to see some sort of reform within the church, but who at the same time were as disheartened by the doctrinal rigourousness of the new church in Geneva as they were by abuses within the Catholic church. It does not seem improbable that Charles Fontaine, an early partisan of reform within the church, decided to become more discreet in expressing his religious views when it became evident that reconciliation between Catholics and Reformers was no longer possible, and that it was furthermore dangerous to be suspected of reformist leanings.

Although we admit the probability that Charles Fontaine was swayed by social, economic, and political considerations in coming forth with a somewhat changed manner in the 1545 Fontaine d'Amour, it seems to us that to ascribe this change in manner solely to these factors is to stop short of telling the whole story of his evolution as a poet. While the everyday necessities of earning a living, finding renown for himself and his verses, and avoiding suspicion of heresy were undoubtedly important ones, they were in the final analysis little more than what one critic has called the causes occasionelles. The cause profonde,
the very basis of Fontaine's poetic credo, which could permit him with some measure of good conscience to mingle verses extolling the dignity of the poet and the divinity of poetry with those whose most outstanding characteristic is their lewdness, must still be delineated. Dassonville speaks for the majority of commentators when he credits this literary schizophrenia to the necessity imposed willy-nilly upon poets of this time by the frivolous, and, where the growth of great poetry was concerned, the totally pernicious influence of the court. While we grant the validity of this conclusion, we should like to propose a larger, and hopefully complementary explanation for this strange phenomenon so easily observable in the works of poets of the first half of the sixteenth century in general, and in those of Charles Fontaine in particular.

This complementary hypothesis which seeks to reconcile the two apparently divergent worlds of poetry practiced by Charles Fontaine has its origins within the view of the universe in the first half of the sixteenth century. We have already noted that at this time in history man was acutely aware of the separation of his own world of the finite from the world of the absolute. The inevitable consequence of such a view was, as we have seen, a certain duality, a tendency to limit and circumscribe man's experience to one of two realms. Since the absolute was fathomed only in terms of the finite, the realm of the sentient and the palpable acquired a dignity and legitimacy that it had not
known since Antiquity. The two realms were mutually legitimate, but mutually exclusive.

That there did not exist for the man of the Renaissance the dissonance between the extensive pleasure of the senses known variously as hedonism, voluptuousness, or materialism and Christian faith is evident from a reading of Lorenzo Valla's De voluptate, in which sensual pleasure is seen not only as justifiable, but as a goal in itself:

In ... the dialogue De voluptate ... pleasure is shown to be not only the highest good, but the good pure and simple, the conserving principle of all value. Now, this renewed hedonism does not present itself as an enemy of faith—rather it places itself under the protection of faith itself. Valla's basic thesis states that Christianity is not inimical to Epicureanism, for it is itself nothing but a more elevated and "sublimated" Epicureanism. Is the bliss that Christianity promises its followers anything but the highest and most complete form of pleasure?

If we allow for the existence of a world view large enough to provide the rationale for composing poetry of widely varying degrees of religious devoutness and moral preoccupation in our attempt to define the basis of Charles Fontaine's poetic theory, we are able to avoid one of the most persistent problems which plagued students of the Renaissance in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, which was the tendency to see in the Renaissance nothing more complex than a simple, direct, and unequivocal return to the ideas and values of antiquity. It is Jean

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32 Cassirer, The Individual and the Cosmos, p. 79.
Babelon who has perhaps most concisely stated the dilemma to which this doctrine leads when it is applied with such categorical rigour:

Considered retrospectively with the eye of a historian, the Renaissance, that simple concept of Burckhardt and Walter Pater, of an earlier generation, dissolves into a balance of contradictions—a return to antiquity that had never really been forgotten, a pagan revival when so many artists, who were far from being mystic, were engaged in building or decorating churches, the development of modern languages as a means of artistic expression when Latin, Greek, and even Hebrew were the subjects of more authoritarian study, the birth of rival nations just when medieval ecumenicity gave way to European civilisation.33

It appears that when considered with Charles Fontaine's total poetic production, La Fontaine d'Amour, and consequently, our own understanding of early sixteenth-century poetry, would gain much from an interpretation in which the work would be evaluated as a specific manifestation of the mental and spiritual duality which was an inherent part of the world view of the time. While this duality is by no means limited to the works of Charles Fontaine, it is a marked influence in them, and from his own writings, we are aware that Charles Fontaine was aware of the division between the worlds of the finite and absolute which was such a pervasive part of the world view of his time. It is no accident that this concept of the separation of the earthly

and the divine was incorporated at an early stage of his career into his ideas on the relative merits of poetry and other literary genres. In an early letter to Jean Dugué from which we have already cited excerpts, we find Maistre Charles informing his uncle:

... par dessus l'oraison, ou épître, la poesie emporte ce haut titre D'estre appellee, & diuine, & hautaine; Autre science est appellee humaine.34

We have said that an awareness of the dichotomy between the absolute and the finite was not limited to the works of Charles Fontaine. M. A. Screech has noted the same tendency to emphasize the clear separation of those two worlds in the work of Rabelais. Screech's evaluation of the respective and mutually legitimate, yet mutually exclusive realms of the human and the divine is perhaps the best summary of this trait so common in the literature of the first half of the 1500's. Seeing in Rabelais' Messere Gaster the symbol of purely human endeavor, Screech describes Gaster's place in Rabelais' world view:

In making Messere Gaster, the first Master of Arts of the World, the driving force behind human endeavour, Rabelais is not denying the existence of higher instincts, higher preoccupations, higher motives. He is emphasizing the power of physical considerations in framing human patterns of life and in stimulating effort, but he is not seeking an exclusively materialistic interpretation of human motivation. Messere Gaster is no God; his power is limited to this world—he is the "premaistre às arts de ce monde"—and whilst the human being has to

34Les Ruisseaux, p. 308.
Screech's explanation of Messere Gaster's role should facilitate for us the solution of the problem of Charles Fontaine's change of manner in La Fontaine d'Amour, a goodly portion of which is a treatment of the instincts engendered in man by his terrestrial nature, a nature which Rabelais personified as Messere Gaster. The broad physical appetites and pleasures which Maistre Charles describes in his more liberated verse seem insufficiently treated on one hand to warrant the conclusion that at this particular stage of his development Fontaine had undergone 

some process of paganization of which La Fontaine d'Amour was the end product. The subjects are too lightly treated. The little jest which terminates the epigrams is a far cry from the reverence in which the thoroughly pagan writers of antiquity held these elemental instincts. On the other hand, by emphasizing the pleasurable nature of these instincts, Fontaine does indeed attribute to them a certain clear but limited realm of legitimacy. Furthermore, the fact that Fontaine saw fit to commit these earthy reflections to verse, a form for which he had such a consistently high regard, indicates that he, while certainly not a thoroughly pagan worshipper of man's physical instincts, nevertheless accorded them a high degree of respectful attention.

If we were to seek examples of this curious, rather carefully maintained dualism in the poetic works of Charles Fontaine, they would be nowhere more apparent than in the two pitoyables élégies written on the occasion of the deaths of his sister Catherine and his son René, both of which we have included in an appendix. In her own comparison of the two pieces, Christine Scollen has justly noted:

Fontaine's elegy on the death of his sister is as pagan as the other poem [on the death of René] is Christian. For in lamenting the death of Catherine, Fontaine follows the model of Ovid's elegy on the death of Tibullus closely enough for the tone to be that of Antiquity. He embellishes his lament with a host of mythological references, and descriptions of purely pagan funeral rites, and forms of mourning.
On the whole, Fontaine has retained the character of Ovid's elegy on the death of Tibullus (Amores III, ix), and here and there a few lines read almost like a free translation, but nowhere does he translate long passages consistently from the Latin.  

It is as interesting as it is significant to observe that the images employed in the elegy on Catherine's death are all palpable, concrete, and confined to the realm of the senses, whereas only one such concrete image is found in the elegy on the death of René, although it does occur two times in the lines: "Tu n'as encore le laict bien sauoure," and "Petit enfant qui n'as gueres testé."

Another equally significant aspect of the elegy on René's death exists in the fact that, although the bereaved father repeatedly asks his dead son why he chose to leave this life so soon, no answer is forthcoming from the son. This detail is all the more significant if one agrees with Hawkins' conclusion that the model for Fontaine's elegy was a poem written some years earlier by the neo-Latin poet, Jean de Boyssoné, entitled Ad Theodulum Rabaloesum puerum morientum. In response to Boyssoné's question, "Pourquoi petit Rabelais nous quitter si tôt?" the child replies, "Je ne meurs pas en haine, de la vie, mais pour ne pas mourir à chaque instant." Even in such a minor

36 The Birth of the Elegy, p. 117.
37 François Mugnier, La Vie et les poésies de Jean de Boyssoné (Paris, 1897), pp. 412-413.
38 Mugnier, La Vie et les poésies, p. 413.
detail, the implication is evident. For Charles Fontaine, the universe was a divided entity comprised of two distinct parts, the absolute and the finite. Man, a finite being, could and indeed did turn his thoughts to the absolute, drew conjectures upon it from his finite knowledge, but rarely was there any mingling or "mixing" of the two spheres.

We have seen in the two poems devoted to the respective deaths of Catherine and René Fontaine one of the finest examples of the concept of chorismos in Fontaine's poetic production. Each elegy remains encompassed throughout its entirety within the realm to which it is initially ascribed; never do the palpable and the spiritual overlap each other--one poem remains purely pagan in tone, the other just as purely Christian. In these poems, it is possible to see how two separate, but quite similar events inspired two poems of entirely different outlook. In the poem on the death of Catherine, the loss of a sister is complete and irrevocable for all time; it is a loss considered only in terms of this world. In the case of René, while the loss is total in terms of this world, it is only momentary, for at the end of the elegy, there remains the hope that the father and son will be reunited at the end of time in another sphere of existence.

We have cited the two poems in question only because they present the most striking example of the division
between the physical and the spiritual to be found in Fontaine's works. There are indeed other poems, notably the "Epître à vne dame, pour la consoler sur la mort de son mari," 39 in which there is a mingling of antique and Christian motifs. It is important to note, however, that the classical motifs of this poem are pressed into the service of religious thought. When interpreted in this perspective, the "Epître à vne dame, pour la consoler sur la mort de son mari" remains essentially Christian in spirit. It is indeed a poem in which Fontaine seems to be pursuing most closely the goals of the early humanists, who sought to clothe religious truth in the formal eloquence of Antiquity. Never does the epistle approach the purely pagan spirit of the lament on Catherine's death.

Further evidence of this tendency to view the universe as a dualistic structure in which there was maintained a rather strict delineation between the phenomenal and the noumenal, the body and the soul, the terrestrial and the spiritual, is found in La Fontaine d'Amour itself. Commenting on the subject matter he has chosen to treat in this volume, Fontaine addresses a huitain to the reader in which we see proof from Maistre Charles' own hand (ll. 4-8) that he was indeed conscious that there were differences separating his own age from that of Pagan Antiquity:

In the process of following the development of poetic theory of the early sixteenth century in France with regard to its relationship to certain developments within the domain of philosophy, we have seen that the myth of the divine origin of poetry and of the poet as an oracular and mystically inspired figure has been broadened to include the legitimacy of poetry as a purely secular endeavor. We hope further to have demonstrated that each of these apparently opposing views of poetry is the logical corollary of the fundamental philosophical mood of the times.

In at least one other particular, Isidore Silver has seen a relationship between the religious upheaval which rocked France in the early sixteenth century and the evolution of French poetic theory. The particular we refer to is that of the tendency on the part of the poets of the school of Marot and the Pléiade to insist upon the use of the vernacular instead of Latin in modern poetry.


41 "Ronsard, the Theological Reaction, and the Creation of a National Poetic Language," L'Esprit Créateur, X, 95-103.
It has been a traditionally accepted practice to attribute the insistence on vernacular as a proper means of poetic expression to the nascent spirit of French nationalism which, inspired by the example of the Italian literature to which the French had been exposed in the course of the Italian military campaigns under a series of French kings, sought to equal its counterpart in Italy and finally to surpass it. According to Silver, the theory of nationalism will henceforth be obliged to share with a "theological reaction" the credit for the triumph of the vernacular over Latin in the composition of poetry.

In Silver's opinion, which he convincingly documents with pertinent references to the Deffence, du Bellay's Musagnoemachie, and Ronsard's Ode à Michel de l'Hôpital, the Pléiade's insistence on the use of French as a worthy means of poetic expression was provoked in no small measure by the intransigence of French Catholics, led by the Sorbonne, in resisting the primacy of French in "the religious field." To support his case, Silver quotes a decision handed down by the faculty of the Sorbonne banning vernacular translations of the Bible:

Two years later [in 1525] the same Faculty declared that it was "ni expédient ni utile à la république chrétienne, et même ... plutôt pernicieux d'autoriser l'apparition ... des traductions totales ou partielles de la Bible, et que celles qui existaient déjà devraient bien plutôt être supprimées que tolérées." 42

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42 "Ronsard, the Theological Reaction," p. 95.
Silver insists that while Ronsard and du Bellay never wavered in their Catholic faith, they were nevertheless appalled by what they considered the crass ignorance engendered by reliance on a foreign language and on inaccurate scriptures, translations, glosses, and commentaries written in this language. To the poets of the Pléiade, the leaders of the intransigent Latinizers acquired the stature of ignorant, unwashed Titans in rebellion against the divinely imposed order of heaven and earth. Silver further maintains that one of the primary purposes of the _Défence_ was to circumvent the ignorance fostered by a blind adherence to Latin, and that the final result of this campaign was the birth of a national poetic language. To give added credence to his argument, Silver quotes a marginal notation from Paul Laumonier's personal copy of his own _Ronsard poète lyrique_:

> De même que Lefèvre d'Étaples, Erasme, Luther, Farel, Olivetan, Calvin, préconisent et pratiquent la langue nationale contre le latin, comme langue liturgique et pour interpréter les textes sacrés—de même Marot, Charles Fontaine, Peletier, Du Bellay, Ronsard, adoptent la langue frse. comme expression des idées profanes. Les deux mouvements se correspondent.43

While we might disagree with Laumonier that Marot, Fontaine, and other poets adopted the vernacular solely for the expression of profane ideas, we will not argue this point. What we do find significant is that Silver, and to

43"Ronsard, the Theological Reaction," p. 96.
some extent, Laumonier, both manage convincingly to link the use of the vernacular in poetry to the reforming impulse which permeated the Catholic church in France in the early 1500's and which is evident in the early poetry of Charles Fontaine.

With Silver's thesis in mind, let us examine a few of Charles Fontaine's comments on the question of the vernacular versus Latin in poetry. In the dedicatory epistle of his earliest known work, which was addressed to the Cardinal de Chastillon, Fontaine begins by defending his use of French instead of Greek or Latin:

Si ce present traitant de Jesuschrist
Estoit en Grec ou en Latin escript
Plus hardiment, 0 Reverendissme,
Vous l'offrierois, car je croy et estime
Qu'a vostre esprit seroit plus convenable.44

Once the perfunctory bow to the excellence of the classical languages has been executed, however, Fontaine launches into a three-part defense of his use of French. In the first place, he notes that "quelque degré de dignité est deu" 45 to his native language. Second, he says that although he has written in French, his sources are Greek and Latin, and that he has made marginal notations wherever he has deemed them necessary. This procedure is a common one in some of his early translations. There is hardly a page of the Remedia Amoris translation, for.

44Epistres ... faictz à l'honneur de Dieu, fol. 2r.
45Epistres ... faictz à l'honneur de Dieu, fol. 2r.
example, where some marginal notation is not in evidence, and this is possibly another good reason for our placing it as a much earlier work than its date of first publication would lead us to believe. Finally, Fontaine professes that by writing in French he is able to satisfy an "amour internelle/Qu'on a devers sa langue maternelle."\footnote{Epistres ... faictz à l'honneur de Dieu, fol. 2r.}

Fontaine's defense is interesting in several respects, and is perhaps as significant for what it does not say as it is for the ideas that are openly expressed. First, the mere fact that Fontaine makes a point of discussing his choice of language is significant, for we must remember that the volume in question is a privately circulated manuscript, intended perhaps for eventual publication, but whose immediate purpose seems to have been to pay hommage to a man the author admired. In this case, a private discussion of the choice of language does not seem to be extremely pertinent in itself. This discussion would become pertinent, it appears, only if the question of linguistic preference had a significance beyond mere personal inclination.

It is probably significant, too, that nowhere are Latin and Greek considered inherently superior to French. It is only in deference to the cardinal's deeply classical
background that Fontaine felt that Greek or Latin would perhaps be preferable to French in the poems of this volume; the nominal praise of classical languages assumes, then, little more importance than that of a more or less indirect method of praising Chastillon's culture. There is never any suggestion on Fontaine's part that French is incapable of expressing the same subtleties of emotion and thought which Latinists and Hellenists of the time held to be the exclusive provinces of their chosen languages.

A third point of interest in Fontaine's defense of French as a poetic language is suggested by the fact that there is a very close proximity of poems of an essentially religious or moral nature and an explicit defense of French as a language adequate for the conveyance of the thoughts the author wished to express in these poems. The simple physical proximity could in all likelihood be construed as a straightforward, minimally veiled rebuttal of the Sorbonne's edict of 1525 which stated that vernacular works touching on religious matters were "plutôt pernicieux" to the promulgation of the Christian faith within France. In this respect, Fontaine appears to have been quite close to the attitude attributed by Silver to the Pléiade in its insistence on the use of the vernacular in poetry. Finally, it is notable that nowhere does Fontaine plead incompetence in Latin and Greek as an excuse for
writing in French. The conclusion seems obvious: For Charles Fontaine, the question of vernacular, like the question of poetry as an approach to divinely inspired knowledge and the question of the poet as an oracular figure, was ultimately derived from the larger philosophical and theological preoccupations of the day.

If Fontaine seems somewhat reserved in stating his case for French as a legitimate poetic language in the dedicatory epistle to his earliest known work, he loses some of this reserve in a more familiar epistle written to Jean Dugué at about the same time he wrote the epistle to the Cardinal de Chastillon. Speaking of his preference for French in poetry, young Fontaine says:

Si vous venez répondre, que la ryme
N'a poésie, & vers qui soient d'estime,
Et que les vers Grecs, Latins, Italiques
Sont trop meilleurs, & trop plus poétiques,
L'en suis assez de vostre fantasie:
Mais ou sera Françoysse poésie?
Sinon en ryme? or en la rejetant
Nous desprisons nostre langue d'autant.
Mais si iadis les Grecs, & les Latins
Ont employé maints soirs, & maints matins
À composer des vers en leur langage,
Serons nous bien de si lasche courage,
Serons nous si rudes & divers
De rejetter, & mespriser noz vers?
Ainsi que font quelques gens eshontez,
Quelques Latins qui n'ont iceux goustez.47

Taken completely out of context, it might seem likely that Fontaine's insistence on French as a poetic language was primarily patriotic in origin. In the light of what

47 Les Ruisseaux, p. 310.
has preceded this passage, however, we believe that something of a case for religious considerations in arriving at the doctrine of the vernacular as a legitimate poetic language can be made. Immediately preceding the fragment we have just quoted is a section in praise of poetry as an adjunct of religion which we have cited earlier in this chapter, and which ends with the lines "Mais auez veu qu'en mes oeuvres tient lieu/En maintz endroit l'honneur, & nom de Dieu." Also of interest in the immediately preceding citation is the use of the words rude, diuers, and eshontez to describe Fontaine's opinion of the Latin poets of his day. The association of Latinizers and ignorance is clearly drawn in this passage.

Fontaine also saw fit to take to task in even more concrete terms those who saw fit to disparage French verse. In this instance, the bond between Latinizers and ignorance is even more clearly drawn:

Si l'Hebreu a rime pour Poësie,
L'Italien, le François mesmement,
Ie m'esbay qu'aucuns ont fantasie
A despriser assez legerement
Rime, qu'on dit Poësie autrement:
La desprisant, Poësie ils desprisent,
Et trop ingrats, leur langue bien peu prisen
En reprouuant ses Poëtiques vers:
Ainsi donc ceux qui de rime desdisent
Sont d'ignorance ou malice couuers.49

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48 see above, p. 152.

One final example should suffice to show that in Charles Fontaine's mind there was a rather tightly knit association between the concept of poetry as a divine gift and that of the necessity of breaking the bonds of ignorance by using the vernacular:

\begin{verbatim}
Si chacun n'a ce beau don de nature,
Si chacun n'a du ciel cette influence,
De composer en beaux vers par mesure
(Vray art diuin, & celeste science)
Respondez moy vn peu en conscience:
Fault-il que ceux qui n'ont pas ce beau don
Laissent aller leur langue à l'abandon,
Pour detracter Poésie en tout lieu?
(Grand Dame elle est, requerez luy pardon)
Chacun n'pas telle grace de Dieu.
\end{verbatim}

Silver does not elaborate upon the reasons why the members of the Pléiade were so adamant in their portrayal of the Latinizers of the Sorbonne as ignorant mentalities. In our opinion, Leo Spitzer complements Silver's argument by suggesting in some detail why this view of the ignorance of the Sorbonniqueurs was epistemologically well founded. In "The Problem of Latin Renaissance Poetry," Spitzer comes quite close to saying that the vernacular prevailed as a poetic language in the sixteenth century precisely because the majority of the writers of the time found Latin lacking the capacity for the subtle distinctions and nuances which were the natural corollaries of dualistic thought:

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Indeed only in an Italian poem could a Petrarchistic mood be sustained; the dualism "soul against body," so dear to Christian poetry is not associative with classical Latin words which are lacking in any suggestion of the psycho-physical perplexities of the Christian mind of that suture between body and soul which Montaigne recognized in Christianity.51

It appears, then, that even in the matter of choosing a poetic language in the sixteenth century, the concept of dualism engendered by the world view of the time, along with nationalistic and theological considerations, was responsible in some measure for the prevalence of the vernacular. In this chapter we have emphasized that the concept of dualism had rather marked effects on the poetic production of Charles Fontaine. When it is viewed as a manifestation of this world view, it appears to us that Fontaine's total poetic production, and especially his Fontaine d'Amour, is far too complex to be judged as a simple return to the poetic ideals and models of antiquity. Rather, it seems to be above all else the work of a man acutely aware of the chorismos of his universe, a universe in which both body and soul were legitimate objects which could be effectively considered totally apart from each other. As we intend to show in the following chapter, it was Fontaine's underlining of this division of the universe which most completely set him apart

from the Pléiade and which induced him to choose the particular classical source from which he seems to have derived the greatest part of his poetic theory.
CHAPTER V

In attempting to discern the greatest single influence of Antiquity on the poetic production of Charles Fontaine, one is soon convinced that it is indeed Ovid who must be accorded this title. Hawkins noted that Fontaine was an "ardent admirer" of Ovid and was struck by the similarity between Fontaine's elegy on the death of Catherine Fontaine and the Latin poet's elegy on the death of his fellow elegist Tibullus (Amores III, 9), yet he chose not to explore the full extent of Ovid's influence on Fontaine's work.¹ Christine Scollen quite correctly observed the influence of the Ovidian tradition in the elegies of La Fontaine d'Amour and in the elegy on the death of Maistre Charles' sister Catherine.² However, since Scollen's study confined itself to the elegy, she could hardly have been expected to pursue a detailed exploration of Ovid's influence on Charles Fontaine's poetic production and theory. For the purposes of organization in our demonstration of the pervasiveness of the Ovidian influence on the work of Fontaine, we shall set forth four general categories in which we believe it will be possible to gauge the true extent of this particular influence. We

²The Birth of the Elegy, pp. 97-121.
believe further that this influence will prove to be greater than most critics have previously supposed. The areas in which we propose to cite examples of Ovid's influence on Fontaine are those of 1) the rhetorical nature of much of Fontaine's early poetry, 2) the influence of Ovid on La Fontaine d'Amour, 3) examples of Ovidian phraseology or very lightly paraphrased versions of sentences found in Fontaine's works, and finally 4) citations taken from Ovid which Fontaine quotes in defense of his own critical and theoretical positions.

It is Ovid, of course, who has been credited with the introduction of "rhetoric" into Latin poetry. In fact, this point seems to be about the only one on which the Roman poet's latter-day critics seem to share anything resembling unanimity of opinion. However, even this unanimity is more apparent than real, for if scholars do agree that Ovid was the first rhetorical poet of Antiquity, they are at some pains to agree on what they mean by the term "rhetoric." Some have equated it with insincerity; others, perhaps influenced by the term rhétoriqueur as it has been applied to the poets who flourished in France in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, have tried to equate Ovidian rhetoric with the use of a great amount of artifice to mask the deficiency of a true gift for poetry. The example of the Grands Rhétoriqueurs notwithstanding, we should remember that at the time the term "rhetorical" was first applied to Ovid's poetry, rhetoric
was universally acknowledged as "the art, methodically elaborated, of speaking (or speaking and writing) clearly, convincingly, pleasantly, and forcefully," and it is in this context that we shall employ the term to refer to the works and style of both Ovid and Charles Fontaine. Furthermore, we shall insist at the outset on the primacy of the adverbs "clearly" and "convincingly" in our discussion of rhetoric in Ovid's and Fontaine's poetry, for the real intent of a large portion of both men's work was persuasion. For instance, we have only to remember the underlying purpose of the *Tristia*, the *Ex Ponto*, and many of the elegies of the *Amores* to appreciate the extent to which poetry was associated with the art of persuasion in Ovid's works. The two former works are direct appeals to friends and to the Emperors Augustus and Germanicus to lift the ban of relegation which had been posted against him, or at least to relegate the poet to a more comfortable place of banishment than the inhospitable shores of Tomis. The elegies of the *Amores* are as often as not poems of supplication to Corinna, her maidservant, or, on one memorable occasion, to the goddess of dawn, Aurora herself. In each of these poems, Ovid indeed presents his case "clearly, convincingly, pleasantly, and forcefully."

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The rhetorical tendency in Ovid's poetry was in no small measure the result of his scholastic training. We know that Ovid, born in 43 B.C., was a member of an honest but otherwise undistinguished family of the equestrian class, a social level roughly equivalent to our own upper middle class. In keeping with his own ideas of what membership in the equestrian class predicated for his son's career, Ovid's father insisted on preparing him for public office or for a legal vocation, each of which demanded training in rhetoric. Two types of oratorical exercises designed to quicken the student's wits and to polish his speaking style seem to have found special favor in Ovid's eyes. They were the *suasoria* and the *controversia ethica*. A prominent classicist has defined these two forms in the following manner: "The *suasoria* was a speech giving advice in a critical situation and recommending a certain course of action. In ... the *controversia ethica* ... the student was to argue the moral aspects of an action already committed."\(^4\)

According to Seneca the Elder (*Controv. II, 2,8*), the young Ovid was highly successful in the execution of these schoolboy exercises. Unfortunately, none of these early efforts has survived, and we must rely solely on Seneca's memory to attest to their effectiveness. Nevertheless, it

should come as no great surprise when we discover that no small part of Ovid's poetry is argumentative, devoted to the business of proving to his friends, Corinna, Corinna's maid, the emperor, and even Aurora herself that his cause is just, and that the course of action he advocates in each case is the one which should be followed.

No less than Ovid, Charles Fontaine framed a large portion of his poetry, especially his early poetry, in a rhetorical, or argumentative, style. The tendency toward persuasion, or argumentation, is in fact quite clearly visible in three of Fontaine's early works; first in his defense of Marot against Sagon, in his Responce to Papillon's Victoire et triumphe d'Argent, and in La Contr'amye de Court. Yet we would do an injustice to Fontaine if we were to try to make a case for the rhetorical nature of his early poetry on the basis of these pieces alone, and it is not necessary for us to do so. Maistre Charles has in fact been most obliging in providing us with more concise specimens of a rhetorical style, in which the rhetorical method is clearly outlined and easily discernible to the most casual reader of the poem in question. For the sake of brévity, we shall cite only a few of Fontaine's early poems in which the rhetorical tendencies are evident. In most instances, they are poems which we have mentioned at least in passing in previous chapters. They are the "Epître au Roy à qui l'auteur addressoit une sienne traduction," another
epistle "A vne Dame pour la consoler sur la mort de son mary," the epistle entitled "Charles Fontaine à son oncle Maistre Jean Dugué, Aduocat en Parlement à Paris," and finally, the tenth epistle from La Fontaine d’Amour.\(^5\)

In our definition of rhetoric as we have chosen to apply it to the rhetorical poetry of Ovid and Charles Fontaine, we have so far insisted on interpreting rhetoric as a means of speaking persuasively and convincingly. If we understand rhetoric as a means, or manner, of pursuing a desired goal in speaking or writing, then its application implies a method. After all, rhetoric is an art, "methodically elaborated." Fontaine's poems which we have chosen to cite as examples of rhetorical poetry have been chosen in no small measure because the author's method is so readily apparent in them. In the first two pieces, Fontaine begins with a brief preface in which he prepares the reader for his argument by breaking the subject matter of the poem into its two or three component parts, which he sometimes calls pointz. In the "Epître au Roy," we read:

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\begin{align*}
\text{Si vostre esprit autant hault en sagesse,} \\
\text{Que vostre haulte, & eureuse noblesse,} \\
\text{Est élevée en toute autorité,} \\
\text{(Roy admirable à la posterité)} \\
\text{Vient à penser qui auroit peu induire} \\
\text{Ma Muse basse à ce liure traduire} \\
\text{Plustost que nul des autres de l'auteur} \\
\text{Dond le renom croist en toute hauteur:}
\end{align*}
\]

\(^5\)Les Ruisseaux, pp. 5-12; 37-46; 293-297. 
La Fontaine d'Amour, pp. 76-78.
After explaining for three pages why he chose to translate this particular work (the Remedia Amoris) rather than any other by the author in question (Ovid), Fontaine continues his discourse, explaining the apparent change in his manner:

Or maintenant touchant le second point, Tresnoble Roy, nier ie ne veulx point Qu'il n'y ait bien assez grand'difference Aux deux traicitez, de stile, & de sentence: Mais tout esprit à l'estude arresté Est recrée par maint divers traicté.

Around the second point Fontaine elaborates the general direction the remainder of the poem is to take. Although the content and style of the two translations (the prose translation of Saint Augustine's De Praedestinatione Sanctorum and the verse rendition of Ovid's Remedia Amoris) which Fontaine had by this time presented to the king were superficially dissimilar, they shared a common ground in the divine nature of their inspiration:

Vray est que l'vn à corriger s'applique Vn vice ou deux souz stile Poëtique: L'autre corrige, & maintz vices efface Souz un esprit plein de diviine grace Combien pourtant (sans que desplaise en riens) A bien parler qu'est-ce que Poësie Fors vne ardante, & saincte phrenesie?

6 Les Ruisseaux, p. 5.
7 Les Ruisseaux, p. 8.
8 Les Ruisseaux, p. 8.
Apart from our immediate purpose of analyzing the methodical elaboration of Fontaine's argument in this passage, it is interesting to note peripherally that this particular excerpt also bears witness to the concept of a strictly maintained dualism in the universe, a concept which we have discussed at some length in the preceding chapter. The divine and the earthly remain rather rigorously separated, united only by the common bond of divine inspiration. The implication seems clear: only when the divinely ordained gift of poetic inspiration comes to bear upon the earthly does the earthly come to share any of the attributes of the divine.

The remainder of Fontaine's argument may be summarized rather succinctly. Poetry is a divine science whose practitioners have no choice but to heed its calling. In spite of its divine nature (or possibly because of it), poetry is not remunerative on this earth, yet the poet must be assured of some degree of economic independence before he can reach his ultimate potential. It is therefore to Francis I, already famous for his support of such enterprises as the establishment of a trilingue collège, to whom all the poets of the realm look for sustenance. Like his brother poets, Fontaine trusts that the king will reward him for his efforts to reillumine the lamp of learning in the kingdom.9

9Les Ruisseaux, pp. 10-12.
A look at the epistle written "A vne Dame pour la consoler sur la mort de son mari" reveals essentially the same methodical process of outline, elaboration upon individual points, and conclusion in perhaps more tightly organized form. After a twenty line preamble in which he expresses both his grief at hearing of the death of "feu monseigneur" and the hope that his epistle will fulfill the purpose of consoling the widow, Fontaine informs the lady of the method he intends to use to effect the desired consolation:

Premiersement vous n'estes à sauoir
Que rien parfait au monde on ne peult voir:
Secondemest que Dieu a ordonnez
Noz certains iours, si tost que sommes nez:
Et tiercement que meilleurs biens possede
Le bon cretien qui en la foy decede.
Ces trois poinctz là bien imprimez en cueur,
De tout ennuy le font maistre, & vainqueur:
Ces trois poinctz là, en vostre conscience
Engendront confort, & patience.10

The succeeding six pages of this poem constitute a strange combination of illustrative incidents borrowed from such diverse sources as the Bible, the Metamorphoses, and contemporary or near contemporary events, all of which elaborate upon and are called upon in support of the author's original trois poinctz. Near the end of the poem, Fontaine imagines what the dead husband would say if he were able to communicate with his widow:

10 Les Ruisseaux, p. 38.
Si à présent il luy estoit permis
Qu'à vous parlast, & qu'il vous fust transmis
Il vous diroit: bonne espouse, & amie,
Cesse vn petit, cesse d'être ennemie
De mon grant bien, lequel si tu sauois,
Tant de soupirs, à de gemissantes voix,
Tant de regretz cesseroient tout à l'heure:
Car je ne puys estre en place meilleure.
De tous les biens du monde ne me chault:
Je ne suys plus subjet à froit ne chault,
A faim, à soif, à manger, ny à boire:
Car maintenant suys en parfaicte gloire:
Me desirant en ce terrestre val,
N'y souspirant, tu desires mon mal:
Car tout l'honneur qui peut estre en ce monde
Enuers le ciel n'est que chose immonde.
I'ay accompli, & fait vn grant voyage,
I'ay ia passé le dur, & grief passage,
M'y veux tu donc mettre à recommencer,
Par ton crier, ton pleurer, & penser,
Non, non: en vain ton cœur en dueil sejourne
M'y regretant, jamais ie n'y retourne,
Car ie ne puys: & quand bien le pourrois
Certes aussi retourner n'y voudrois.
Tu es encor (grâce à Dieu) ieune & saine,
Tu es encor de vie, & de vigueur pleine
Pour contenter autrue noble mair,
Dont ne seray, ne doy estre marri:
Car entre nous la mort interuenue
Fait qu'en ce cas n'es plus a moy tenue.
Mort rompt tousjours la løy de mariage:
Mais i'en remetz à ton cœur bon, & sage,
Lequel saura après bien proposer
Discretely de tout cas disposer.
Dido la royne extremement marrie
De son espoux Sycheus, se marie
Cenonobstant à Eneas Troyen,
Quand fort amour luy donna le moyen.
Voila comment vostre loyal espoux,
Vous consolant tiendroit propos à vous:
Voilà comment feu monseigneur diroit.
Quand à present à vous il parleroit.11

We have cited this rather lengthy excerpt to show
that, in addition to his early penchant for the rhetorical
poetry of persuasion, Charles Fontaine once again appears

to have been strongly aware of the *chorismos*, or separation, between the Finite and the Absolute. Two planes or levels of existence are contrasted in this passage—that of the body on one hand, that of the soul on the other. Instead of attempting to relate the two analogically or allegorically as a good medieval poet might have done, Fontaine chose to emphasize the gulf between the two planes. As in the case of the elegy on the death of René Fontaine, it is perhaps significant that Fontaine never pretended to hear the dead husband speaking to his widow. The dead man is already too far removed from this world. Instead, the poet uses the device of saying in effect, "If your husband could speak to you, this is what he would say." Death, the *grief passage* from the finite to the absolute, breaks all the barriers set up by human law. The law of the marriage bond has been subordinated to a higher law, the law imposed by the irreconcilable separation of the two spheres of the phenomenal and the noumenal. The wife must henceforth inhabit her proper sphere, the dead husband his. For the wife, this duty implies not withdrawal to a convent in mourning, but a second marriage and a resumption of a normal life in her own world. To this end, the example (a singularly unfortunate one, it seems to us) of Dido is invoked as a precedent for the wife's remarriage.

Another example of Fontaine's argumentative or
rhetorical poetry which we have already mentioned in passing is found in the tenth epistle of La Fontaine d'Amour. Perhaps because it is a relatively short poem, the specific points are not enumerated in any preface. Rather, maternity and virginity are compared to two trees, one of which renews itself by reproducing fruit, the other of which is *vn arbre sans fruict*, whose only earthly credit is an occasional beautiful, but sterile, flower. Although he concedes that virginity "Aproche plus de la diuinité," Fontaine also maintains that in maternity "Lon peut pourtant à Dieu complaire bien." Once again in his rhetorical poems, Fontaine makes his point by assuming that the demands of the material world are far different from those of the spiritual, and that God, realizing the difference between the two spheres, does not seek to make man more than human, and therefore condones maternity.

The final poem which we shall consider as an example of Fontaine's persuasive poetry is the epistle written to Jean Dugué, Fontaine's uncle. In this poem, the youth informs his older relative of his desire to become a poet, and, foreseeing his uncle's objections to this decision, states the reasons for his commitment to poetry. Once more, the reader is informed beforehand of the direction Fontaine's argument is to follow. After paying his respects to his uncle, Fontaine broaches the real subject

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12 pp. 76-78.
Et vostre loz pour son decorateur
Requiert meilleur Poëte, ou Orateur.
Ce ne me doit pourtant retarder
D'escrire à vous, & ne me doit garder
De vous donner, quasi en m'ebatant,
L'honneur, & los dont vous meritez tant,
Pour deux raisons: l'vne est, car cet escript
Que le nepueu à l'oncle aura escrit
Plus sera ample, ou plus les vers croistront,
Tant plus aussi mes fautes paroistront,
Qu'il vous plaira à part me remontrer,
Quand vous pourrez temps & lieu recontrer:
Car demourer tel que suis ie ne veux,
Mais bien veux faire ainsi que bons nepueuz,
Qui en vertu veulent leurs oncles suyure,
Et leur sauoir, sens, & bon stile ensuyure:
En quoi valez de loz vn million,
Ie iuge ainsi aux ongles le Lyon.
L'autre raison c'est que ie pren plaisir
En vers François, & si ay grand desir
De plus auant gouster cette science:
En escriuant croistra l'experience.
Celuy qui veut estre en quelque art parfait
Faut qu'il y soit par long temps expert fait.13

Having thus informed his uncle of his desire to become a poet in the second, or autre raison, above, Fontaine proceeds to defend his decision with a series of three general points, each of which is developed and reinforced with specific examples from Roman antiquity. The first point Fontaine makes is that "La Poësie est chose si diuine." Historical precedents of poets who sustained their country in times of crisis are given. Finally, Fontaine remarks that Caesar Augustus himself had allowed the majesty of Roman law to be diminished rather than execute the condition in Vergil's will which called for all

13 *Les Ruisseaux*, pp. 293-204.
of his poetry to be destroyed. Next, Fontaine calls his uncle's attention to the fact that all is transitory in this world except poetry:

Les corps, les biens, maisons, châteaux,
vieillissent,
L'or, & l'argent par la roille perissent:
Mais les beaux vers ne vont point perissant.
Car Apollo est tousjours florissant,
Tousjours beau, ieune, & sa face en liesse
Ne sent jamais du vieil temps la vieillesse.  

The third and most thoroughly elaborated point which Fontaine makes in support of his decision to become a poet is that poets are predestined before birth to their calling, and that it is useless to resist a divinely instigated vocation. To support this point, Maistre Charles cites briefly the case of Propertius, whom Apollo turned from legal studies and thus "garda d'aduocasser." The case of Ovid is cited as a second, more thoroughly developed example of a prospective law student whom nothing could deter from following a poetic career. Fontaine, obviously comparing himself to these two examples, warns his uncle that "Le naturel d'un enfant n'obtempere,/Et ne se vainc par oncle, ne par pere." Having come this far in his commitment to poetry, little remains for Fontaine to do except to retrace the example of Ovid's "naturel" overcoming the advice of his father and finally to ask his own uncle's blessing on his choice of a career and to request permission to read Duguë's own poetry as a means

14Les Ruisseaux, p. 296.
of correcting his youthful errors of style.

In all of Fontaine's rhetorical poems, several common traits are observable. First there is in the longer poems an introduction of sorts in which the author tells his reader what to expect, in the form of two or more raisons or pointz. Each of these is in its turn developed from a general statement, reinforced by specific examples and historical precedents, and finally linked to the succeeding point by a smooth transition. Although the poetic value of all these pieces is mediocre at best, the works are still remarkable for the clarity, order, and persuasiveness with which Fontaine states, elaborates, and finally links each point of his case into a coherent whole, much as a lawyer builds a case for the particular point of view which he is paid to advocate. Descartes would have heartily approved of Fontaine's method. The epistle to the king is interesting and somewhat unusual for the refreshing directness with which Fontaine states his case. We would do well to remember that Marot himself couched his requests for money in elegantly indirect fashion, maintaining that only the double misfortune of illness and a dishonest valet had forced him into bankruptcy. We have already suggested that Charles Fontaine may have studied law at some early point in his career. While positive proof of this conjecture has yet to be found, it appears that Fontaine's early rhetorical poems offer serious enough circumstantial evidence of this
possibility to prevent us from rejecting the notion out of hand, for the salient characteristic of these persuasive poems is a certain method employed to the end of attaining agreement with the poet's own point of view.

Clarity of expression is of course the sine qua non of any effective argumentative piece of writing, and clarity is one of the remarkable traits of Charles Fontaine's verse. Indeed, one might well go so far as to say that much of Fontaine's verse is clearer than some of his prose, undoubtedly because it was to poetry that the author dedicated much of his energy, polishing, refining, and searching for the one mot juste which, more than any other word, most accurately expressed the exact shade of meaning the author wished to convey. R. J. Clements voiced the opinion of all students of Fontaine's poetry when he stated that it was "Charles Fontaine, whose extreme clarity placed him in a better position to make accusations of incomprehensibility than some of his contemporaries."¹⁵ While clarity is a trait not too often found in the poetry of the first half of the sixteenth century, and even in the earlier works of the members of the Pléiade, it does nevertheless entail an obverse characteristic detrimental to the development of the highest order of poetry. Complete clarity robs a poem of a

certain teasing, elusive quality by means of which a poem is capable of meaning many things to different readers, and in the end, such complete clarity usually results in a certain prosaic tone proceeding from the tyranny of the idea of a poem over its more inspired nature. In all fairness, we must admit that Charles Fontaine was guilty of this fault on many occasions, and that as a result of it, many of his poems read like nothing so much as rhymed prose. Let us consider, for example, the following piece, a dizain from a collection of epigrams which was included in *Les Ruisseaux de Fontaine*, and was addressed to Pierre Scève of Lyons:

![French text](https://example.com/translation)

Although it is a circumstantial piece and not one of Fontaine's larger efforts, for which reason we should not judge it too harshly, we can nevertheless see the tendency to prosaicness. The little poem is clear—amazingly so when we consider that it is contemporary with the works of such men as Rabelais, Montaigne, and Maurice Scève—yet it would be a mistake to call it real poetry as we

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16 pp. 116-117.
have come to understand the term. The inspired quality is totally lacking. What is present instead is a very pleasant and relatively clever estreine to be delivered to a friend on New Year's Day and then to be promptly forgotten. Unfortunately, many of Fontaine's longer, more serious works suffer from this same handicap of too much clarity.

We have seen that it was Ovid who first introduced rhetoric, the art of speaking "clearly, convincingly, pleasantly, and forcefully" to the end of persuading his audience to adopt a particular point of view, into Latin poetry. We have further observed that a good portion of Charles Fontaine's poetry, especially his early work, was written in this same rhetorical vein, and that his art of rhetoric was as methodically and carefully applied as the rules of Latin rhetoric called for it to be in Ovid's time. However, Ovid's early suasoriae and contraversae ethicæ have long since been lost in their entirety and survive only as fragments recorded, thanks to the prodigious memory of Seneca, some fifty or more years after their original composition. Is it possible, then, that we are stretching a point in seeing a connecting link between Ovid and Charles Fontaine in the matter of Maistre Charles' own early rhetorically inclined poetry? For two reasons, we feel that our estimate of Ovid's influence on Fontaine's rhetorical style is not exaggerated. In the first place, although examples of Ovid's
earliest rhetorical works—mere schoolboy exercises—had been lost many centuries before Charles Fontaine began to write poetry, the rhetorical influence is still present in many of Ovid's later, better-known works, notably in the *Tristia*, the *Ex Ponto*, and, to a somewhat lesser extent, the *Heroides* and the *Amores*. Finally, we hope to demonstrate that in at least three other general areas, Charles Fontaine was directly and much more explicitly influenced by Ovid. Once the predominance of Ovid's influence in these three remaining areas will have been demonstrated, we feel that any reservation in accepting the theory of an identical influence in Fontaine's rhetorical poetry will have been laid to rest.

The second area in which we shall find traces of the Ovidian influence in Charles Fontaine's work is in that of sources and manner of execution of some of the elegies of *La Fontaine d'Amour* and the elegy on the death of Fontaine's sister, Catherine. In an earlier chapter, we have cited the opinion of Raoul Morçay, who saw in the *Fontaine d'Amour* little more than an echo of Marot. In her more recent and more detailed study, Christine Scollen has found several subtle, but nevertheless fundamental differences between the elegiac production of the two men. First, however, we shall review the similarities which Scollen finds in the works of the two men. Scollen believes that Fontaine followed Marot where the definition of the elegy was concerned. For both poets the elegy
served the dual function of a love poem and a lament on death:

In his *Fontaine d'Amour* first published in Paris in 1545, Fontaine offered the reader a group of twenty-two love elegies, which are in effect, like the elegies of Marot, love epistles. Again, like Marot, in a later collection of poems, *Les Ruisseaux de Fontaine*, Fontaine presents a further group of elegies, two in number, which are laments on death.\(^{17}\)

If Fontaine seems to have followed Marot's lead in the dualistic definition of the elegy, he nevertheless tended to diverge from Marot in the sources he employed for his elegies and in his execution of the poems, for Scollen detects the presence of two influences in Fontaine's work which were mostly absent from Marot's elegiac production. She maintains that "in the case of Fontaine there are suggestions that Petrarchism, and some of the Latin elegiac poets had a greater influence on his elegies than they had on those of Marot." At the end of her examination of Fontaine's elegies for traces of Petrarchistic, Latin elegiac, and Medieval influences, Scollen maintains that there exists this fundamental difference between the elegies of Fontaine and those of Marot:

Although on the one hand Fontaine remains a disciple of Marot, in his imitation of his type of elegies, in the actual execution of them he branches out and uses sources which the older poet does not use. If the elegies

\(^{17}\) *The Birth of the Elegy*, p. 97.
of Marot can legitimately be qualified as one of the more mediaeval parts of his works, and this is largely true, Fontaine's, in contrast, reflect the increasing influence of Petrarchism, and to a certain extent the Ovid of the Amores rather than the author of the Heroides. 18

In the main body of her study of the elegies of the Fontaine d'Amour, Scollen appears a bit ambivalent in her appraisal of the exact extent of the Ovidian influence. On the one hand she concedes that Fontaine was influenced by Ovid in the defense of the aims of the Fontaine as they were set forth by Maistre Charles in a prose preface to the work, in the texts of a few of the elegies of the volume, and finally in the general spirit of the volume: "In his lightness of touch and frivolity, he is often a lot nearer to the Amores of Ovid than Marot was in his own elegies." 19 On the other hand, however, Scollen claims that in the matter of actual textual imitations of Ovid's works, the influence of the Latin poet was greater in Fontaine's works than in Marot's, it was after all, not very great, for she notes that Fontaine "hardly ever translates directly, either from his Latin or his Italian sources." 20 We suggest that part of the riddle of the apparent ambivalence in Scollen's appraisal of Ovid's influence on the Fontaine d'Amour would be resolved by remembering that she seems to make an implicit, yet

18 The Birth of the Elegy, p. 121.
19 The Birth of the Elegy, p. 111.
20 The Birth of the Elegy, p. 120.
clear-cut distinction between general influences and specific textual borrowings, and we agree that Fontaine only rarely translated directly from whatever sources inspired the works of La Fontaine d'Amour. To say, however, that Ovid is rarely directly translated by Fontaine in his elegies is not the same thing as saying that his works had no influence on the Fontaine d'Amour. Scollen in fact admits as much when she states that "Fontaine was particularly interested by Ovid."²¹ She continues to delineate the general influence of Ovid by stating that "Fontaine almost certainly culled some of the mythological embellishments for his poems from the Heroides and the Metamorphoses."²² Scollen continues by tracing the process typical of Fontaine's borrowings from Ovid:

One of the more striking passages which demonstrates Fontaine's knowledge of Ovid is in the fourteenth elegy. In it, Fontaine does not actually translate, or even directly imitate, he simply exploits "Ovidian" material. Here it is not the Amores that Fontaine follows, but the Heroides. In exhorting his lady to love him, Fontaine tries to spur her on by quoting a list of the great lovers of Antiquity. We are young, says the poet, and should therefore take advantage of our love and youth. He then quotes his list of lovers, most of the couples being those who wrote or received the Heroides. ... The point to note here is that Fontaine not only gives greater detail to the couples whose tragic loves are narrated in the Heroides, but that he keeps well within the tradition of Ovid by insisting that Hero and Leander "ont voulu des

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²¹The Birth of the Elegy, p. 100.
epistres mander." Obviously Fontaine was well acquainted with the *Heroides* by this stage of his career.\(^{23}\)

At other points in her discussion of Ovid's influence on Charles Fontaine, we find Scollen saying that Fontaine's knowledge of the *Metamorphoses* was "extensive," and that "in some cases Fontaine seems to be relying on his own knowledge of mythology, which may have been quite wide in view of his interest in Ovid."\(^{24}\)

In addition to the fourteenth elegy of the *Fontaine d'Amour*, other examples of the Ovidian influence on the poems of this volume are found in the ninth elegy of the work in which Fontaine, obviously inspired by both Catullus and, to a larger degree, Ovid's lament on the death of Corinna's parrot, writes a similar lament on the theft of his own mistress' dog.\(^{25}\) The tenth elegy also shows traces of the same influence inasmuch as Fontaine wishes that he could be a "mignon perruquet" free to speak his real thoughts to his mistress.

Perhaps, however, the most striking single example of Ovid's influence on the *Fontaine d'Amour* is to be found in the prose preface to the work, in which Fontaine attempts to forestall the possible objection to the licentiousness of some of the poems therein. To mollify his

\(^{23}\) *The Birth of the Elegy*, pp. 102-103.

\(^{24}\) *The Birth of the Elegy*, p. 101.

\(^{25}\) *La Fontaine d'Amour*, pp. 25-27.
critics, Fontaine cites Ovid as a precedent for the type of literature found in the *Fontaine*, insisting that immoral verse, intended solely for the recreation of the Duke of Orleans, does not necessarily predicate an immoral author:

*Ouide ha ainsi escript parlant de soymesmes:*
*Crede mihi mores distant a carmine nostre*
*Vía verecunda est, Musa iocosa mihi.*

*que iay tradueict,*
*Entre mes moeurs, & le mien metre*
*Grand difference lon peut mettre:*
*Ma vie est honnestee, & honteuse:*
*Mais ma Muse est un peu ioyeuse.*

Not content to insist upon the sometimes necessary divergence between the life and works of a poet, Fontaine again cites Ovid, among others, to insist that even if his works did indeed reflect his private moral standards, this would after all not be so very reprehensible, given the precedents from Antiquity:

*Je nay ces choses alleguees pour me iustifier, & me rendre innocent: car quand bien seroit que iauroye conioint lexperience auc lescriture, ce ne seroit noueaulté, ne cas si reprehensi­ible. Il est tout seur que Tibulle poëte beau de corps, & scauant desprit, eut pour amye Nemesis: Prosperse, Cynthia: qui par fois luy aydoit a parfaire ses vers, tant estoit scauante. Comme aussi la Corinne à Ouide: Lesbia, à Catulle.*

It is interesting to note that in citing Ovid and other Latin elegists first as examples of morally blameless men who wrote immoral verse and then as men who had

26 *La Fontaine d'Amour*, p. 7.

27 *La Fontaine d'Amour*, p. 7-8.
"conjoint lexperience avec lescriture," Charles Fontaine seems to be less interested in constructing a logically impregnable case for many of the pieces included in the Fontaine d'Amour than in citing authoritarian precedents for them from the examples of Roman Antiquity.

Two other allusions to Ovidian sources in the apologetic preface to the Fontaine d'Amour seem so far to have escaped notice, or at least mention. The first of these is found in the preliminary point of the preface, which is a defense of the purely recreational function of poetry. Citing the universal need for recreation from time to time, Fontaine finds within the Heroides matter to support his case:

> Or est il (pour rentrer à mon propos) que ie scay, & ay aucunement experiments que ce monde est remply de fascheries, & daffaires, & que mesameent la Court est tousiours pleine dimportunitez: en quoy convient, tant aux grans que aux petis, que lesprit travaaille. Parquoy est de besoing pour le recreer & resiouir, vser de quelque passetemps, & repos honnestes. Comme dit bien la dame Phedre en son Epistre, Que toute chose qui ne prend repos & recreation par interuale n'est point de duree.28

Since it is "en son epistre" that Phaedra alleges the necessity of recreation, we may be assured that the Heroides is the source for Fontaine's substantiating point. Indeed, in the fourth epistle of this work, Phaedra's missive to Hippolytus, we find the following lines:

28 La Fontaine d'Amour, p. 5.
quod caret alterna requie, durabile non est; 
haec reparat vires fessaque membra novat. 
arcus—et arma tuae tibi sunt imitanda Diana—
   si numquam cesses tendere, mollis erit.

That which lacks its alterations of repose will not endure; this is what repairs the strength and renews the wearied limbs. The bow—and you should imitate the weapons of your Diana—if you never cease to bend it will grow slack.29

This allusion should give added weight to Scollen's assertion that Fontaine was indeed well acquainted with the Heroides by the time of the publication of La Fontaine d'Amour. The second example of a possible Ovidian influence in the preface to the work is found in a passage in which Fontaine, expounding on one of his ideas of the essential nature of poetry, says:

   Aussi ne doibt on pas legerement iuger de la personne qui escript telles choses damour, joy-euses & recreatives, plus que vicieuses: principalement dun Poëte, en lesprit duquel y ha tousiours ie ne scay quoy de gayete naturelle, sans laquelle (iose dire) ne se peult appeler Poëte.30

While these actual lines are not themselves directly traceable to any of Ovid's work, their thought does, it seems, reflect more than a little of the idea expressed in a few lines within the epistle to the king which accompanied Fontaine's presentation of the translation of Ovid's Remedia Amoris to Francis I. Speaking once more of the

29 Unless otherwise noted, all citations from the works of Ovid, Martial, and Horace are taken from the Loeb Classical editions of their works.

30 La Fontaine d'Amour, pp. 5-6.
poet's right to take some license with the matter he
treats, Maistre Charles asserts, without giving credit
to Ovid:

Poésie est noblesse, & gayeté
D'esprit tranquille, & en grand liberté. 31

It is evident that the idea expressed in the two immedi­
ately preceding quotations is the same. Perhaps not so
readily apparent, however, is the fact that the poetic ver­
sion found in the epistle to the king is an almost direct
translation from Ovid, who says in the Tristia (V, xii,
3-4)

dificile est quod, amice, mones qui carmina laetum
sunt opus, et pacem mentis habere volunt.

My friend, your advice is hard, for versifying
is a cheerful occupation, and requires to have
the mind at ease.

It is ironic that Fontaine should have culled this
particular precept on the gaiety of poetry from the
Tristia, or Elegies of Gloom, which were written at a time
in Ovid's career when he had surely had occasion to regret
the early licentiousness of his Muse, yet the fact that
Fontaine almost certainly had Ovid's words in mind when
he wrote this portion of the epistle to the king around
1540 is significant inasmuch as it is proof that at a
relatively early point in his career, Charles Fontaine was
already well acquainted with the more lugubrious Tristia
as well as with the lighter, better known works of Ovid

31 Les Ruisseaux, p. 11.
such as the Amores and Heroides, both of which influenced to some degree the Fontaine d'Amour, and the Metamorphoses and the Remedia Amoris.

In addition to Ovid, several other Latin elegiac poets were cited by Fontaine to justify his own licentious verse. They were, as we have seen, Tibullus, Catullus, and Propertius, who, along with Ovid, compose the quadruplirate of the Latin elegiac poets. Martial is also invoked as a precedent for the licentious epigram. In the matter of actual textual borrowings from the elegiac poets, however, it is from Ovid alone that any significant textual influence is discernible in the elegies, whereas Martial’s spirit, if not his literal influence, is readily apparent in many of the epigrams, and we believe that Martial’s influence on Fontaine’s epigrams is greater than Hawkins was willing to concede. In the longer poems, however, it is the Ovidian influence which is predominant as far as any inspiration from Antiquity is concerned. In her concluding assessment of the three other Latin elegists, Scollen says:

From Catullus, Fontaine appears to have taken little, apart from a few reminiscences, and the idea for the elegy on the loss of his mistress’ dog. These borrowings suggest haphazard scraps remembered and used, rather than a conscious consistent effort at imitation. There appears to be very little that Fontaine took directly from Tibullus or Propertius.32

At another point in her study, Scollen avers that Fontaine took "nothing from Tibullus and Propertius."\textsuperscript{33}

In evaluating the relative strengths of two other influences on Fontaine's elegiac production, Scollen implies that Petrarchism and Medieval tradition played a larger role than the Ovidian tradition. Nevertheless, Scollen is at some pains to separate these two different strains, finding it difficult to discern clearly where the Petrarchian influence ends and where the Medieval influence begins:

There are several passages in Fontaine's elegies where it is difficult to see where the influence of Petrarchism begins, and where mediaeval influence ends. When the poet-lover suffers the torments of unrequited love, is this the influence of Petrarchism, or is it the well-worn theme of the "amant &conduit"? Certainly there are parts of Fontaine's elegies which owe more to the tradition of courtly love, and to Alain Chartier, than to Petrarch or Petrarchism.\textsuperscript{34}

While it is not our purpose to disagree with Scollen's conclusions, we should like to suggest that perhaps both the courtly love and Petrarchistic traditions themselves owe a larger debt to Ovid than one might at first assume.\textsuperscript{35}

Regardless of the precise relative degree of influence exerted by the three literary traditions traced by

\textsuperscript{33}The Birth of the Elegy, p. 105.
\textsuperscript{34}The Birth of the Elegy, p. 111.
\textsuperscript{35}For a concise estimate of Ovid's influence on succeeding poets, see Edward K. Rand, Ovid and His Influence (New York, 1928).
Scollen in *La Fontaine d'Amour*, we believe that it is important to realize that, as meager as the instances of actual textual borrowings from Ovid may have been in this volume, Fontaine seems to see himself throughout the work as the heir, and to some extent, the continuator of the Ovidian tradition—a point which Scollen herself has recognized when she said that Fontaine "possibly saw himself writing in the same tradition as Ovid's *Amores*."36

On the basis of our own examination of the general influence of the Ovidian tradition of the *Fontaine d'Amour* we are convinced that it is more than merely possible that Charles Fontaine regarded himself as a writer in the same tradition as that of Ovid's lighter works, especially the *Amores* and the *Heroides*. Nevertheless, it is difficult to disagree with Scollen's conclusion that Fontaine rarely employed actual verbatim textual borrowings from either his Italian or Latin models as we might expect him to have done if he were indeed greatly influenced by them. It appears, however, that the implicit problem of this situation may be explained, and that this explanation is directly related to the differences separating the poets of the school of Marot and those of the Pléiade in the matter of translations. It is a well-known fact that translations were held in high esteem by the former group. Indeed, we have previously quoted portions of a poem by

36 *The Birth of the Elegy*, p. 103.
Fontaine in which we have remarked an at least implicit tendency to accord well-done translations a status equal to that of original poetry. Some scholars have gone so far as to say that the fundamental reason for du Bellay's harsh treatment of translations and translators in the Deffence stemmed from an over avid desire to draw lines of differentiation between the poetic theory of the members of the Pléiade and those of the school of Marot as it was expounded in 1548 by Sébillet's Art Poétique which in some respects, claim the scholars, had the effect of stealing some of the Pléiade's thunder by making their proposals seem less revolutionary than those of their antecedents. Whatever the real explanation for du Bellay's attitude toward translations, and we shall examine one other explanation in the course of this study, the fact remains that once having so thoroughly berated translations, the Pléiade could hardly have begun to include them among their earliest works. The course chosen by the new school to extricate itself from a potentially uncomfortable situation was to insist upon the imitation of antique models, not their direct translation. In theory, this was an admirable solution, for it endowed even the most imitative poet with some of the prestige conferred by original creativity in the process of imitation. In practice, however, the line between imitation and translation became quite indistinctly drawn in the works of the Pléiade, resulting
in the most extreme cases in a process that amounted to little more than a translation from an unavowed source. In fact, it was against the charge of plagiarism that the new school was most frequently obliged to defend itself in its early days. We will remember that it was in one of the prefatory pieces to his translation of the *Remedia Amoris* that Charles Fontaine associated the practice of plagiarism with the Pléiade, those "si grans ennemis de toute traduction."

For his part, Charles Fontaine, who was an unequivocal champion of the art of translation, probably did not feel the urgent need to depend upon actual textual borrowings from his models as did the members of the Pléiade. In short, it appears that Fontaine's avowed admiration for good translations largely vitiated the need for very close or extensive textual borrowings from his models. If he wished to translate, he was free to label the result a translation. Original poetry did not need to be so highly imitative. It was enough for him to see himself writing in the general tradition of the Latin neoteric poets in general, and Ovid in particular.

If the Medieval and Petrarchan traditions must share some place with the Ovidian influence in the *Fontaine d'Amour*, we are able to note a decline in the predominance of the first two traditions and a resurgence of the third in Fontaine's later work. It is easy to see in Fontaine's
later poetry a certain change of manner. The licentious-
ness and in many cases plain obscenity which characterized
some of the pieces of the Fontaine d'Amour, and which
Scollen attributed to the vestiges of Medieval influence,
have vanished in the later works. Similarly, the
Petrarchan penchant for exaggeration, hyperbole, and para-
dox, a quality which the author of the Quintil Horatian
dubbed "la singerie de la passion Italiene," is also
absent from Fontaine's works appearing after La Fontaine
d'Amour. As for the epigram, Martial's influence remained
inasmuch as Fontaine, following Martial's lead, retained
wit rather than mere brevity as the salient characteristic
of the genre. However, Fontaine did chasten his epigrams
to the point of avoiding the obscenity which was present
in the short pieces of the Fontaine d'Amour. Although the
influences of Petrarchism, Medievalism, and Martial's
obscenity are attenuated in Fontaine's work after 1545, the
Ovidian influence becomes, if anything, more pronounced.
Ovid's name and authority are invoked more often, especial-
ly in critical matters, and it is easier to find examples
of actual textual borrowings from Ovid, the absence of
which in the Fontaine d'Amour seems to have prevented
Scollen from insisting as strongly as she might have on
the importance of Ovid's influence on the work.

The years between 1545 and 1555 were relatively pro-
ductive ones for Maistre Charles, since they saw six works
of which he was either the author or translator appear.
Of these six works, five are either complete translations or primarily translations to which Fontaine appended one or two original poems. The sixth work, published in 1546, was entitled Estreines, à certains Seigneurs et Dames de Lyon. 37 This thirty-two page volume is composed for the greatest part of quatrains addressed to various citizens of Lyons. Emile Roy has maintained credibly enough that because of its status as a work in the Festschriften tradition and its highly localized focus of interest, the Estreines was probably unknown outside Lyons during its author's lifetime. 38 At any rate, the extremely topical, limited nature of the work renders it useless as a guide in any study of Charles Fontaine's poetic theories. It was only in 1555 that Fontaine's next significant collection of original poems, Les Ruisseaux de Fontaine, appeared.

If we have been correct in our assumption that Les Ruisseaux was published both as a response of sorts to the Pléiade and as its author's poetic summa, we should therefore reasonably expect to find in it rather generous traces of the primary influences which, in the author's opinion, had shaped his development as a poet. We are not deceived in this expectation. On the first page of Les Ruisseaux,

37 Lyons, Jean de Tournes.

we find an example of what might well be a synthesis of two direct textual borrowings from Ovid. The piece in question is a sizain and is the third poem found in the work. It is preceded by two quatrains and followed by a distich, all of which have as their announced theme "la louange de Poésie":

Les durs cailloux, le coultre en la charue
S'usent par temps: les vers demeurent sains:
Cedent les Roys: leurs triomphes, & trains,
(Qui en leur main ont la fortune dure).
Les mines d'or, après qui tant on sue
Cedent aux vers de loz immortel pleins. 39

The first lines of this little poem bear a striking resemblance to the sixth line of the tenth letter of the fourth book of the Ex Ponto:

atteritur pressa vomer aduncus humo.

The curving ploughshare is rubbed away by the pressure of the earth.

It is in the eighth letter of the same book of epistles from which Fontaine may have taken the reference to the durs cailloux:

tabida consumit ferrum lapidemque vetustas,
nullaque res maius tempore robur habet.
scripta ferunt annos.

Decaying age consumes both iron and stone; and no one thing has greater power than time. Writings survive the length of years; ...

Although it is impossible to state with certainty the source of Fontaine's plowshare and rock image, we feel that its similarity to the passages in the Ex Ponto is too great

39 Les Ruisseaux, p. 2.
to be dismissed as merely fortuitous. Not all the links between Fontaine and Ovid are so tenuous, however. The first poem of any length in *Les Ruisseaux* is the dedicatory epistle to the king which presumably accompanied his translation of the *Remedia Amoris*. Several times Ovid's name is invoked to lend authority to the poet's arguments. In the first instance, we learn that it is on Ovid's authority that we are supposed to accept the case for the divine inspiration of poets:

A bien parler qu'est ce que Poësie  
Fors vne ardante, & saincte phrenesie?  
Comme bien lire en nostre Ouide on peult,  
Dieu est en nous, qui nous eschaufe, & meut.  

Hawkins designates line 549 of the third book of the *Ars Amatoria* as the source for this particular reference, and this does indeed appear to be the correct passage:

Vatibus Aoniis faciles estote, puellae:  
Numen in est illis, Pieridesque favent.  
Est deus in nobis, et sunt commercia caeli:  
Sedibus aetheriis spiritus ille venit.

So, be kind to us, girls, be gracious, always, to poets; in them divinity dwells, they are the Muses' own. There is a god in us, communication with Heaven, from the stars of the sky our inspiration comes down.

However, this passage alone is not the only one to which Fontaine would necessarily have turned for support of his argument that poets are divinely inspired. In the fourth epistle of the third book of the *Ex Ponto*, Ovid insists on

---

41 *Maistre Charles*, p. 164.
the divine source of his poetic inspiration:

* Ista dei vox est deus est in pectore nostro
  haec duce praedico vaticinorque deo.

'Tis the voice of a Divinity; a Divinity resides within my breast: I foretell and I prophesy this under the influence of a God.

Following immediately on the heels of the line "Dieu est en nous, qui nous meut, & eschaufe," there follows a brief passage which, while it remains an obvious borrowing from Ovid, turns for its source to the *Tristia*. Moreover, the transition is made to occur without any abruptness or even any immediate awareness on the part of the reader that it has occurred:

```
Et de là vient cette fiction belle
Que de Bacchus font feste solennelle
Poëtes saintz, & a obtenu lieu
D'estre appelé des Poëtes le dieu:
Pource que quant le sainct Nectar s'apreste
A leur monter en leur sacree teste:
Diuinement, & si bien les enyure
Qu'on les diroit ailleurs penser et viure,
Tant sont hors soy elevez & rauis. 42
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The source for this passage seems to be the *Tristia* (V, iii):

```
Illa dies haec est, qua te celebrare poetae,
si modo non fallunt tempora, Bacche, solent,
festaque odoratis innectunt tempora sertis,
et dicunt laudes ad tua vina tuas.
```

This is the day, if only I do not mistake the time, on which poets are wont to praise thee, Bacchus, binding their brows with sweet-scented garlands, and singing thy praises over thine own wine.

Another specific instance of the Ovidian influence in the work of Charles Fontaine is found in the epistle addressed to "Vne Dame pour la consoler sur la mort de son mary." The first of the three points which the author sets out to make is the fact that "il n'y a rien en ce monde durable." In support of this argument, Fontaine advances the following elaboration:

Considererez donques en premier point,
Quand le remors de telle mort vous point,
Qu'il n'y a rien en ce monde durable,
Rien de parfait, rien de constant, ne stable:
Et si voulez es choses naturelles
Querez exemple, & les trouueres telles.
Ne voyez vous qu'apres le iour qui luict,
Incontinent vous prent la noire nuict?
Ne voyez vous comment ne nuictz, ne iours,
N'yuer, n'esté, ne durent à tousjours?
Mais l'vn s'en va, puis apres l'autre vient,
Puis s'en reva, mais iamais ne reuient.
Ne voyez vous que la muable Lune
Durant le iour ne rend lumiere aucune?
Ne voyez vous tout au contraire aussi,
Que le soleil tant beau, tan esclarci,
Apres qu'il a dessus nostre hemisphere
Rendu chaleur, & grand lumiere clere,
Faisant son tour, donne à la Lune place,
Qui vient de nuict avec sa brune face?
L'yuer tant laid succede au bel esté:
Dieu a le tout en ce point arresté
Et a voulu toute chose en son ordre,
Dessus autruy n'entreprendre, ne mordre:
Ne pourroit pas le beau Souleil contendre
De quoy ne peult ses rays de nuit estendre?
La Lune aussi repliquer à son tour,
A quoy tient il que ie ne luis iour?
Certainement ores que parler peussent,
Ne le diroient: & encore que dit l'eussent
Ia pour leur dit ne seroit fait:
Ains dureroit l'ordre en nature faict:
Car le seigneur, qui par tout seigneurise
Ia une foys y a sa grand'main mise.43

Although we agree with Scollen that Fontaine rarely seems to have translated his Latin source directly into French, there is nevertheless enough similarity between the preceding passage from the epistle to the lady and a passage in the Metamorphoses (XV, 165-216) to warrant the conclusion that Fontaine drew much of the inspiration for his own passage from the latter work:

"omnia mutantur, nihil interit: ...
...nihil est toto, quod perstet, in orbe. cuncta fluunt, omnisque vagans formatur imago
"Cernis et emensas in lucem tendere noctes, et iubar hoc nitidum nigrae succedere nocti; nec color est idem caelo, cum laassa quiete cuncta iacent media cumque albo Lucifer exit clarus equo rursusque alius cum praevia lucis tradendum Phoebi Pallantias inficit arbem. ipse dei clipeus, terra cum tollitur ima, candidus in summo est melior natura quod illic aetheris est terraeque procul contagia fugit. nec par aut eadem nocturnae forma Dianae esse potest umquam semperque hodierna sequente, si crescit, minor est, major, si contrahit orbem. "Quid? non in species succedere quattuor annum adspicis, aetatis peragentem imitamina nostrae? nam tener et lactens puerique simillimus aevo vere novo est: ...
transit in aestatem post ver robustior annus fitque valens iuvenis ...
excipit autumnus, postio fervore iuventae inde senilis hiems tremulo, venit horrida passu, aut spoliata suos, aut, quos habet, alba capillos.
"nostra quoque ipsorum semper requieque sine ulla Corpora vertuntus, nec quod fuimusve sumusve, cras erimus."

"All things are changing; nothing dies. ...There is nothing in all the world that keeps its form. All things are in a state of flux, and everything is brought into being with a changing nature. "You see how the spent nights speed on to dawn, and how the sun's bright rays succeed the darkness of the night. Nor have the heavens the same appearance when all things, wearied with toil, lie at rest at midnight and when bright Lucifer comes out on his snowy steed; there is still another aspect when
Pallantias, herald of the morning, stains the sky bright for Phoebus' coming. The god's round shield itself is red in the morning when it rises from beneath the earth again; but in its zenith it is white, because there the air is of purer substance and it is far removed from the debasing presence of the earth. Nor has Diana, goddess of the night, the same phase always. She is less today than she will be to-morrow if she is waxing, but greater if she is waning.

"Then again, do you not see the year assuming four aspects, in imitation of our own lifetime? For in early spring it is tender and full of fresh life, just like a little child; ... After spring has passed, the year, grown more sturdy, passes into summer and becomes like a strong young man. ... Then autumn comes, with its first flush of youth gone, ... And then comes aged winter, with faltering step and shivering, its locks all gone or hoary.

"Our own bodies also go through a ceaseless round of change, nor what we have been or are today shall we be to-morrow."

Another poem from Les Ruisseaux de Fontaine to which we may turn for evidence of unmistakable textual borrowings from Ovid is the "Elégie sur le trespas de Catherine Fontaine, soeur de l'auteur." Both Hawkins and Scollen have been quick to see the similarities between this poem and Ovid's lament on the death of Tibullus. It would still be a mistake to say, however, that Fontaine imitates his model to the point of literally translating it, for although the similarities between the two pieces are great, Fontaine does not appear to have had a copy of his model before him while he composed his own lament on Catherine's death. Scollen has aptly summarized the impression one receives from a close comparison of the two poems:

It can be seen from [a reading of Fontaine's poem] that in fact Fontaine owes much to Ovid in this elegy although at no point does it read
like a translation. Hawkins suggests that "Maistre Charles devoured, digested and assimilated Ovid's poem, and then tried to write a similar poem." In other words, Fontaine follows Ovid in the same way that he follows Catullus in the short passage from "Vivamus, mea Lesbia," always at a respectful distance, adding characteristic touches of his own.\(^4^4\)

If Fontaine seems to have been influenced by Ovid in some of his poems, it appears also that he may have submitted to the Ovidian influence in one area of thematic choice, and a rather unlikely one at that. The theme is that of conjugal love and marital constancy in the face of separation. With the development of this theme, it is the Ovid of the Ex Ponto and the Tristia, not the poet of the Amores and the other lighter elegies, who is invoked. Like Ovid, Fontaine on several occasions promises his wife Flora immortality through his verses:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Tes grandes singularitez,} \\
\text{Tes vertus, & tes raritez,} \\
\text{Muettes s'en alloyent mourir} \\
\text{Sans moy qui les vien secourir.} \\
\text{Car mes vers par toy excitez,} \\
\text{Rendent tes dons resuscitez,} \\
\text{Les font parler, & reflorir.} \quad 45
\end{align*}
\]

In the last stanza of an ode addressed to Flora, Fontaine expresses substantially the same idea:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{O ma Flora bien que ton seul corps meure,} \\
\text{Le mien aussi, pourtant point ne mourrons:} \\
\text{Car mon doux chant à ton honneur demeure} \\
\text{Mille foys plus que viure ne pourrons.} \quad 46
\end{align*}
\]

\(^{44}\) The Birth of the Elegy, p. 120.  

\(^{45}\) Les Ruisseaux, pp. 85-86.  

\(^{46}\) Les Ruisseaux, p. 131.
Ovid expresses this same idea in one of the elegies of the *Tristia* (I, iv) addressed to his wife:

quantumcumque tamen praeconia nostra valabunt,
carminibus vives tempus in omne meis.

Yet so far as my praise has power, thou shalt live for all time in my song.

At least once more Ovid returned to the theme of conferring immortality upon his wife through his verses. In the *Ex Ponto* (III, i), he tells her:

si locus est aliquis tanta inter nomina parvis,
nos quoque conspicuos nostra ruina facit.

nec te nesciri patitur mea pagina qua non inferius Coa Bittide nomen habes.

If there is some place among mighty names for the humble, I too am become a man of mark by reason of my fall. And thou are not permitted by my pages to be unknown; thou has a name not inferior to that of Coan Bittis.

Ovid reiterates this theme of poetic immortality conferred on his wife through his verses in several elegies of the *Tristia*. From the various references to his wife in this work, it is interesting to note that although we have textual proof that Fontaine was well acquainted with Plato's Androgyne myth, it is entirely possible that he had precedent in Ovid's works for referring to Flora, as he occasionally did, as "ma moitié." Ovid, in the first book of the *Tristia*, says:

at nunc, ut peream, quoniam caret illa periclo,
dimidia certe parte superstes ero.

But now, although I perish, since she is safe from danger, doubtless I shall survive in her, one half of myself.
In an ode written to Flora during a period of apparent separation, Fontaine employs the same figure of speech:

Mais dy moy donc, ô ma Flora,
Pourquoy on t'a veu si fort plaindre?
Et pourquoy ton oeil tant plora
Et qui le peut à ce contraindre?
Ha ie l'entens, & le devine:
C'est que tu fus par trop long temps
Sans ta moitié la plus divine. 47

It would of course be difficult to list all the instances in which Fontaine alluded to the Androgyne myth, and it might be argued that Fontaine's precedent for referring to his wife as the other half of himself came from Platonic sources rather than from Ovidian ones, and this possibility must be admitted. Nevertheless, it is probably significant to note that in a total poetic production so heavily tinged by the Ovidian influence, the possible precedent for the allusions to the Androgyne myth was also available in Ovidian sources. Significant also is the fact that throughout the remainder of this ode, two other Ovidian influences are suggested. They are the Heroides and possibly the Ex Ponto. Citing examples for Flora to follow during their separation, Fontaine reminds her of Penelope and Ulysses:

Car si leurs lettres & escritz
Tu veulx pour ton soulasse lire,
Tu verras quelques plaints & cris
Mais no pas tant que tu veulx dire.

Tu y verras Penelope
Regretter son mary Vlisse,
Qu'en vingt ans elle n'a trompé
Ains les braues pleins de malice:

Qui trop audacieusement
Luy faisoiët la court, & grâd chere:
Mais son coeur chaste sagement
Les abusoit sous toile chere. 48

By referring to the lettres & escritz, Fontaine clearly designates the Heroides as the source of his reference. It is also possible that some elements of the preceding passage were inspired at least in part by one of the Pontic epistles (IV, x) in which Ovid compared the difficulties of his banishment to the trials which Ulysses encountered in the course of his odyssey.

If the exact Ovidian sources of the ode to Flora are somewhat obscure, they are much clearer in a disastrous ode dedicated to the Cardinal de Chastillon. While Hawkins is correct in maintaining that it is a "ridiculous version of Horace's ode to Maecenas, Non usitata nec tenui ferar, etc. (ii, 20), the theme of which is the transformation of the poet into a swan," 49 it is almost certain that the more explicit physical details of the transformation, which make the ode appear ridiculous, were taken from the Cycnus story in the Metamorphoses:

Dieu qu'est ce-cy?
Le sens ici
Hors & dans moy
Vn grand esmoy:

48 Les Ruisseaux, p. 135.
49 Maistre Charles, p. 191, n. 1.
Vne mutation etrange
Entierement tout mon corps change,

   Chantant mes vers
   Et tons diuers
   Suis mue tout
   De bout en bout

Ma teste haulte s'appetisse,
Et mon poil par tout se herisse:

   Qui plume est fait
   Par vn grand faict.
   Et en blancheur
   Rend grand lueur.

Mes deux bras emplumez s'estendent,
Et à voler desia pretendent.

   Iambes, & piedz
   Me sont liez
   De rude peau
   Trempee en l'eau:

Tout au bout des doigts y sont jointes
Des griffes, & picquantes pointes

   Mon nez pointu
   Plat rabbatu
   Et faict brun-sec,
   Me sert de bec,

Desia bien hault par l'air ie vole,
Couuert de plumes blanche & molle.50

The theme of Fontaine's ode is indeed borrowed from
Horace. In the twenty-four lines of Horace's ode, how­
ever, only two instances of a purely physical metamorphosis
are mentioned, and both of these are conceits which have
parallels in man's aging process:

iam iam residunt cruribus asperae
pelles, et album mutor in alitem
superne, nascunturque leves
per digitos umerosque plumae.

Even now the wrinkled skin is gathering on
my ankles, and I am changing to a snowy swan
above, and o'er my arms and shoulders is
spreading a plumage soft.

On the other hand, Fontaine's insistence on the purely
physical aspect of the transformation of the poet to swan
bears witness to a strong textual influence exerted by
Ovid's Cycnus story in the *Metamorphoses* (II, 367 ff.):

> Adfuit huic monstro proles Stheneleia Cygnus,
quì tibi materno quamvis a sanguine iunctus,
mente tambn, Phaeton, propior fuit. ille relictò
(nam Ligurum populos et magnas rexerat urbes)
imperio ripas virides amnemque querellis
Eridanum inplerat silvanque sororibus auctam,
cum vox est tenuata vior canaeque capillos
dissumulant plumae collumque a pectore longe
porrigitur digitosque ligat iunctura rubentis,
penna latus velat, tenet os sine acumine rostrum.
fit nova Cygnus avis nec se caeloque Iovique
tradit, ut iniuste missi memor ignis ab illo;
stagna petit patulosque lacus ignemque perosus
quae colat elegit contraria flumnia flammis.

Cycnus, the son of Sthenelus, was a witness of
this miracle. Though he was kin to you, O Phaëton,
by his mother's blood, he was more closely joined
in affection. He, abandoning his kingdom—for he
ruled over the peoples and great cities of Liguria—
grew weeping and lamenting along the green banks
of the Eridanus, and through the woods which the
sisters had increased. And as he went his voice
became thin and shrill; white plumage hid his hair
and his neck stretched far out from his breast.
A web-like membrane joined his reddened fingers,
wings clothed his sides, and a blunt beak his mouth.
So Cycnus became a strange new bird—the swan.
But he did not trust himself to the upper air and
Jove, since he remembered the fiery bolt which the
God had unjustly hurled. His favourite haunts were
the still pools and spreading lakes; and, hating
fire, he chose the water for his home, as the
opposite of flame.

The process which resulted in Fontaine's ode to the
Cardinal de Chastillon is now fairly easy to see. Taking
his general theme from Horace, and apparently recalling some similarities between the former's ode and the Cycnus story in the Metamorphoses. Fontaine enlarged upon the motif of physical transformation, borrowing from Ovid's story the details of the lengthened neck, the webbed fingers and toes, and the pointed beak.

Another example of a direct Ovidian textual influence on the works of Charles Fontaine is to be found in a dizain addressed to the author's "femme, & enfans, parens, & amis":

Vous mes amis, & vous mes parens
Et vous ma femme, & mes enfans aussi
Ne menez dueil, ny regretz apparens
Ny en secret, quand de ce monde cy
Je partiray, alaigne, & sans souci:
Car soyez seurs quand ce mien corps mourra,
Que mon meilleur immortel demourra.

Ne pensez pas que vous & moy i'abuse:
Mon plus d'honneur mieux que iamais viura,
C'estasauoir mon esprit, & ma Muse. 51

The preceding epigram was almost certainly influenced by the closing lines of the Metamorphoses, with which it shares at least one remarkable textual similarity. Taking leave of his audience at the conclusion of the work which had required his most sustained effort and in which he had placed his best hope for poetic immortality, Ovid assures his readers that his Metamorphoses will place his fame safe beyond the oblivion wrought by time:

51 Les Ruisseaux, pp. 86-87.
Iamque opus exegi, quid nec Iovis ira nec ignis nec poterit ferrum nec edax abolere vestustas. com volet, illa dies, quae nil nisi corporis huius ius habet, incerti spatium mihi finiat aevi: parte tamen meliore mei super alta perennis astra ferar, nomenque erit indelebile nostrum, quaeque potet domitis Romana potentia terris, ore legar populi, perque omnia saecula fama, siquid habent veri vatum praesagia, vivam.

And now my work is done, which neither the wrath of Jove, nor fire, nor sword, nor the gnawing tooth of time shall ever be able to undo. When it will, let that day come which has no power save over this mortal frame, and end the span of my uncertain years. Still in my better part I shall be borne immortal far beyond the lofty stars and I shall have an undying name. Wherever Rome's power extends over the conquered world, I shall have mention on men's lips, and, if the prophecies of bards have any truth, through all the ages shall I live in fame.

We have already seen that Charles Fontaine was fond of word play on proper names, especially his own. It is entirely possible that even in this trait, which one would assume he had inherited from the Grands Rhétoriqueurs, he was also influenced by Ovid. In the Ex Ponto (II, v, 21-22), we find the following lines:

> ingenioque meo, vena quod paupere manat, plaudis, et e rivo flumino magna facis.

My talent, trickling now in so impoverished a stream, wins your applause, and from a rivulet you make a mighty river.

Possible echoes of this passage are sounded in several places in Fontaine's own work. As typical as any of them is the following passage from an epistle addressed to Jean Dugué:
Car lon sçait bien, & la chose est certaine, 
Que le Gue passe en tout cas la Fontaine.⁵²

Some of Fontaine's references to the various signs of the Zodiac may also have been reminiscences of certain passages in Ovid's work. In a "Dieu gard à la ville de Paris," written around 1547, Fontaine refers to the sign of the fish as the close of the poem:

Dieu me gard de beaucoup troter,
Le pourrois bien trop me croter:
Dieu me gard que mon long proces
Voye deux foys sol en Pisces.⁵³

Ovid refers to the same sign of the Zodiac in the Tristia (IV, vii, 1-2), when, lamenting on the length of his banishment, he says:

Bis me sol adiit gelidae post frigora brumae, 
bisque sum tacto Pisce peregit iter.

Twice has the sun drawn near me after the cold of icy winter, twice completed his journey by touching the fish.

Is it possible that Fontaine, during the time he spent in Paris in pursuit of his legal claims, compared the separation from his wife and family to Ovid's banishment at Tomis? Perhaps. At any rate, the source for the rather curious closing lines of his Dieu gard is almost certainly the Ovidian passage cited above, for in each case, both authors make a point of mentioning the number two in relation to the astrological sign of the fish. It is possible,

⁵²Les Ruisseaux, p. 293.
⁵³Les Ruisseaux, p. 65.
but not certain, that Fontaine had a copy of Ovid's work before him when he penned the lines above, yet the insertion of the Ovidian lines into an otherwise distinctly non-Ovidian poem would seem to indicate that Fontaine was making a conscious effort to remain within the Ovidian tradition.

Another echo of Ovidian phraseology is found in a poem in which Fontaine describes taking leave of his wife and family at the beginning of an extended trip:

Estant au port trois fois prest à partir,
Trois fois i'ay eu la fortune contraire: 54

These lines are strongly reminiscent of two lines from the Tristia (I, iii, 36-36), in which Ovid relives the events of the day he began to carry out his sentence of banishment:

ter limen tetigi, ter sum revocatus, et ipse indulgens animo pes mihi tardus erat.

Thrice I touched the threshold, thrice did something call me back, and my very feet moved slowly to gratify my inclination.

In addition to framing much of his poetry around ideas, phrases, and sentence fragments recalled from his reading of Ovid, Charles Fontaine was also fond of citing Ovid in support of his own poetic theories. One of the most prominent theoretical areas in which he makes use of Ovid is in that of the idea of the divine inspiration and

54 Les Ruisseaux, p. 112.
foreordination of poets. We have already cited portions of Fontaine's epistle to Francis I as an example of the author's use of Ovidian material to support these two points. In the very early epistle written to Jean Dugué, in which he informs his uncle of his intention of becoming a poet, Fontaine is even more specific in his use of Ovid as a precedent for the idea of the predestination of poets to their calling:

Ce beau Phebus, que je veux poursuivre,
Tira des loix, garde d'adoosasser
Iadis le beau, & le gentil Properse,
Comme estant de bruit & controverse:
Autant en feit à Ouide, plaisant,
A qui son pere alloit souvent disant,
Que poursuis tu une estude inutile?
Homere n'a laissé ne crois, ne pile:
Laisse tes vers, & poetique veine,
Ceste science est trop sterile, & vaine:
Mais onques n'a cet esprit destorné
De son Ouide, aux Muses du tout né:
Et quoy qu'il fust la cause de son estre,
Si n'a il peu en cela estre maistre.
Le naturel d'un enfant n'obtempere,
Et ne se vainc par oncle, ne par pere:
Car la nature est toujours la maistresse
Et, la chassant, retrouvera sans cesse.
Ce qui aduient k Ouide, car lors
Que de quitter les vers feit ses effortz,
Cuidant escrire en prose, de sa plume
Couloitent les vers par nature, & coutume.
Soymesme ainsi sans y penser se trompe:
Adonc sentant qu'en rien ne se corrompe
Le naturel, & que la plaiderie
Estoit grand faix, & trop grand facherie
Pour son esprit, né à mansuetude,
A paix, repos, & à plus douce estude,
Se retirera, ses Muses poursuyuant,
Et de son temps les Poëtes suyuant:
Lesquelz si bien honora en tout lieu,
Qu'il estimoit chacun d'eux estre vn dieu,
Another area in which Fontaine repeatedly cited Ovid's authority was in that of the immortality of poetry and the vindication of the poet's efforts after death, at which time the monster of envy would leave the poet's reputation to grow in peace, attracted by the more desirable target provided by living flesh. This thought is a recurring one in Ovid's last two major works, and Fontaine utilizes it on several occasions in Les Ruisseaux:

Le say tresbien ce qu'a escrit Ouide,
Que les escrits plaisent apres la mort:
Car fausse enuie apres mort tourne bride,
Et la chair vire elle picote, & mord:
Mais d'imprimer mon oeuvre je n'ay tort,
Pour obuier, en le vous presentant,
A maintz bauars qui vont tout euentant
Et puis apres, & aux prests, & aux pertes
De maints traitez que ci vois regretant:
Ne sont ce point trois raisons bien apertes?

The first half of this dizain was obviously inspired by a passage from the Ex Ponto (III, iv) in which Ovid used the same figure of envy as an animal of prey which Charles

55Les Ruisseaux, pp 296-297.
56Les Ruisseaux, p. 94. Fontaine used this same example in at least one other passage in Les Ruisseaux. On page 32, in an epistle to Nicole Le Jouvre, we find him saying:
Ouide dit contre les enuieux,
Que les escrits apres mort plaisent mieux.
Car fausse enuie aux gens mortz ne s'attache:
Mais sur les vifz iette tousjours sa tache.
Fontaine was to use some fifteen hundred years later:

scripta placent a morte fere quia lasdere vir
livor et iniusto carpere dente solet

Writings generally please after death; because envy is wont to attack the living and to tear them with unfair tooth.

In an epistle to Nicole Le Jouvre, Fontaine compared his verses to his own offspring in the degree of affection which he felt for them:

[Ain] Si noz vers sont comme noz enfans mesmes,
Nous les aymons d'affections extremes:57

Once more, we are able to find a very similar line in Ovid's Tristia (III, xiv), in which the author admonishes a friend to whom he had entrusted some of his epistles:

Palladis exemplo de me sine matre creata
   carmina sunt; stirps haec progeniesque mea est

Pallas-fasion were my verses born from me without a mother; these are my offspring, my family.

The epistle to Le Jouvre, which Fontaine devotes to a summation of his poetic theory is remarkable for the number of times Ovid's name is invoked. In another passage of the same epistle, Fontaine relates quite accurately the account of the near destruction of the Metamorphoses due to Ovid's fit of depression shortly after learning of his sentence of relegation to Tomis:

Ouide escrit, & plainement declare,
Quand il estoit avec la gent barbare,
Loing de sa femme, & loing de tous amis,
Qu'en tel estat Poësie l'a mis:

57Les Ruisseaux, p. 34.
En païs frot, plein de bize, & de guerre,
Au bout du monde, & en estrange terre.
Ostez (dit-il) Poësie, & l'estude
Vous osterez de moi la solitude:
Ostez mes vers, vous osterez mon crime.
Mesme en son coeur telle douler s'imprime
Que quelques foys souhatoit pour tout seur
N'auoir gousté des Muses la douceur:
Car lui estant ainsi banni par elle,
Ayme son mal de trop conuiteux zele:
Et ne peult d'escrire se contenir,
En vers, qui l'ont en exil fait venir.
Mais y venant, au feu ieter il ose
Son plus d'honneur, c'est sa Metamorphose:
Qui s'est savee en despit de fortune
Car de copie il s'en trouua plus d'une.58

The preceding examples are only the most outstanding ones which show some connection between Ovid and Charles Fontaine. We do not pretend to have exhausted the possibilities which exist for demonstrating the Ovidian influence on the work of Charles Fontaine. We do hope, however, that the number and quality of the preceding citations are sufficient to demonstrate that the Ovidian influence was the dominant one on Charles Fontaine's works throughout his entire career as a poet. It appears further that this influence was the most constant one on his work, for Les Ruisseaux de Fontaine contains, as we have seen, poems which may well represent a time span of twenty years between the composition of the earliest and the latest. The tendencies to Petrarchism and Medieval influences discerned by Scollen in the Fontaine d'Amour are largely if not completely absent in Les Ruisseaux.

58 Les Ruisseaux, pp. 33-34.
yet the Ovidian influence is, if anything, stronger in the latter work. Rarely does Fontaine seem to have had a copy of Ovid's works before him while he composed any given poem in which his influence is apparent. Instead he seems to have been so thoroughly familiar with his Ovidian models that he was able to assimilate ideas and snatches of phrases often taken from different poems by Ovid into his own works. Moreover, the process of joining multiple influences into a new and coherent work essentially of Fontaine's own creation is usually so smoothly wrought that the average reader, while he may detect the presence of Ovid's influence in the poem, is usually unaware of the "joints" or "sutures" where one borrowing ends and another begins.

Although the Ovidian influence was surely the dominant one on Charles Fontaine's poetic production, it would be a mistake to say that it was the only one. A thorough reading of Fontaine's works reveals that he was acquainted with the major Greek and Latin writers who were known to the well-educated man of the Renaissance, and Maistre Charles was capable on occasion of borrowing from these sources, too. For instance, there is a passage in an epistle addressed to an unidentified E. H. in which Fontaine comes close to translating a few lines from Martial almost verbatim. Insisting on the necessity of craftsmanship, revision, and conciseness of expression, Fontaine reminds his interlocutor of Martial's comment on the
relative merits of Persius and Marsus, although he un-
characteristically fails to name his source:

Perse a plus fait en vn sien petit liure,
De iugement, & bon sens nous deliure,
Que n'a pas fait, par sa legere plume,
Marsus Poëte avec son grand volume.59

There can be little doubt that this piece of literary
criticism was culled from one of Martial's longer epigrams
(IV, xxix, 7-8):

saepius in libro numeratur Persius uno
quam levis in tota Marsus Amazonide.

Oftener Persius wins credit in a single book
than trivial Marsus in his whole Amazonid.

While we do not wish to imply that Martial had little in-
fluence on Fontaine, we do think it wise to remember that
at least one reputable critic has seen in Martial little
more than a reincarnation of Ovid once proper allowances
for certain superficial differences between the personali-
ties of the two men are made:

In following the experiences of the posthumous
Ovid, we should expect, besides frequent meta-
morphoses, a Pythagorean resort of his spirit
to other poets' forms. His first reincarnation,
with the necessary adaptation to his new environ-
ment, is in Martial. Martial is a sort of prole-
tarian Ovid. Like Ovid, he has a sprightly,
kaleidoscopic mind, but is several grades beneath
him, morally and spiritually. He is a parasite
of greater appetite than taste, ready to feed on
whatever is cast to him, offal or ambrosia.
Ovid is audacious: Martial is unabashed. Et
pudet et dicam,—"Ashamed I am, and yet I'll say
it," declares Ovid; non pudet et dicam, expresses
Martial. He has Ovid's abandon, which is the

59 Les Ruisseaux, p. 20.
ethical corollary of a philosophy of metamorphosis, without the savoir faire which prevented Ovid from ever becoming vulgar. Like Ovid, Martial makes no pretences. He has wit and feeling and a dainty grace,—on occasion. 60

Although Fontaine was acquainted with the great writers of Antiquity, his readers should be cautious in assuming that mere mention of an Ancient was necessarily taken from that particular poet's writings, for it occasionally happens that references to other ancient writers are gleaned, like so many other features of Fontaine's poetry, from an Ovidian source. Let us consider the following example, which constitutes the first four lines of an eleven line epigram addressed to Flora:

Le vieil Poète Ascree (né
En petit lieu, haut, infertile)
Son nom iusqu'à nous amené
De ses vers vetu, & orné. 61

At first glance, one might think that this reference was based on a first-hand knowledge of Hesiod and his works, and such may indeed be the case. However, the specific phraseology used in describing the Greek poet is similar to a description of him found in the Ex Ponto (IV, xiv, 29-34):

in loca, non homines, verissima crimina dixi.
culpatis vestrum vos quoque saepe solum.
 esset perpetuo sua quam vitabilis Ascra,
ausa est agricolae Musa docere senis:
et fuerat genitus terra, qui scripsit, in illa,
in tumuit vati nec tamen Ascra suo.

60 Rand, Ovid and His Influence, pp. 110-111.
61 Les Ruisseaux, p. 83.
Against the land, not the people, I have uttered true charges; even you often criticize your own soil. How his own Ascra was constantly to be avoided the old farmer poet dared to sing, and he who wrote had been born in that land, yet Ascra grew not angry with her bard.

If Fontaine knew well the great poets of Antiquity, and it is obvious that he did, then why did he single out Ovid as his primary model? Surely there were reasons for this choice, and although it is impossible to cite any one reason with certainty, there nevertheless do seem to exist several probable causes for this choice, each of which appears to exist at a slightly different level of profundity from the others.

On the most superficial level, there exist several interesting if somewhat loose parallels between the biographies of Ovid and Charles Fontaine. Both men were the sons of respectable, moderately affluent, but otherwise undistinguished families. In both families the study of law as a preparation for posts of minor civil service seems to have been something of a tradition. Both Ovid and Charles Fontaine appear to have pursued their legal studies only perfunctorily—Fontaine perhaps never at all—until familial restraint relaxed to the point that each man could follow his first choice of a vocation, poetry. In later life, it was to happen that both men would be involved in multiple marriages before finding their perfect halves in a final, and to all appearances happy, union. Surely these loosely woven parallels could not
have escaped Fontaine's notice, and he does indeed draw comparisons between certain aspects of his career and Ovid's. Temperamentally, the two men seem also to have shared some similarities. Each was cosmopolitan, obviously relishing the animation and social activity of the cities which in their respective eras were centers of culture—Ovid at Rome, and for a while in his student days at Athens, Charles Fontaine at Paris, later at the principal cities of Italy, and finally at Lyons. In spite of their sophistication, each man retained certain bourgeois elements in his personality which prompted him to talk about himself at some length in a chatty, light style. The experience of Ovid's exile in his later years seems to have no parallel in Fontaine's own life. We have mentioned the possibility that Fontaine may have remained in Lyons following his return from Italy in order to avoid persecution. If this is true, Fontaine's stay at Lyons was a banishment of sorts, yet it was a self-imposed one, and we know that Maistre Charles was much happier at Lyons than Ovid ever managed to be at Tomis. It would of course be unwise to insist too strongly on the influence exerted by these parallels in explaining Fontaine's affinity for Ovid, and we mention them only as a rather curious point of departure, for Fontaine, who knew Ovid so well, could hardly have been unaware of them himself. However, if we would seek a more satisfactory explanation for Charles Fontaine's reverence for Ovid, we must seek more profound
reasons for its existence.

The first very serious explanation of Charles Fontaine's use of Ovidian material and models stems in part from the modern poet's desire to place himself in the main current of a securely established poetic tradition, and the Ovidian tradition was the one poetic legacy from Antiquity which had remained largely undiminished throughout the Middle Ages and well into the sixteenth century. Chaucer, Petrarch, Boccacio, the troubadours, and, through them, Dante, had all felt the powerful influence of Ovid. His influence had of course undergone changes at the hands of these men, yet it was still distinctly the Ovidian influence. In sixteenth century France, it was Clément Marot's translation of the first book of the Metamorphoses and the imitation of some of Ovid's elegies, plus Octavien de Saint-Gelais' translation of the Heroides which had rekindled an interest in the Latin poet. Therefore, by imitating Ovid or at least by attempting to follow the mainstream of the Ovidian tradition as he understood it, Charles Fontaine was able to take advantage of both the immediate popularity of his model on one hand and the prestige of a firmly established tradition from Antiquity on the other. Yet if Ovid were so popular with both readers and writers of the first half of the sixteenth century in France, this popularity must have been the result of Ovid's having struck a responsive chord in the hearts and minds of those who studied him fifteen hundred
years after his death. There are at least two good reasons for this popularity, and in the final analysis it is perhaps these two reasons which provide the most profound reasons for Fontaine's conscious attempt to remain within the Ovidian tradition.

In the first place, the disturbances and general malaise engendered by the events of the Reformation, and later, by the Counter Reformation, had resulted in rather fundamental changes in man's concept of himself and of his place in the universe. In an age when violent death and destruction had become an accepted part of everyday life, it was comforting to the man of the sixteenth century to know that at least some of the treasures of Antiquity had survived, and that in all probability some of the utterings of his own voice could be expected to survive. Since Ovid's work and influence had managed to survive so well, it is little wonder that many poets of the early sixteenth century were attracted to him and his works as models. It would indeed be difficult for us to overestimate the malaise that accompanied the early years of the sixteenth century, for it seems that man began to question such fundamental Christian concepts as the immortality of his own soul. The seriousness of the doubt about man's spiritual immortality is seen in the article on death in Etienne Dolet's *Commentarii linguæ latinae*. Commenting on this particular article, Henri Weber notes:
A l'article "Mors," il [Dolet] ne voit, comme seule moyen d'échapper à la mort, que la gloire qui accompagne les grands hommes et les grands poètes de l'Antiquité.62

If immortality was to be purchased only by human effort, then in the domain of literature there was no more likely a model to follow than Ovid, whose star had remained relatively undiminished by time.

For at least one other reason, Ovid's work would have been especially congenial to the mind of the sixteenth century. In the preceding chapter, we have dealt in some detail with the existence in the early sixteenth century of a world view of which the first dominant characteristic was one of dualism, of separation between the Finite and the Absolute, between the body and the soul, between God and Man. We have also produced evidence to show that this particular concept of the world seems to have played no small role in the formulation of Charles Fontaine's basic theory of divine inspiration and oracular utterance on one level and of poetry as a means of recreation on the other. It is significant, therefore, in our search for reasons why Charles Fontaine chose to emulate the Ovidian tradition to the best of his ability, to note that a consciousness of this same sort of dualism is one of the outstanding characteristics of Ovid's work. As one example of this tendency, Herman Fränkel cites the story of Hercules' death

62La Création poétique, p. 30.
and subsequent deification in the Metamorphoses (IX, 262-270):

interea quodcumque fuit populabile flammae,
Mulciber abstulerat, nec cognoscenda remansit
Herculis effigies, nec quiquam ab imagine ductum
matris habet, tantumque Iovis vestigia servat.
utque novus serpens posita cum pelle senecta
luxuriare solet, squamque nitere recenti,
sic ubi mortalis Tirythius exuit artus,
parte sui meliore viget, maiorque videri
cœpit et augusta fieri gravitate verendus.

Meanwhile, whatever the flames could destroy, Mulciber had now consumed, and no shape of Hercules that could be recognized remained, nor was there anything left which his mother gave. He kept traces only of his father; and, as a serpent, its old age sloughed off with its skin, revels in fresh life, and shines resplendent in its bright new scales; so when the Tirythian put off his mortal frame, he gained new vigour in his better part, began to seem of more heroic size, and to become awful in his godlike dignity.

These ... lines were written between the years 2 and 8 of the Christian era. It took two hundred years until Tertullian found the same formula for Christ and for the first time spoke of his "double status, not merged but combined in one person: God and Man." The idea of two natures combined in Hercules' person was certainly not of Ovid's own invention, but was able to give it so exquisite an expression because it was in line with the novel tendencies of his age and congenial to his own mind.63

It is not our purpose to imply that Ovid was, as the author of the Ovide moralisé implies, a divinely inspired prophet who wrote a pre-Christian allegory in the Metamorphoses. We do propose, however, to convey the idea that the dualistic concept of the universe so necessary to Christian thought and which is discernible in the works of

63 Ovid, pp. 81-83.
Ovid did set him apart from most of the other writers of Latin Antiquity. It is not surprising, therefore, that Ovid's concept of the world would attract an author like Fontaine, for whom the world seems to have been infinitely more complex than the self-contained, unitary world of most of Antiquity. Although it would be a mistake to cast Ovid in the role of a prophetic pre-Christian moralist, it would be an equally great mistake to ignore certain aspects of Ovid's world view which shared some similarities with that of the first half of the sixteenth century, and which for reasons of these similarities, impelled many of the poets of the age with religious preoccupations, Charles Fontaine among them, to adopt Ovid as their model.

Fränkel contends that in the matter of actual poetic production, Ovid's characteristic dualism is also present:

Like a painter who first puts ground colors on the canvas and then covers them up with top colors of a different sort, so Ovid was in the habit of building up his poetry in two strata, representing two different mental attitudes. But here the parallel ends. Whereas in a painting the two layers are meant to combine into a unified whole, Ovid's art characteristically allows the two attitudes to blend in part only, but in part they are to remain distinct.\(^\text{64}\)

Much the same kind of judgment could be made on Fontaine's works. In them, Maistre Charles seems to have made a conscious effort to maintain as rigorous a separation as possible between the human and the divine, between body and

\(^{64}\) Ovid, pp. 150-151.
soul, allowing them to be joined only by the common element of poetic inspiration. From the devout pieces of his earliest known work to the obscenity of many parts of the Fontaine d'Amour, a mentality is at work which recognizes the legitimacy of both spheres, human and divine, but which refuses to merge or mingle the two. If anything, Fontaine maintains an even more rigorous separation of the two spheres of reality than does Ovid.

Having determined the identity of the dominant influence from Antiquity on Charles Fontaine's work and having explored some possible reasons for its dominance, we are now prepared to re-evaluate Fontaine's position with regard to the Pléiade. Having been influenced by Ovid in such matters as rhetorical tone, subject matter, and actual quotations or paraphrases taken from Ovid's work, we may reasonably expect Fontaine to have been influenced by Ovid in the larger realm of style. One of the hallmarks of Ovid's style is its "lowness"; that is, its conversational, often bantering tone as opposed to the lofty, lyrical, and occasionally sententious phrasing of the more ancient Greek and many of the later Latin poets. Commenting on the lowness of Ovid's style even in the epic Metamorphoses, Fränkel has noted that "regal dignity and grave authority, Roman style, are rather infrequent." It is interesting to remember that Sebillet, in his Art Poétique of 1548,

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65 Ovid, p. 100.
proposed the *Metamorphoses* as a model for the aspiring epic writer, but that du Bellay, less than a year later, makes no mention of this work as a model epic. However, if we understand the epic as a long narrative poem in which the cosmology, mythology, and historic destiny of a national culture are traced throughout its history, the *Metamorphoses* is every bit as much an epic as the *Iliad* or the *Aeneid*. Such an omission on du Bellay's part was probably intentional and was more than likely based, not on a reaction against Sebillet's work, but on deeper considerations of gravity of style, a trait often absent in Ovid's epic.

In a consideration of the difficulties which faced Ovid when he attempted to write an epic poem, Brooks Otis has gone so far as to describe the process through which Ovid purposely lowered the tone of his narrative. In a comparison of Ovid's version of the theft of Hercules' cattle in the *Fasti* with older renditions of the same story, Otis has said:

Finally the ellipses in Ovid's narrative have a jerky bathetic effect that markedly lowers the tone. Consider the sequence (545-9):

*Dumque huic hospitium domus est Tegeaea,*
*vangantur incusteditae latu per arva boves.*
*Mani erat: ercussus somno Tiry nthius actor*
*de numero taur os sentit abesse duua.*
*Nulla videt quaereus taciti vestigia furti...*  

And while he shares the hospitality of Evander the cattle go wandering untended through the broad fields. Then morning came: aroused from sleep their Terynthian driver sees two bulls are missing
from the tally. But seek as he will he can find no
sign, no clue to the theft.

We can easily gather that Hercules had had a good
night's sleep after turning his cattle out to pas­
ture, but the strongly marked transition bothers us:
the sleep and waking of Hercules, his early morning
counting of the cattle, etc., are quite incongrous
with anything grandiose, supernatural, tragic or
heroic. Ovid therefore emphasized, Virgil avoided
such detail. ... We have, then, an illuminating
instance of the transition from the Greek epic to
Augustan elegy—of how an original epic narrative
was progressively reduced to smaller and smaller
proportions and, in the process, given an utterly
different tone and meaning from that which it ori­
ginally possessed.66

Ovid himself does not seem to have been unaware of
his deficiencies of style in writing grave and dignified
verses. On at least one occasion, he chastises himself
for this fault, and laments his inability to bring his
lost and apparently abortive Triumph of Tiberius to a
successful conclusion because of his inability to write in
an elevated style. The passage is from the Ex Ponto (II,
v, 25-32):

dum tamen in rebus temptamus carmina parvis,
materiae gracili sufficit ingenium.
nuper, ut hic magni pervenit fama triumphi,
ausus sum tantae sumere molis opus.
obruit audentem rerum gravitasque nitorque,
nec potui coepti pondere ferre mei.
illic, quam laudes, erit officiosa voluntas:
cetera materia debilitata iacent.

Still so long as I attempt verse on humble themes my
talent is equal to the meagre subject. Recently
when the report of a mighty triumph reached me, I

66 Brooks Otis, Ovid as an Epic Poet (Cambridge, Eng.,
1966), p. 35.
ventured to undertake a work of great difficulty. My venture was overwhelmed by the grandeur and splendour of the theme; I was not able to bear up under the weight of my task. Therein you will find worthy of praise the will to do my duty; all else lies overpowered by the subject.

On other occasions, however, Ovid spoke fondly of his low style and defended it, as we see from this passage from the **Tristia** (III, iv, 21-27):

> quid fuit, ut tutas agitaret Daedalus alas, Icarus immensas nomine signet aquas? nempe quod hic alte, demissius ille volabat; nam pennas ambo non habuere suas. crede mihi, bene qui latuit bene vixit, et intra fortunam debet quisque manere suam.

Why was it that Daedalus in safety plied his wings while Icarus marks with his name the limitless waves? Doubtless because Icarus flew high; the other flew lower; for both had wings not their own. Let me tell thee, he who hides his life lives well; each man ought to remain with his proper position.

It is interesting to note that Charles Fontaine made approximately the same use of the Icarus image as Ovid did. Given our knowledge of the degree of Ovid's influence on Maistre Charles, it appears highly unlikely that this similarity could be entirely coincidental. In the epistle to Nicole Le Jouvre Fontaine explains why he has published no poetry recently:

> Le trop haster cause enuie, & malheurs: Les fruictz tardifz sont tousiours les meilleurs: Et maint Poëte ayant mal enfourné Comme Icarus est cheu trop fortuné.67

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In Charles Fontaine's works there are numerous references to "mon style tant bas," or to "ma Muse basse," and they constitute one of the most constant features of his theoretical pronouncements. As early as the dedication of the *Fontaine d'Amour* in 1545, Fontaine mentions his "si bas style." Later references to this low style are found in greater abundance in *Les Ruisseaux de Fontaine.* Perhaps the most extended comment Fontaine makes on his low style is found in a response he wrote to an epistle from Jean Orry. In this response, Fontaine equates his own Muse with Pan, the "dieu agreste," to whom he opposes Mercury, the more sublime singer:

> Je ne suis point d'Apollo, ou Phebus
> Le vif pourtraict, ainsi que tu parles:
> Onc n'ouy chant de Mercure, ou Phebus:
> Mais il est vray que sur les champs herbus
> Pan le cornu i'ay ouy sonner,
> Qui ne se veult moindre gloire donner
> Que fait le pan en sa queuë, & sa rouë:
> Car comme Pan de son beau flaiol iouë,
> Un iour me trouve aueneques les bergers
> Gardant brebis illec en ces vergers,
> Et les vy tous (ce que tresbien ie note)
> Venir à luy, à son chant, & sa note:
> Avec son chant il les vous attrait
> Comme Amphion pierres, & boys tiroit:
> Si m'approchay, & au son de ses buses
> Prenois plaisir autant au'au chant des Muses
> Font diuins Poëtes excellens,
> En stile hault riches, & opulens.

> Or ainsi comme à ce Pan, Dieu agreste,
> Et à son chant mon oreille ie preste
> Rauis si fort en furent mes espritz
> Que pour mon maistre, & enseigneur l'ay pris:
> Mais le Mercure, en sa parfaite lyre,
> Point n'ay ouy, ains n'en ay fait que lire
> qu'il endormoit tous les cent yeux d'Argus,
> Afin que fust raue (que Dieu sache)
> La belle Yo iadis muee en vache.
De Pan tout seul ie puis bien dire ouy
Que ie l'ay veu & son gros chant ouy
Voila pourquoi ma Muse estant sylvestre
Elle ne tient sinon de Pan mon maistre,
Me rauissant avec ses chalumeaux
Qui m'y sembloient harmonieux & beau:
Dont à présent ma Muse sourde, & molle
Tant sourdement & mollement flaiole,
En sensuyuant du Dieu Pan les Musettes.68

In a shorter piece Fontaine makes it clear that his
low style is a matter of choice, and that it is not neces­
sarily the result of any limitations on his part. In this
particular matter he is less modest than Ovid:

Ie pouois bien hausser ma Muse,
Et mon stile enfler grauement,
Chantant des vers plus hautement:
Car mon Apollo ne refuse
A m'inspirer diuinement
Non plus qu'vn autre entendement
Mais du temps du grant Roy François,
Que l'autre entonnoit doucement,
Ie chantois ainsi bassement
Que vous oyez, mes vers François.69

One might argue that in 1555, several years after the
triumph of the pléiade, Charles Fontaine was defending his
past sins of style against the victorious incursions of
the new school's theories. Indeed, Marcel Raymond seems
to have interpreted the matter in just this light.70

Such a thesis might be tenable if it were not for the
fact that as early as 1545 Fontaine had also spoken fond­
ly of his low style. It seems more probable that for
Fontaine, the purpose of purely secular poetry was one

68 Les Ruisseaux, pp. 250-252.
69 Les Ruisseaux, p. 110.
70 L'Influence de Ronsard, pp. 56-63.
which precluded the use of a more noble style. In Charles Fontaine's opinion, the immediate purpose of secular poetry was, as he stated several times, to "recréer les clers espritz." Therefore, poetry, which was a divine gift on both the religious and secular levels, was still in the latter frame of reference a gift of which the immediate intent was recreation. The chorismos of Fontaine's universe is apparent in this scheme. Spiritual on one level, terrestrial on the other, the two realms of poetry were never to be merged by Fontaine into a single coherent aesthetic theory, and it is in essence this aesthetic dualism which ultimately separates Fontaine from anything more than a rather superficial affinity with the Pléiade. The members of the new school, in formulating the theories set forth in the Deffence, went one step beyond the concept of a divided universe which was the starting point of Nicholas Cusanus' speculative thought, and which, in a much larger sense, was the starting point of the world view of the sixteenth century.

Unfortunately for his own renown, Charles Fontaine never went beyond the idea of the division of the universe into the two mutually exclusive realms of the human and the divine, whereas the greatness of the Pléiade is based on nothing less fundamental than its initial acceptance of this concept and its subsequent transcending of the limitations this view had imposed on earlier poets of the
century. In order for us to understand the means by which the Pléiade was able to transcend the barrier implied by the concept of the separation of the human and the divine, it is first necessary for us to appreciate the fundamental unity of its manifesto.

Although it has perhaps been the most widely read and thoroughly studied of all French literary manifestoes, the Deffence et Illustration de la langue Françoysé has nevertheless presented its various critics and interpreters with certain problems of apparent inconsistency. A modern critic has aptly summarized the opinion of all those who have attempted a systematic analysis of du Bellay's theories:

> Du Bellay's book was wordy, ill organized, contradictory, but it provoked enthusiasm and served as a manifesto for two centuries.71

Even Henri Chamard was compelled to admit that the work "est pour un bon tiers, une mosaïque ou, si l'on aime mieux, une marqueterie faite de morceaux de toute provenance assemblés souvent au hasard."72 There are indeed contradictions in the Deffence and these contradictions seem to be the result of the two equally powerful forces of pragmatism and idealism at work simultaneously in du Bellay's mind. Once these two opposing forces have been

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72 La Deffence, vi.
identified and separated from each other, the essential direction of du Bellay's thought may be more fully understood. We may next form a more just perception of the fundamental unity of the Deffence, and finally, we shall be able to evaluate more accurately the place of Charles Fontaine in relation to the Pléiade.

According to Michel Dassonville, the contradictions of du Bellay's pamphlet spring first of all from his attempt to placate two distinct parties of his reading public—the pure classicists or academicians on one hand, who believed that only Greek and Latin were capable of conferring immortality on a writer, and the honnêtes gens on the other hand, who believed in the potential worth of the vernacular yet whose inbred reverence for antiquity had held in check anything but the most timid experiments and innovations in poetic theory and practice, with the result that they had come to accept poetic mediocrity in the vernacular. Dassonville labels this second group demiaudaces. Following Dassonville's theory, du Bellay's attempt to convince both the scholarly humanists and the honnêtes gens at the same time results in several contradictory statements in the Deffence:

Comment peut-on admettre, à la fois qu'il faille imiter "les meilleurs auteurs grecs, se transformant en eux, les dévorant, et après les avoir bien digéré, les convertir en sang et nourriture" et regretter d'autre part, quelques pages plus loin, "d'employer tant d'années pour apprendre des mots (i.e. les langues anciennes)! et ce jusqu'à l'âge bien souvent que n'avons plus ny le moyen ny le loisir de vaquer à plus grandes choses?" 

Instead of placating both sides of his audience, du Bellay succeeded only in stiffening the resistance to his ideas in both camps. Nevertheless, despite the surface contradictions regarding the primacy of ancient languages and literature, Dassonville detects a deeper unity within the Deffence which serves, at least in part, to reconcile these dissonances. The esthétique nouvelle formulated by the Pléiade was based upon what Dassonville calls a platonisme minimum mais fondamental which insisted upon the strict relationship between the visible work of art and its ideal archetype. On the most idealistic level, the Ancients were to be studied and digested to the end of rediscovering the relationships which they had found between these two separate realms of the universe, relationships which had been forgotten by recent poets:

De la même façon que chacune des créatures du monde visible correspond, selon Platon, à un archétype, l'oeuvre d'art qui s'inscrit sur le papier ou dans la pierre correspond, pour Du Bellay à un archétype invisible, à une idée conçue—ou découverte—par l'auteur. C'est

74 "De l'Unité," pp. 97-98.
l'existence de cet archétype, fondement essentiel de toute œuvre, qui rend impossible l'imitation parfaite de cette œuvre, antique ou non. Impossible même au celui qui aurait retrouvé l'archétype dont elle n'est que la projection. La preuve en est la Nature elle-même; quoiqu'elle produise en fonction d'archétypes, "elle n'a scue tant faire que par quelque note et différence (ses productions) ne puissent estre discernées" (I, 8, 46). Que dire alors de l'écrivain qui essaie d'imiter une œuvre sans en posséder l'archétype! Le but de l'étude des Anciens est de s'assimiler à eux au point de retrouver le secret des relations qui unissent une œuvre d'art à son Idée.75

It is therefore because translators, neo-Greek, and neo-Latin poets could not be expected to possess the archetypes of the works they produced that their efforts were disparaged in the Deffence, not because these efforts were necessarily pernicious or even without some value to the development of literature in France during the sixteenth century. Dassonville concludes his analysis of the Deffence with the following statement:

Or le premier et le plus important article de la doctrine est d'exprimer ces hautes conceptions en français. Telle est la dimension nouvelle que nous voyons à la Deffence. Si ce manifeste a indéniablement une signification historique qui en fait un plaidoyer entre dix autres en faveur de l'emploi du vulgaire, il a aussi une signification esthétique. De la même façon que les Anciens ont élaboré leurs conceptions et les ont exprimées en leur langue maternelle, de la même façon les français doivent élaborer et exprimer leurs inventions en français. L'emploi du vulgaire est la garantie de l'existence de l'archétype, la preuve du don créateur (I, 11, 80, 65-68; II, 4, 106-107). De là naît l'évidente

75"De l'Unité," p. 105.
In its attempt to relate all poetry, not simply the more serious religious and moralizing pieces, to an ideal archetype, the Pléiade took a step which brought it beyond the aesthetic tradition which had preceded it. We have noted that for Charles Fontaine, the universe was an inalterably divided, hence dualistic one, and that a feeling of this dualism permeates his poetry. We have seen also that the concept of chorismos was characteristic of the culture in which Fontaine lived. The chorismatic scheme of the sixteenth century, for once having accepted the idea that the separation between the Finite and the Absolute was real, the task of roughly the last half of the century became that of narrowing the gap between the two realms to its smallest possible limit. Cassirer comments on the progress of the same process of narrowing the gap between the Finite and the Absolute in the works of Nicholas Cusanus:

76 "De l'Unité," p. 107.
Cusanus' early works ... are dominated by the Platonic theme of chorismos. In the later works, methexis gradually becomes the dominant theme.\textsuperscript{77}

In the later stages of his study, Cassirer elaborates upon the effects of the emerging dominance of the theme of methexis on aesthetic theory:

In the conception of the value and meaning of the visual arts, the Renaissance moves away from Plato. For Plato saw in art almost nothing but the mimetic element, the element of imitation of the given; and he therefore excluded it, as art of the idols, from the true vision of ideas. The opposition to Plato's view is deeply rooted in the essence of the Renaissance. Speculative idealism itself takes up the new view and tries to give it a systematic justification. Nicholas Cusanus developed no independent aesthetic; but in his theory of knowledge, he gave sensibility a new place and a new value, opposed to the Platonic conception. It is significant and characteristic that whenever Cusanus relies on Plato and directly follows him, he does so precisely in those places where Plato seems to be more friendly than usual to sensory perception, admitting that it has a value for knowledge—though to be sure, conditional and relative. He cites those sentences in Plato's Republic which affirm that individual classes of sensory perception indirectly promote the aim of knowledge precisely because of the contradictions they bear within them. For it is just these contradictions that do not permit the soul to rest content with mere perception. They incite thought and become its "paraclete." The contradiction in sensibility spurs on the search for genuine and true meaning elsewhere, in the region of the \textit{Staurocr}

By concentrating on the chorismos of the universe, Charles Fontaine denied the necessity of a grave and lofty

\textsuperscript{77}The Individual and the Cosmos, p. 36.

\textsuperscript{78}The Individual and the Cosmos, pp. 170-171.
style in all poetry except his more serious efforts—
"Estre ne veulx en mesme liure/Spirituel et terrien." The
theorists of the Pléiade, on the contrary, by taking into
account the existence of an ideal archetype for all works
of visual or literary art, had the effect of reuniting the
two divided worlds of poetry into a single aesthetic whole.
While Dassonville is correct in maintaining that the be-
lief in the existence of universal archetypes for each
individual artistic production is Platonic in origin, it
is nevertheless true that the Pléiade's final solution to
the problem of approaching the ideal as closely as possible
is in essence more Aristotelian than Platonic, for the
process endowed artistic creation with a search for
"potentiality" that was hardly foreseen in Plato's merely
mimetic definition of art. As a result, all artistic
creation became an almost sacred quest regardless of its
subject matter, and poetry was no longer to be divided into
the two relative functions first of praising God and then
of honoring one's Muse, as Charles Fontaine had once said
it was to be.

In order for poetry to reflect its new dignity, it
became imperative for it to be clothed in a loftier style
and to acquire a gravity of tone which it had only rarely
possessed in the history of French literature. Dassonville
has aptly expressed this imperative:
Du Bellay himself expressed the imperative by stating a bit more simply that he wished to endow poetry with a "plus haut et meilleur style."

By insisting in theory on the dignity and divinity of poetry, Charles Fontaine did anticipate the Pléiade; yet in practice, his attachment to his own style bas served only to underline the distance separating the visible work from its divine source, its divine archetype. It remained then for the Pléiade to wed theory to practice by advocating the use of poetic forms which were, as one critic has stated, "plus larges et plus amples," and which were capable of reflecting more accurately the effort to approach as closely as possible in human terms the essential nature of the divine source of the work of art.

Although the Pléiade did recommend Ovid to the aspiring young poet addressed in the Deffence, there are at least two points which should be made with regard to this recommendation. In the first place, it is the Ovid of the Tristia and the Ex Ponto and the elegy on the death of Tibullus who is recommended, not the author of most of the Amores, the Ars Amatoria, or the Remedia Amoris. In the first two works, Ovid speaks in a voice of genuine sadness.

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and disillusionment. Although he did continue to write in his low style, the content and subject matter of the *Tristia* and *Ex Ponto* was in itself grave enough to insure the sympathy of the Pléiade. Second, we have already mentioned that the Deffence sometimes seems to contradict itself because of the twin strands of pragmatism and idealism which often were at odds with each other in the pamphlet. Dassonville has depicted this conflict as it applied to the matter of emulation of the Ancients:

Les auteurs grecs et latins n'ont d'autre valeur que d'être lus et admirés quinze ou vingt siècles après leur mort. "Qui veut voler par les mains et bouches des hommes" trouvera dans l'antiquité les recettes infaillibles. Ce pragmatisme de la jeune brigade est tellement cynique qu'on a peine à l'admettre. C'est pourtant le même sens de l'efficacité qui orienta, consciemment ou non, toute la production française pendant plus d'un siècle et qu'on retrouve nondéguisé dans la préface que Boileau écrivit pour ses œuvres en 1702. Ce n'est pas parce qu'Homère est grand qu'il est encore lu aujourd'hui, y affirme-t-il, mais c'est parce qu'il est encore lu aujourd'hui qu'il est grand.  

Undoubtedly, the Pléiade's attitude toward Ovid was somewhat encumbered and ambivalent. Here was an Ancient who wrote in a style which was for the greatest part directly contrary to the elevated tone which the members of the Pléiade wished poetry to assume. Yet if Ovid's greatness were to be measured in terms of the audience he had attracted throughout the centuries, he was indeed a great poet.

80 "De l'Unité," p. 104.
To solve the dilemma with which he found himself faced, du Bellay seems to have reached a compromise by proposing for emulation the elegies and epistles of the graver Tristia and Ex Ponto, while at the same time neglecting to mention Ovid's lighter works or the epic Metamorphoses, in contrast to Sebillet, who took the latter work as one of his first choices as an epic model. In this fashion, the Pléiade was able to satisfy both its pragmatism and its idealism. Since distinct traces of Martial's influence are observable in Fontaine's work, it is interesting to note that du Bellay seems to have employed about the same stratagem with regard to his recommendation of Martial as he did in his rather selective recommendation of Ovid. According to Chamard, du Bellay wished to re-elevate the epigram to its primal status as a brief votive inscription, yet the inconvenient example of Martial, who had made wit as well as mere brevity the hallmark of the form, intervened itself. Again du Bellay compromised between idealism and pragmatism to the point of recommending Martial as a model for the epigram while at the same time warning his future poet to avoid writing epigrams solely for the value of the "petit mot pour rire." Taken quite seriously, this advice would mean that only about ten percent of Martial's work would be worthy of emulation.

If we accept Dassonville's contention that the underlying unity of the Deffence is to be found in its author's
desire to return to the search for the ideal archetypes of artistic creation, and that to attain this goal the style of secular as well as religious poetry had to be elevated to reflect the grave and almost sacred nature of the poet's quest, we may finally appreciate the vast distance separating Charles Fontaine from the Pléiade. What Maistre Charles had merely glimpsed in his theoretical writings, the Pléiade methodically elaborated in its theory and, more important, in its practice.

Hawkins maintained that the Pléiade had little influence on the works of Charles Fontaine after 1549, except for his decision to publish odes. To some extent this is true, for Fontaine's greatest years of productivity were mostly behind him by the time du Bellay wrote his manifesto; yet the Pléiade does seem to have had some effect on Fontaine's works after the appearance of the Deffence, and it is significant that this influence is precisely on the question of style. Marcel Raymond has aptly characterized the plight of Charles Fontaine, a writer attached philosophically as well as by custom to the old, low style, attempting to compete with the Pléiade in his later years. Raymond comments on the following lines:

Les beaux vers tousjours vers ont tel vivacité
Qu'ils ne craignent la foudre et la mortalité
0 qu'à peu de gens c'est que la Must fait grace
De suivre le haut trac de l'immortelle trace!
Vive vertu ne meurt, ny honneur mérito,
Ains luit devant les yeux de la posterité.
Vos vertus, et vos vers, passant le mont
Parnasse,
Jusqu'au plus haut des cieux vous ont assigné place.
Le lyrisme de Charles Fontaine atteint ici son plus haut point. Quelque temps soulevé au dessus de lui-même, le poète saisit à deux mains la lyre, frappe une ou deux notes d'un dithyrambe, puis retombe dans les lieux communs les plus faciles. Les odes qui suivent les Sentences d'Ausone, en 1558 font l'éloge des vertus moyennes et expriment les graves pensées qui accompagnent d'ordinaire l'approche de la vieillesse. Il semble que Fontaine ait compris la vanité de ses efforts vers "le haut trac" de la grande poésie; toujours "apprentif" dans ce domaine, il se décourage aussi parce que nul des jeunes gens qu'il a loués dans ses épigrammes, qu'il a imités dans ses odes n'a répondu à ses avances, n'a glissé son nom dans un poème. Peut-être que Ronsard et Du Bellay qui se souviennent de l'aventure du Quintil, doutent de la sincérité de ses compliments. 81

It does appear, then, that the Pléiade did exert some influence on Charles Fontaine after 1549 in the critical matter of style. At the same time it also appears that the basic difference which separated Maistre Charles from the new school was, as we hope to have shown, so fundamental that he has little if any right to be considered a precursor of the Pléiade.

81 L'Influence de Ronsard, pp. 62-63.
CONCLUSION

This study of Charles Fontaine has attempted to clarify and amplify three principal areas of consideration—biographical, bibliographical, and critical—all of which are to some degree interrelated.

In our biographical investigation, we have noted the good possibility that Charles Fontaine may have seriously considered studying law. Thanks to Grace Frank's discovery of a previously unknown work by Fontaine, we know that as a very young man Charles Fontaine was pious and devout and apparently came close to entering a religious order. However, as Frank points out, it is clear from the nature of many of Maistre Charles' earliest known works that a degree of Protestant bias may have been the determining factor in turning him away from his plans for a monastic vocation.

Bibliographically, we have been able to determine that a supposedly lost translation attributed to Fontaine by Hawkins and Goujet is in reality Fontaine's translation of Ovid's *Remedia Amoris*. This translation was in all probability produced and presented to Francis I around 1540 in manuscript form, but it was not published until some fifteen years later as the last section of *Les Ruisseaux de Fontaine* (1555). The number of "Lost Works and Doubtful Attributions" which Hawkins credited to Fontaine's literary production is therefore reduced from seven to six by this
new knowledge. In addition to clarifying the record of Fontaine's literary production, this discovery contains two other implications. First, if our appraisal of the reasons for Fontaine's apparently willful dissimulation concerning the real identity and origin of this translation is correct, we are provided with a much more accurate measure of the depth of Charles Fontaine's disagreement with the Pléiade's theories in the matter of translations and translators. Second, the knowledge that the "lost" translation was a rendition of the Remedia Amoris has the effect of concentrating slightly the apparent degree of the Ovidian influence on Fontaine's works.

The critical appraisal of Charles Fontaine began by questioning several basic criteria which R. L. Hawkins presented as proof of Fontaine's right to be considered as a precursor of the Pléiade. With regard to the most complex of these criteria--that of Fontaine's supposed Platonism in the Querelle des Amyes--we have seen that a double misapprehension may have been a factor in misinterpreting this particular point to Fontaine's advantage. First, it appears that while Fontaine was acquainted (as we should expect him to have been) with the Platonic love doctrine which was in vogue in early sixteenth-century France, and while he adapted some of its vocabulary and conceits to his own use, the supposed Platonism of La Contr'amyde Court was much more firmly grounded in moral and theological considerations
and perhaps in a more medieval literary tradition than it was in purely philosophical thought. Finally, more recent critical opinion seems to shy away from awarding the title of thoroughgoing Platonists to the members of the Pléiade where the question of feminism is concerned.

With regard to the Quintil Horatian, it is true that there appear at first to be so many contradictions between what the author of the pamphlet has to say about poetry and Charles Fontaine's actual poetic production as to disqualify Fontaine as the work's author. However, careful examination based on a greater concern for the respective chronologies of the Quintil and Charles Fontaine's known literary production tends to reveal that most of these apparent contradictions are amenable to resolution without any loss of credibility. While this does not necessarily mean that Charles Fontaine was the actual author of the Quintil, it does serve to indicate that his theoretical views were possibly not so far removed from those expressed in the Quintil as Chamard and Hawkins once believed.

In the matters of Fontaine's erudition and his anticipation of some of the forms advocated by du Bellay in the Deffence, we have tried to show that these two criteria are incapable by themselves of assuring Fontaine a place among the Pléiade's precursors without admitting every other poet of his generation, thereby robbing the title of precursor of any real meaning.
Much of the difficulty inherent in evaluating Charles Fontaine's poetic career stems from the fact that his production is so varied as to prohibit his easy consignment to a single category. This is a problem which applies not only to Charles Fontaine, but also to his contemporary and acknowledged master, Clément Marot. Until some way can be found which would allow his critics to consider the two extreme poles of his work as complementary parts of a single whole, we are likely to continue to consider Maistre Charles as inconsistent, perhaps even incoherent, in his development. Yet the very fact that the same problem which we have stated above is applicable to Marot and to others of his school would seem to indicate that the problem of inconsistency may very well be the result of our own distorted hindsight rather than that of any real inconsistency on the part of the poets of this era.

In order to remove as much of this distortion as possible, we have attempted to reconstruct the universe as it was conceptualized by the early Renaissance man. In returning to the basic starting point of Platonic thought, we have seen that sixteenth century man was faced with and fascinated by the idea of the chorismos of his universe. This concept of the rigid, intransigent division between phenomenon and noumena, between the finite and the absolute, between body and soul, was one which had never existed in the Aristotelian concept of the universe which
had been predominant in the Middle Ages. The duality implied by the concept of chorismos had repercussions throughout the entire structure of sixteenth-century society, politics, religion, and literary theory. During this general period, poetry came to reserve for itself two basic functions, the first of which was that of the divinely inspired oracle explaining the ways of God to Man. The second of poetry's functions was that of purely secular entertainment or récréation. While poetry of serious intent often approached the gravity of style advocated by the Pléiade, purely recreational poetry was expected to be little better than mediocre to be successful. The unique contribution of the Pléiade to the development of French poetry was the recognition of the fact that all poetry, religious or secular, was, or at least should be, a creative act in that each poem was to be the embodiment of a quest for its ideal archetype. Although the members of the Pléiade acknowledged that the search for ideal archetypes was predestined to fall short of its ultimate goal, they nevertheless maintained that the style and tone of all poetry should be sufficiently elevated to reflect as accurately as possible the gravity and dignity of the creative undertaking. Charles Fontaine, who remained fascinated with the chorismos of his universe, never seems to have attempted to find an aesthetic solution to the dualism which characterizes his poetic production. Indeed, he probably never suspected that his production was
anything but the reflection of the natural order of things. He therefore continued on his way after 1549, content for the most part to continue to sing in his beloved style tant bas.

In the choice of his primary model from Antiquity, Fontaine reinforced his natural inclinations to view the universe in dualistic terms and to write in his low style. Ovid, who wrote at a time when the concept of the unitary, self-contained world of antiquity was in the process of giving way to another vision of the universe whose hallmark was the disparity between the real and the ideal, was perhaps the only poet from Antiquity who could have been so completely congenial to Charles Fontaine's own vision of the world. We can therefore understand why Maistre Charles chose Ovid for his model, yet while we understand the reasons for his choice, we can at the same time understand why this choice ultimately separates Fontaine from anything but the most superficial affinity with the Pléiade.

It has been said that the essential difference separating the Renaissance from the Middle Ages lies in the process of role-changing between Aristotle and Plato. In the Renaissance, Aristotelian philosophy was abandoned in favor of Platonic thought; yet, as if to compensate for the dethronement of Aristotle as The Philosopher, Aristotelian literary criticism began its rise. If there is any validity in such a simple formula, we may say that in a
large sense the case of Charles Fontaine represents the approximate mid-point of this process, for while Fontaine's view of the universe seems firmly imbued with Platonic thought, his theory and practice of poetry show little if any of the traces of Aristotle's influence.
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Epître au Roy, à qui l'Auteur adressoit
une sienne traduction.

Si vostre esprit autant hault en sagesse
Que vostre haulte, & eureuse noblesse
Est élevée en toute autorité,
(Roy admirable à la posterité)
Vient à penser qui auroit peu induire
Ma Muse basse à ce liure traduire
Plus tost que nul des autres de l'auteur,
Dond le renom croyt en toute haulteur:
Secondemment quelle chose soudaine
A fait changer la petite Fontaine,
Qui feit courir en fin de l'autre esté
Vers vostre grande, & haulte maiesté
Vn ruisselet de source encor plus nette:
Soupuerain Roy oyez ma raisonnette.

Communément chascun fait tresbien dire,
Que qui choisit ne doit prendre le pire:
I'ay donc eleu ce liuret cy, pourtant
Que de sante l'Auteur y va traitant,
Et qu'il vault mieux estre sain que malade:
Cenonobstant assez me persuade
Qu'en autre endroit pourrois têt bien, ou mieux
Qu'en ce labeur qui va souz voz clers yeux:
Lequel traitant des moyens de sante,
Par bons propos en a maints contenté:
Et tout esprit qui bon repos demande,
Y trouuera recreation grande.

Vous y verrez comme on doit s'occuper,
Pour toute oysiue occasion couper,
Ou en l'amour de victoire par guerre,
Ou à chacer, ou cultiuer la terre:
Qui sont trois pointz de noblesse tenans,
Qui sont trois pointz à vous appartenans,
Ou lon a veu tout le cours de vostre age
Sur tous noz Roys emporter l'avantage:
Second Cyrus vous estes en culture:
Le chacer est vostre propre nature:
Mais en bataille, à la lance ou espee,
Vous ressemblez vn Cesar ou Pompee.

Ce traitez donc qui proficte, & ne nuit,
N'est sans plaisir, & si n'est pas sans fruict:
Vous presentant donques le contenu,
Comment pourrois-ie estre le mal venu?
Mesme vers vous, Prince tant debonnaire,
Qui de bonté, & de grace ordinaire
Recuilez bien toutes gens de savoir,
Puis les haulez, comme chacun peut voir:
Qui ornez vostre vniuersité saincte
De gens lettrez, & de science mainte:
Qui longtemps a, & de propos certain,
Auez conceu en vostre esprit haultain
D'edifier vn trilingue college,
Et l'enrichir de maint grand privilege:
Mais cependant par vos raisons prudentes
Auez mis fin aux choses plus vrgentes.
Puis auez fait commandemens expres
Que les ouuriers d'y bessoigner soyent pretz:
En quoy ne peult esprit, tant soit insigne,
Vous extoller par louange assez digne:
Que Dieu vous face avec son bon plaisir
Mettre en effet ce tant noble desir,
Si qu'en voz iours pleins de fortune eureuse,
Et en sante de cent ans plantureuse
Vostre noble oeil l'oeuure parfaite voye,
Et vostre esprit en ait le fruit, & ioye.

Or maintenant touchant le second point,
Tresnoble Roy, nier ie ne veulx point
Qu'il n'y ait bien assez gran'difference
Aux deux traitcez, de stile, & de sentence:
Mais tout esprit à l'estude arresté,
Est recrée par maint diuers traicté.
Vray est que l'vn à corriger s'applique
Vn vice ou deux sous stile Poëtique:
L'autre corrige, & maintz vices efface
Souz un esprit plein de diuine grace.
Combien pourtant (sans que desplaise en riens
Au hault esprit rempli de si grans biens)
A bien parler qu'est-ce que Poësie
Fors vne ardante, & saincte phrenesie?
Comme bien lire en nostre Ouide on peult,
Dieu est en nous, qui nous eschaufe, & meut.
Et de là vient cette fiction belle
Que de Bacchus font feste solennelle
Poëtes saintz, & a obtenu lieu
D'estre appelé des Poëtes le dieu:
Pource que quant le sainct Nectar s'apreste
A leur monter en leur sacrée teste:
Divinement, & si bien les enyure
Qu'on les diroit ailleurs penser et viure,
Tant sont hors deoy elevez & rauls.

Sur ce propos diray-ie point l'aduis
De quelques gens, dont l'ignorance blasme
En moy cet art, qui doit estre sans blasphme:
Ou pour mieux dire, ilz me vont blasmat, pource
Qu'il me garnit petitement la bource.
O quantesfoys ils m'ont crié, ta Muse
T'abusé trop, non seulement t'amuse:
Gens ignorans (car le meilleur tresor
Point ne consiste en argent, & en or)
Et non sentans le bien, & la richesse,
L'honneur, le fruit, la joie, et la liesse,
Qui par le temps, glaive, & feu ne perit,
Ains sans fin brule un Poétique esprit:
En ce disant ne blasme leurs personnes,
Lesquelles sont moins sauantes que bonnes:
Si croira bien vostre esprit tant savant
Que sans propos n'ay parlé si auant.
Si à cet art l'estoye destine
Des que sur terre enfant petit fus né,
Pourrois ie bien de coeur trop endurci
Combatre Dieu, & la nature aussi?
Lon dit tresbien, tout esprit d'autre estoffe,
Soit d'Orateur, ou soit de Philosophe
Se fait par art, sollicitude, & cure.
Mais le Poète est faict tel de nature.
Il est bien vray (sire) que pourété
Maint haut esprit a tout court arresté:
Tel n'est le mien qui tous les iours aprend,
Mais tous les iours ie say comme il m'en prend.
Le riche auare est tout accoustumé,
Louer de bouche vn œuvre bien limé
Et puis c'est tout; l'auteur demeure là:
Et tout comté, ce seul salaire il a.
Si Heròët est loué iusqu'au bout,
Et Sangelais, qu'est-ce si c'est le tout?
Que si au moins enfin la recompense
Correspondoit au labeur, & despense,
Mille espritz bons, pour vn apparoistroient
En vostre France, et tous les iours croistroient:
Mais pourété qui les garde de croistre,
Pareillement les garde d'apparoistre.
Car pourête avec son obscur voile
Obscurciroit la plus luisante estoille.
Poésie est noblesse, & gayeté
D'esprit tranquille, & en grand liberté,
Lequel n'admet double sollicitude:
Tel noble esprit occupé à l'estude,
Pour un chaslit ne se doit travailler,
Ny pour avoir vn linge, ou oreiller.
Car si Vergile est en grande souffrette,
S'il n'a ne lict, ne tect, ne maisonnette,
Ne serviteur, ne pecune moyenne,
Escrira il de la guerre Troyenne?
Quand on est ieune en grand esbatement
Pour passetemps, & pour contentement
C'est vn plaisir de sonner la musette:
Mais puis aprés quand l'aage, & la disette
Surprennent tost le Poète estonné,
Alors s'en va son chant mal entonné,
Diminuant tout petit à petit,
Car de sonner il perd tout appetit:
Alors il hait sa Musette, & sa Muse:
Si elle s'offre, il la iette, & refuse:
Le seul Poëte en ce point esperdu,
Demeure là esgaré, & perdu.
Mais maintenant Poëtes à merueille
Et en grand nombre, ont bien qui les reuille:
Car vn grand Roy le grand Dieu de là sus
Nous a donné, qui les a remis sus.

O roy, franc Roy, le seul vray Roy vous estes,
Qui despoir grand, & de gages honnestes
Entretenez les poëtes sans fin
De vostre temps, plus que l'or pur, & fin.
Parquoy souuent, contre fortune forte,
D'auoir tel Roy ma Muse se conforte,
Et de faueur d'vn tel prince alaitée,
Ia par deux foys s'est vous presente.

This poem occupies pages 5-12 of Les Ruisseaux de Fontaine.
Le Traducteur aux Lecteurs.

Amis lecteurs, si vous plaist lire ce mien translat en vers Françoïs du premier liure du remede d'Amour, composé en vers latins par Ouide, j'espère que vous y trouuerez plaisir & proufit, né moindre, mais encore plus grâd qu'en ma traduction des dix epistres du mesme Ouide, que vous avez veuë ces iours passez. Car ce remede n'est point refusables, tant à ceux qui sont en santé, pour les preseruer, comme à ceux qui sont en malaadie, pour les guerir. Et certes comme chacû peut bië savoir, c'est vne tresmaulvaise & tresgrieue malaadie que d'amour, i'entê voluptueuse, qui est pire que fieure continue, & de laquelle il fait tresbon entredre & praticer bien le remede: lequel vous verrez amplement deduit par plusieurs raisons en ce petit traité. Et sur certains passages, j'ay fait des annotatïons, outre la preface: comme aussi j'ay fait le semblable sur les dix epitres du mesme Ouide, par moy traduites. Et pource que j'ay ia fait office de transla­teur esdictes epitres, & encore le fay ie à present, il ne vous grieuera point d'entendre encore en deux motz, ce que i'en puis congoistre par science & experience, afin de vous faire ce proufit, & à ceux qui en voudront faire estat, & qu'ilz observent le plus pres qu'il leur sera possible les trois pointz que ie vueil cy declarer, ou qu'ilz ne s'en meslent point. Le trouue donc qu'il y a trois choses que doit obseruer vn qui veult bien traduire: La premiere, c'est qu'il retienne & rende les termes, & desctions de l'auteur, autant pres qu'il est possible: ce que lon peut appeller la robbe.

La seconde, qu'il rende aussi le sens par tout entier (car il ne fault têt estre curieux des termes que de laisser le sens, ou le redre obscur:) ce que lon peut appeller le corps.

La tierce, c'est qu'il rende & exprime aussi, naïvement la naturelle grace, vertu, energie, la douceur, elegance, dignité, force & viuacité de son auteur qu'il veult traduire à des personnes introducées parlês ou saisans aucunes choses: ce que lon peut appeller l'ame de l'oraison: mais bien peu de ceux qui traduisent aduuiennent eureusement à ces trois pointz, pour la grant difficulté. Parquoy la plus grand part des plus sages & experts translateurs sont plus soigneux à rendre le sens & la grace que les motz: de l'aduis & du nombre desquelz j'ay este, ie suis, & vueil estre.

Or quant à ceux qui sont si grans ennemis de toute traduction, à leur bon commandement: mais que ce pendant ilz ne perseuerent point à desrober (qu'ilz appellent imiter) plusieurs vers, & périodes des anciës Poëtes, lesquelz vers, sentences, & périodes toutes entières ilz s'attribuent: car ilz ne sauroient si bien se couvrir de
ce qu'aucuns Poëtes renommez ont fait le semblable, que ce pedant lon ne les puisse, & lô ne les doive à bon droit renuoyer au jugement que feit Aristophanes deuant le Roy Ptolomee, & à la punition que ledict Roy feit de telz cinges de Poëtes plagiaires. Le vous pry donc, lecteurs debonaires, ne desaigner ce mien labeur de traduction, congoissant mon vouloir & effort, en quelque partie honorable, vtile & vertueux, car i'ay traduit cecy pour bien, & pour la vertu: comme aussi pour mesme raison, à bonne intention, & pour induire à pudiques moeurs, i'ay, long temps a, cõposé le petit traité de la contr'amie de Court. Sur quoy le vueil bien aduertir, & prier les detracteurs, (si d'auenture il s'en rencontre aucuns) qu'auant que d'en mesdire ilz facent quelque chose de meilleur, & plus vtile, pour la conservation de la plus belle rose de toutes les vertus: Laquelle, au contraire, il semble quasi que les propos deliberé lon se vouë pour la souiller: chose, certes, tresmal correspondante à ce saint nom que nous portons. Adieu, amis lecteurs, lequel ie prie vous conserver en corps & esprit sain.

This document is found on pages 347-350 of Les Ruisseaux.
Sommaire de la principale matière
du présent livre.

Ovide, pour tendre à son but, qui est de remedier à
l'amour vicieuse, dit & remontrer en premier lieu, & sus
tout, qu'il faut fuir oysieute: pour à quoy paruer,
il propose le plaider & le batailler: hanter les champs,
iardiner, & cultiuer la terre: puis chacer, ou pescher.
Si tout cela n'y peult bien seruir, il conseille fuir bien
loing le lieu ou se tient l'amie, qui nous enchante, &
seduit: & demourer long têps absent. Mais si les affaires,
train, ou traffique, requièrent faire résidence au lieu
meme ou la dame se tient, il dit, qu'alors il faut
soüent reduire en mémoire les imperfections, fautes, &
offenses, pompe, gloire, auarice & audace de l'amie, qui
nous tient liez, & captifs, comme pures bestes encheue-
trees, & reduites sous le ioug de quelque peu de beauté ou
de grace: & si telles imperfections ne sont en elle, les
y fault feindre, & pourpenser qu'à l'auvenir, & possible
bien tost, elles y pourroyent estre: comme c'est
l'ordinaire que les hommes trop à tel amours subiets,
soient par leurs dames, ou amies, ainsi domtez, subiguez
& traitez. Dit aussi qu'il ne faut que prendre vn peu de
courage: car le plus difficile est le commencement. Dit
d'avantage qu'il faut s'avancer de voir l'amie de grand
matin, & la surprendre deuant qu'elle se farde, pour se
desencager en sa laider, ou à l'heure même qu'elle se
farde, pour desdaigner & adversir l'ordure de ses fards.
Somme, voila les principaux nerfs de tout le corps de ce
liure en vers: ceux qui voudront, en pourront voir vn
autre petit en Prose, que ie trouue bien fait, & bien
deduit, c'est la Deiphire de Leon Baptiste Albert, qui
enseigne d'euerter l'amour: Il a esté composé en Italie,
& traduit en François, & imprimé par plusieurs fois:
aussi est-il bien digne d'estre leu, & releu. A tant vous
suffira.

This document occupies 355-356 of Les Ruisseaux. Pages
351-354 are devoted to a "Preface du Translateur, sur le
premier liure de Remede d'amour d'Ouide," in which
Fontaine ingenuously proposes that the Remedia Amoris was
a product of Ovid's exile, prompted by his desire to
restore himself to the good graces of Caesar Augustus.
Las, elle est morte, elle est en terre mise
Celle que Dieu, voire seule a permise
Viure avec moy, apres tout frere & soeur,
Et apres pere & mere: or est il seur.
Las elle est morte, & en terre boutee.

Mercure avec sa verge redoutee
De tous esprits, Mercure aime des Dieux
Son cler esprit a conduit es hauts cieux.
Arriere pleurs donques, Fontaine, arriere:
Pourquoy es tu convertie en riviere?

Or say-je bien que quand je chanterois
Mieux qu'Orpheus, ne la retirerois
De la puissance & charge de Mercure,
Qui, en ce cas, de m'exauisser n'a cure:
Et si say bien qu'elle a son mal vaincu,
Par qui elle a plus languy que vescu
Cinq ou six ans: mais l'amour fraternelle
Ne me sauroit defaillir enuers elle.
C'est ceste amour qui l'arrose en mes pleurs,
Et l'arrosant augmente mes douleurs.
C'est ceste amour, sur toutes principale,
Qui m'a rendu esploure, triste, & pale
C'est ceste amour que nature enracine,
Qui de mon poing fait battre ma pwoctrine,
Et qui me fait avec pleurs souspirer,
Tant que ne puis mon aleine tirer.

Si Aurora, & Tethys, grans Deesses,
Du ciel & mer regentes, & princesses,
Ont tant pleuree Achilles, & Memnom,
Puis-je ne pleindre, & ne pleurer? ha non.
Et si encor du grand Souleil les filles
Ont eu les yeux a pleurer tant faciles
Dessus leur frere, abysme sans secours,
Qu'en arbre humide, & qui pleure tousjours
Muees sont: qui me pourra defendre
De ne pleurer ma soeur, ia terre, & cendre?
Toy son espoux pleure sur ton espouse;
Et moy son frere, autant que dix ou douze
Dessus ma soeur ie pleueray sans cesse.
Or sus allons tous deux pleins de tristesse,
Vestuz, helas, de noirs habitz non ceinctz,
Les yeux de pleurs, les coeurs de regretz pleins,
Chanter sus elleven piteux requiem.
Allons offrir à Pluton l'ancien,
Vin avec lait, noirs moutons, & brebis.
Allons en deuil & de coeurs & de habitz
Ses beaux os blancs recueiller tous ensemble,
Avec la main qui toute de deuil tremble:
Puis les mettans en beau coffre de marbre,
Pres d'un cypres, qui est douloureux arbre,
Les baignons en pleurs, en lait, & vin,
Entremelans ce service divin
De telz regretz: Or es tu trespasssee
Et comme fleur or es tu tost passee.
Encor n'auois ton cours demy parfaict,
Quand fausse mort ce meschant tour t'a fait:
Encor n'auoit la ride fait outrage
A ton bénit, & ton tendre visage.
Cire n'auoit bordé tes yeux si bons,
Ny la blancheur gasté tes cheveux blonds.
Maudite mort, tousjours tes noires ailes
Abbatront-ilz les choses les plus belles?

Outre ceux là, tant de regretz diray
Qu'autour de moy tout l'air i'en rempliray.
Ma seule soeur, non plus soeur, car je suis
Frere sans soeur, di pourquoi tant me fuis?
Tu n'auois pas demi parfait ton aage
Quand lachesis trop lasche de courage
Ne voulut plus deuider le beau fil
Tant delié, tant blanc, & tant subtil,
Lors Atropos par trop pleine d'envie
S'en vint couper ce beau fil de ta vie.

Pourquoi m'es tu tant contraire, ô fortune?
Quand après tout tu m'en as fait perdre vne,
Vne de corps qui valoit dix de coeur?
Perdue l'ay suuant vn belliqueur,
Loing de Paris, voire bien loing i'estois,
Entre les monts la mort ie ne doutois:
Et toy ma soeur qu'en la plaine laissoye
Dedans Paris trouuas de mort la voye.
Fontaine, helas, depuis que tu fus né
Or es-tu bien au monde fortuné.
Mais si i'ay veu quelque temps si prospere
Que frere estois, ores ne suis plus frere:
Car i'ay perdu le reste de mes soeurs,
Qui me sera commencement de pleurs.
ELEGIE SEUR LE
trespas de Renê, cinquiesme enfant,
à tiers filz de l'auteur.

Dieu te gard donc mon petit filz Renê,
A Dieu mon filz aussi tost mort que né:
Dieu gard mon filz venant sur terre ronde,
Adieu mon filz departant de ce monde.
Tu n'as encor le laict bien sauoure,
Tu n'as encor le tien pere honoré,
Ne seu que c'est de maux, & de liesses,
Que loing de nous tu t'en vas, & nous laisses,
Tu n'as encor vne seule sepmaine,
Que tu depars de ceste vie humaine.
Pourquoy fais-tu ton dernier partement
Si tost apres le tien enfantement?
Petit enfant qui t'a donné enuie
De si soudain aller en l'autre vie?
Il semble à voir que tu congneusses bien
Qu'en ceste vie y a petit de bien,
Donc as choisi les grans ioyes celestes
Pour de ce monde euirter les molestes.
Petit enfant ie croy bien que tu as
Vn autre pere au ciel, là ou tu vas,
Lequel a fait que ton coeur le desire,
Quand le charnel laisses pour l'autre elire.
Petit enfant qui n'as gueres testé,
Je ne croy point que tu n'eusses gousté
Du laict celeste, au moins deux ou trois goutes,
Quand tu t'en vas à fin que plus en goustes,
Puisque tu veux l'eternal bien choisir,
Laisse m'en as vn merueilieux desir,
0 mon enfant qui as vie tant brieue,
La mienne, estant moyenne, m'est ia grieue:
Et si te dy qu'à l'exemple de toy
Me tarde bien que mon Dieu ie ne voy.
VITA

Andrew Anderson Vance, Jr., was born January 26, 1941, in Statesville, North Carolina. He graduated from Davidson College in 1962. During the academic year 1962-63, he was an Assistant d'anglais at the Lycée "Alain Chartier" in Bayeux (Calvados), France. In September, 1963, he enrolled as a graduate student in French at the Baton Rouge campus of Louisiana State University, and was awarded the M.A. degree in the Summer of 1965.

From 1965 to 1966, he was employed as an assistant professor of French at Arkansas College in Batesville, Arkansas. In September, 1966, he accepted a similar position at Catawba College in Salisbury, North Carolina, where he is still employed. In August, 1968, he married Sara Frances McGee, of Rocky Mount, North Carolina.

In June, 1969, he was granted academic leave by Catawba College to pursue work leading to the Ph.D. in French at Louisiana State University. Before returning to North Carolina in the Fall of 1970, he had been admitted to candidacy for the degree he sought. Since September, 1970, he has been engaged in teaching and writing the dissertation. He is a candidate for the Spring, 1973, graduation.
EXAMINATION AND THESIS REPORT

Candidate: Andrew Anderson Vance, Jr.

Major Field: French

Title of Thesis: Charles Fontaine: A Bibliographical Contribution and a Study of his Concept of Poetry

Approved:

[Vendor: Vendor]  [Name: Vendor]

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Major Professor and Chairman

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Dean of the Graduate School

EXAMINING COMMITTEE:

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Date of Examination:

March 1, 1973