

CHARITY AND INTERPRETATION
IN THE *HEPTAMÉRON* AND THE *TIERS LIVRE*

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Abstract

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This study examines charity in Marguerite de Navarre's *Heptaméron* and François Rabelais's *Tiers Livre*, two works of 1540's France that explore similar philosophical themes and follow analogous literary structures. Charity appears in these texts in contexts of community, friendship, and human nature, which are the topics of the three chapters in this work. Notions of charity in Marguerite and Rabelais's texts are rooted in exegetic tradition stemming from the Pauline Epistles and designate charity as a social model, distinguished by the love of *caritas*, as well as an interpretive model, characterized by an appeal to read in good part, *in bonam partem*. The works draw upon exegetic sources for notions of charity that appear in the writings of their contemporaries, such as those of Erasmus, whose adages, treatises, and *encomia* inform representations of charity in Marguerite and Rabelais's works. As the *Heptaméron* and the *Tiers Livre* develop notions of community, friendship, and human nature, they reveal the underlying precepts of charity in these contexts while also exploring aberrant figures and forms that contradict charitable models. These contrasting themes expand the narratives, ultimately contributing to illustrations of charity in Marguerite and Rabelais's texts.

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Abbreviations

CWE *The Collected Works of Erasmus*

DDC *On Christian Teaching (De Doctrina Christiana)*

E 1979 *The Praise of Folly*

E 1990 *The Erasmus Reader*

E 1992 *Érasme*

E 1996 *Erasmus on Women*

ISBE *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*

M 1943 *L'Heptaméron*, edited by Michel François

M 1999 *L'Heptaméron*, edited by Gisèle Mathieu-Castellani

NE *Nicomachean Ethics*

R 1991 *The Complete Works of Rabelais*, presented and translated by Donald Frame

R 1994 *Œuvres complètes de Rabelais*, edited by Mireille Huchon

R 1995 *Le Tiers Livre des faictz et dictz du noble Pantagruel*, edited by Jean Céard

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in memoriam Arden Clute

amicis meis

INTRODUCTION

This study addresses charity as an influential topic in texts of the French Renaissance and focuses on Marguerite de Navarre's *Heptaméron* and François Rabelais's *Tiers Livre*. "Charité," defined as "affection, amour, tendresse" in Edmond Huguet's *Dictionnaire du seizième siècle*, appears as a significant social and interpretive model in these works. Notions of charity inform representations of community, friendship, and human nature in these texts and are rooted in exegetic tradition stemming from the Pauline Epistles. Charity appears as *agape* in the Pauline Epistles, which exegetes, such as Erasmus, translate as *caritas*.¹ Drawing from the Pauline Epistles, and from works influenced by Pauline tradition, descriptions in the *Heptaméron* and the *Tiers Livre* designate charity as a social model, distinguished by the fraternal love of *caritas*, as well as an interpretive model, characterized by an appeal to read in good part, *in bonam partem*. Sources for notions of charity appear in writings of Marguerite and Rabelais's contemporaries, including Erasmus.² I examine my main texts in light of the writings of Erasmus, including his adages, treatises, and *encomia*, which inform representations of charity in Marguerite and Rabelais's works.

¹ This correspondence between the Latin term *caritas* and the Greek term *agape*, (ἀγάπη) appears in Erasmus' description of "caritatem autem non habeam" in I Cor 13:1 (E 1990, 498); *agape*, defined as "love" in *A Greek-English Lexicon*, incorporates various models of reciprocal love, including love characteristic "of the love of husband and wife" and love that is "especial love of God for man and of man for God" as well as "brotherly love, charity," for which the editors refer to Rom 5:8, II Cor 5:14, Luke 11:42, and I Cor 13:1.

² This includes Erasmus' *Praise of Folly*, which Mireille Huchon designates as a constituent work of the *Tiers Livre* and whose author Rabelais considered as an authoritative figure (R 1994, xxvii). Lucien Febvre discusses Marguerite's more implicit connection to Erasmus, pointing out their common focus on Pauline themes of the unique place of love in understanding authoritative texts, such as Scripture (1944, 63).

The *Heptaméron* and the *Tiers Livre*, two examples of narrative prose of the 1540's, explore similar philosophical themes and follow analogous literary structures. The *Heptaméron* was written in the decade before Marguerite's death in 1549 and published posthumously for the first time in 1558.³ The *Tiers Livre* was first published in 1546.⁴ These works present community, friendship, and narrative in anecdotal forms with framing passages, forming the structure of a cornice. Each text is introduced by a narrative voice in the prologue, which gives way to the voices of the characters in the anecdotes that are related. The *Tiers Livre* opens with a dedicatory *dizain* that appeals to the spirit of Marguerite, a gesture that indicates her support and affinity for Rabelais.⁵ Marguerite is, as Lucien Febvre notes, a "protectrice des lettres et des arts" (1944, 57) and, like those whom she protects, explores the human condition in its varied forms. Her writing reflects a mystical streak, to which Rabelais's *dizain* alludes (R 1991, 248, n.1), and mirrors her own preoccupations with the spiritual and carnal aspects of human existence. These aspects of Marguerite's work appear in the evangelical framework in which her narrative develops and are corroborated by her correspondence with Guillaume Briçonnet.⁶ In his *dizain*, Rabelais directs his appeal to the spirit of Marguerite, which has risen to lofty heights: "Esprit abstraict, ravy, et ecstatic / Qui frequentant les cieulx, ton origine" (R 1994, 341; 1995, 5) and asks that it return momentarily to the domicile of her body so that she may witness the third volume of the deeds of Pantagruel. This movement reflects the juxtaposition of divine and earthly existence that permeates her work. Her

³ See Michel François's notes on the publications of the *Heptaméron* (M 1943, 15-17).

⁴ Mireille Huchon describes the publications of the *Tiers Livre* (R, 1994, 1341).

⁵ Céard notes that the dedicatory *dizain* could not have been written without her permission, showing her support for R (1995, 4, n. 1).

⁶ The gathering of her characters at the Nostre Dame de Serrance and their daily readings of Scripture show the evangelical influence on the structure of the days they spend together. M's correspondence with the Bishop of Meaux shows a preoccupation with approaching spiritual and carnal marriage with a Christian understanding, as illustrated in Briçonnet's letter to her, dated July 6, 1542 (Briçonnet 1979 v. 2, 193-211).

preoccupation with this dichotomy reveals, for Marcel Tetel, a soul that is “still firmly held to the ground, instead of a soul abnegating itself for a union with God” (1973, 7). This “esprict,” described as “ecstatic,” signals the momentary flight of Marguerite’s soul from her body as it reaches divine spheres, a state that signals Christian ecstasy. At the same time, the term “ecstatic” points to the madness of those who lose their senses, as Mireille Huchon mentions when she contrasts its use in Rabelais’s *dizain* with its appearance in his chapters that focus on the character of a fool and the negative effects of clandestine marriage (R 1994, 341, n.4). The double stance of this term signals the relevance of the wise-fool topos to both Marguerite and Rabelais’s discourse, a significant topos in the Pauline tradition. Each of the texts contributes to discourse on wisdom and folly, a theme that Erasmus articulates in his *Praise of Folly*, his *Encomium moriæ*, first published in 1511. As the texts enter into a discussion on wisdom and folly, they contextualize aspects of the human condition and in this way contribute to discourse on charity.

Pauline themes in the *Hepteméron* and the *Tiers Livre* indicate the significance of charity in portraits of community, friendship, and human nature that develop in the texts. Community develops as a result of fraternal bonds between individuals who experience joy at seeing one another and who are in turn inspired to engage in communal approaches to discourse. Notions of charity coincide with precepts of friendship, a relationship that illustrates an affective bond between individuals. This bond occurs above all in spirit, giving meaning to exterior bonds, such as common possessions or conjugal contracts. Finally, charity appears in human nature at moments during which individuals seem to be guided by their impulses, their actions signaling their entry into altered states. These

states, brought about by passions, appear in the narratives as manifestations of internal conditions, drawing these out in the manner of the spirit of Marguerite in Rabelais's *dizain*, which has left the domain of her human form and has reached celestial heights. This ecstatic state suggests moments during which the narratives push past their parameters of discourse, thereby enriching topics of community, friendship, and human nature.

The texts show similar configurations, their concentric forms reflecting the structure of a cornice. Evoking cornucopian themes of abundance, which Terence Cave describes, they integrate a variety of figures and forms into discourse, thereby appealing to designated interpretive audiences in the manner of Erasmus' *De copia*.⁷ Introduced by prologues that indicate the manner in which interpreters may approach the seemingly disparate information given in the texts' novellas and consultations, the texts make use of the modular forms characteristic of Renaissance writing (Jeanneret 1993, 85). The anecdotal forms that guide the narrative suggest the innumerable compilations and the encyclopedic investigation that reflect the way in which knowledge was managed during the Renaissance (Jeanneret 1993, 89). Presented in dialogic form, these anecdotes allow different voices to infiltrate into the narratives in the manner of Platonic dialogue. Tetel remarks upon the way in which the model of the Socratic banquet pervades the *Heptaméron* in every part, expressing the "unfathomable multiplicity of human conduct without any fixed conclusion" (1973, 9), while Duval describes the series of consultations in the second half of the *Tiers Livre* as a *symposium* of the most perfect representatives of theology, medicine, and law, who are "experts on the three loci of human wellbeing (the

⁷ Cave discusses cornucopian themes in writing of the French Renaissance, which draws from Erasmus' work, *De duplici copia verborum ac rerum* (1979, 8).

soul, the body, material possessions)” (1997, 93). Such Platonic forms are further illustrated by Rabelais’s *dizain*, an invitation to Marguerite’s “centrifugal, Platonizing spirit to come back down to earth where it belongs, in order to read the earth-bound *Tiers Livre de Pantagruel*” (Duval 1997, 130). The structure of the cornice sets forth a base upon which the modular forms of Marguerite and Rabelais’s narratives build, making use of dialogic models and expanding the topics of discourse that are introduced.

While the structures of both of these texts recall older writings, such as Plato’s *Symposium*, as well as more contemporary writings, such as Erasmus’ dialogues,⁸ they diverge in the roles they assume within the Renaissance corpus and in their representation of charitable discourse. The *Heptaméron* explicitly states the role of Giovanni Boccaccio’s *Decameron* as a model for the storytelling that takes place in novella form. The presentation of tales further recalls medieval *fabliaux*, comic tales written by *jongleurs*, while revealing evangelical influences on the narrative, signaled by the setting of the abbey, where the characters engage in daily readings of Scripture, as well as the frequent Biblical citations in the pleasant meadow where they gather to tell tales. The form of the *Tiers Livre*, on the other hand, remains “more anomalous than its subject” (Duval 1997, 15), offering an amalgamation of themes and figures that evoke older writings in new and unusual forms. While illustrating Pauline themes, it also draws from classical sources, reflecting the revival of classical texts that occurred during the Renaissance. Rabelais’s use of these writings appears in glosses on these texts that stand in contrast to the glosses on medieval writings and Scripture that dominate Marguerite’s

⁸ These include, for example, the *Convivium religiosum*, first published in 1522 and the *Ciceronianus*, first published in 1528.

work. These diverse references to authoritative models affect the shape of the narratives, giving them unique voices in discourse on notions of charity.

The three chapters of my dissertation explore contexts for charity that proceed from the largest social group of community, progress to the more intimate relationship of friendship, and arrive at sources for such bonds in human nature. I begin each chapter with a description of terms used to express charity in the particular context addressed, examining the way in which these terms delineate notions of charity and how interpretation of these terms changes according to context. Referring to these representations of charity, I describe the manner in which Marguerite and Rabelais's texts offer various *exempla* that draw upon literary tradition, in this way pointing to the significance of charity in the larger Renaissance corpus.

Chapter I presents charity in the context of community, illustrating the way in which collective identity relates to physical space and the way in which such space is tied to literary narrative. This chapter describes the way in which the prologues to the *Heptaméron* and the *Tiers Livre* delineate communal space with geographic references, showing the role of such references in providing common interpretive ground for participants in community. Frank Lestringant's work on textual representations of Renaissance geography and Timothy Hampton's work on the role of literature in creating national identity are prominent references in my discussion of the way in which Marguerite and Rabelais delineate communal settings in their prologues. Kathy Eden's work on the role of classical texts in the Renaissance corpus and Gisèle Mathieu-Castellani's work on the novella form are also significant references for the manner in which discourse provides interpretive ground that builds upon such spaces.

Chapter II describes the relationship between charity and friendship, revealing the similar precepts that inform discourse on these topics. The relationship of friendship reveals an affinity of the soul pertinent to examples of medieval relationships of fealty and courtly love as well as contemporary situations of marriage. For the use of examples to give both ideal and empirical illustrations of friendship, I refer to John D. Lyons' work on the role of *exempla* in early modern texts. For the influence of traditional ideas on friendship on early modern texts, I refer to Ullrich Langer's work on perfect friendship. Michael Screech's work provides historical background on marriage in the Renaissance and on the influence of the Pauline Epistles on Renaissance perceptions of marriage. Lucien Febvre's work provides historical and literary references for the *Heptaméron*, situating it within the historical period of the Renaissance and within the Renaissance literary corpus.

Chapter III illustrates the links between charity and human nature, indicating the origins of bonds between individuals. Representations of human nature, linked to degrees of prudence in individuals, become manifest in certain impulsive and spontaneous behaviors. Such behaviors, illustrated by the physiological responses of characters to particular situations, embody notions of folly while also assuming the position of revelatory signs. Jean Céard's work on Renaissance views of extraordinary phenomena in nature provides references for characters' approaches to such behaviors while Marie-Luce Demonet's work on Renaissance perceptions of signs and the origin of language provides references for characters' interpretations of physiological signs. François Rigolot's work on uses of language in Rabelais's works also gives important references

for Renaissance thought on language and on the role of language in structuring Rabelais's texts.

Representations of charity in contexts of community, friendship, and human nature reveal the diverse bonds that unite individuals in Marguerite and Rabelais's works. Such bonds occur within shared space, between kindred spirits, and in the common experiences individuals share by virtue of their human form. These bonds take shape within discourse that shows breaks from the commonality affiliated with notions of charity. Deviations from charitable behavior occur as a result of external threats, such as those brought about by natural disaster and military offensive, by separations between individuals provoked by jealousy and concupiscence, or by interpretive approaches that show hostility or ignorance toward new figures and forms that appear in discourse, as Ian Maclean describes in the contrast he sets forth between bad readers and those who read *in bonam partem* (2002, 221). Integrating such contrasting examples into their narratives, the *Heptaméron* and the *Tiers Livre* offer a varied and detailed portrait of charity that perpetuates its cornucopian themes, continuing to expand into new and unexpected forms of discourse.

CHAPTER I

CHARITY AND COMMUNITY

I. INTRODUCTION

I would like to begin by discussing charity in settings of community that appear in the *Heptaméron* and the *Tiers Livre*. Communal settings in these texts reflect the description of “communauté” in Edmond Huguet’s *Dictionnaire du seizième siècle* as “confédération,” a union of several states or a group of associations which act in the common interest.⁹ Descriptions of community in these texts illustrate the manner in which individuals are joined by a common bond. This bond occurs as a result of common experiences, which are linked to shared geographic space and developed by collective recognition of literary narratives. As the prologues to the *Heptaméron* and the *Tiers Livre* illustrate the manner in which communities develop, they reveal the significance of tenets of charity in the creation of common geographic and literary ground.

The formation of community in Marguerite and Rabelais’s prologues suggests descriptions of charity in the Pauline Epistles. Such ideas reflect the fraternal bond of *caritas* as well as the interpretive method of approaching discourse *in bonam partem*. In his first letter to the Corinthians, Paul describes the Church of Christ as a body politic: “For just as the body is one, and yet has many parts, so all the parts of the body, though they are many, are only one body. So also is Christ.” (I Cor 12:12). This corporal analogy suggests unity among members of the Church that occurs despite differences between

⁹ *Le Nouveau Petit Robert*, s.v. “Confédération.”

individuals. Paul points to the individual members of the Christian community as vital to the Church, just as individual parts of the body are vital to the human form in its entirety. This image functions as a topos in the prologues to *Heptaméron* and the *Tiers Livre*, as the narrators bring the interlocutors' gaze to individual movements within the scenes that are presented, movements that reveal the contours of communal space. As the narrators integrate these various perspectives into their portraits of community, they point to analogous movements in the development of discourse that characterizes the narratives.

Descriptions of the formation of community in the *Heptaméron* and the *Tiers Livre* suggest the development of political themes in the texts. By "politics" we refer to the notion of the good of the individual in relation to the state, as Ian Maclean describes (1980, 48). The term is derived from the Greek term *politeia* denoting government, constitution, and commonwealth, and is related to the term *polis* meaning city or state.¹⁰ In the *Politics*, Aristotle describes a state as a community: "Every state is a community of some kind, and every community is established with a view to some good" (I.i,1). The political settings of Marguerite and Rabelais's works appear in descriptions of the formation of community, as individuals come together with a common goal. The common pursuits of members of communities in Marguerite and Rabelais's texts reflect their public role and function. Members of these communities establish and maintain bonds with one another by occupying common space and by relating to common narratives.

The communities that form in the prologues appear in geographic settings, referred to by place names, or toponyms. The prologue to the *Heptaméron* describes the

¹⁰ *The Pocket Oxford Greek Dictionary*, s.v.v. "Πολιτεία," "Πόλις."

journey of the *devisants* from the springs of Cauterets through the Pyrenées mountains to the abbey of Nostre-Dame de Serrance, where they meet and decide to retire to a pleasant meadow on the banks of the Gave river. The prologue to the *Tiers Livre* describes the efforts of the Corinthians to fortify their city against attack by the Macedonian army, actions that are interpreted and mimed by the Cynic Diogenes with his barrel, and repeated in turn by the narrator, who refers to Diogenes as an emblem for his text.¹¹ These representations of physical space set forth views of the world that are chorographic, conveying images of extents of land that fall into an observer's line of vision (Lestringant 1993b, 50). Illustrating the moment at which cartography meets landscape, these chorographies focus on the quality of geographic spaces when taken individually, the *qualitativim*, which can be contrasted with mathematical measurements of geographic spaces, based on latitudes and longitudes, the *quantitativim*.¹² As spaces of encounter, these chorographic representations evoke issues of shared space that bring up notions of shared identity. Reflecting the experiences of individuals who form community, these dynamic spaces transform from a *locus terribilis* into a *locus amœnus*, from space that is characterized by “la fureur de la création” and “la terreur de guerre” into an idyllic place of pleasure and harmony, a “lieu littéraire” of abundance.¹³

The prologues illustrate the manner in which collective identity corresponds to shared space. This occurs in the *Heptaméron* through discourse on topics that are relevant to the company gathered by the Gave river while in the *Tiers Livre* it is revealed in the

¹¹ Floyd Gray describes Diogenes' tub rolling as emblematic of the *Tiers Livre* in his article on structural and interpretive aspects of the Prologue (1963, 57-62).

¹² The distinction is taken from Ptolemy's *Geographia*, I i in cosmographic works of the Renaissance (Lestringant 1993b, 51).

¹³ Alexandre Tarette describes these metaphorical attributes of landscape as emblematic of individuals (2005); see Cave on the role of *copia* in the literary work as a *locus amœnus* (1979, 176).

reference to the *mise en scène* at Corinth as a topos for reading the text. Members of community build on these common spaces, “lieux communs,”¹⁴ with other shared characteristics, such as character and language. These shared characteristics coincide with Timothy Hampton’s description of the origins of nationalism, individual identity that is “shaped and given purpose by a concept of community of which a common language is the medium, territory the seat, and shared character the stimulus” (2001, 9). Members of the designated communities in the *Heptaméron* and the *Tiers Livre* address the meaning of a shared identity while confronting actions and discourse that seem alien. This is, as Hampton notes, a position that reflects the historical situation of 1540’s France, a nation that lacked the natural boundaries that set off the island state of England and the peninsulas of Iberia and Italy, and was therefore particularly susceptible to political conflict (Hampton 2001, 7). As the prologues describe the formation of community in contexts of natural disaster and military offensive, they set forth notions of the shared characteristics and values to which members of community adhere. They introduce texts that are, as Hampton describes, examples of the most influential texts of sixteenth-century French literature that explore the nature of the collective experience (2001, 9). As the prologues to the *Heptaméron* and the *Tiers Livre* set forth these scenes of shared space, they posit notions of community in relation to their “lieux communs.”

Members of the designated communities approach these “lieux communs” with a sense of familiarity that is based on recognition. This sense of recognition – of individuals and of places – extends to literary models that the chorographic descriptions of the prologues recall. Flooding in the Pyrenées mountains recalls not only the deluge described in Genesis, but also the more contemporary disaster of plague in Giovanni

¹⁴ See Cave on “topos” as a place or commonplace and its cognate forms, “topic” and “topical” (1979, xix).

Boccaccio's fourteenth-century Florence. The Corinthians' fortification against siege is taken almost verbatim from Lucian's *How to Write History*.¹⁵ The designated communities in the prologues recognize these literary models and refer to them as they proceed with their common pursuits of storytelling and reading text. Their recognition and use of such texts illustrates a manner of understanding narrative that is grounded in knowledge of prior texts. Such knowledge reflects an intimacy with written discourse that Kathy Eden describes as *familiaritas*. This relationship, based on a tradition inherited from epistolary writing,¹⁶ illustrates the way in which the interpretive communities of Marguerite and Rabelais's texts understand the narratives with which they are presented. As the *devisants* and Rabelais's narrator appropriate prior texts into the narratives that they relate, they develop a context that encourages collective interpretive efforts. The creation of "lieux communs" is thus contingent upon these "lieux littéraires."

While building a common identity in relation to these shared spaces, members of these designated communities find themselves in situations that they do not recognize or that are not conducive to building community. Such unfamiliar circumstances occur as a result of unscrupulous individuals, such as those who attack the *devisants* during their journey, or those who resist figures that Rabelais's narrator sets forth in the text. Such difficulties are reflected in the rhetorical crises indicated in the prologues. In the *Heptaméron*, the crisis is related to spoken discourse, as the *devisants* attempt to remain true to the events that they recount by avoiding speech that is too stylized or too

¹⁵ Duval shows the parallel structures between the *Tiers Livre* and *How To Write History* in citations from these works in Appendices I and II to his *Design of Rabelais's Tiers Livre de Pantagruel* (1997, 223-27).

¹⁶ Eden links *familiaritas* to the intimate knowledge that is characteristic of epistolary writing, a paradigm that reveals the manner in which individuals understand past writings. *Familiaritas* in Petrarchan and Erasmian hermeneutics takes on an analogous role to *caritas* in Augustinian descriptions of understanding Scripture (2006).

rhetorically similar to written discourse, all the while referring to the literary model of the *Decameron*. In the *Tiers Livre*, the crisis is related to written discourse, as the narrator, in his pastiche of Lucian's work, raises the question of writing effectively while introducing bizarre and alien figures into his text. Terence Cave, commenting on the significance of the "colloquial" mode in vernacular writing of sixteenth-century France, describes the way in which Marguerite and Rabelais's works attempt to escape the space of the written text by opening it up or disrupting it, yet retaining fragments of writing that underpin literary tradition (1979, 141). This use of literary models allows interpretive communities to approach what is unfamiliar and even hostile to their "lieux communs."

The appeal to the designated communities to proceed with their interpretive efforts under varied circumstances illustrates the use of "lieux communs" as the basis for understanding discourse. Parallel uses of discourse and space as mediating areas also appear in Erasmus' works which, like Marguerite and Rabelais, incorporate fragments of classical writings into current narratives. Cave compares Marguerite and Rabelais's use of, and departure from, traditional literary models to the role of the trilingual inscriptions in Erasmus' 1522 work, the *Convivium religiosum* (1979, 141). These fragments of classical writings, in Latin, Greek, and Hebrew, are inscribed on many objects at the villa of Eusebius, including the front door, the chapel, the walls, and objects in the gardens and dining hall. Within a space that Eusebius offers to his friends as communal, these inscribed proverbs and Biblical citations,¹⁷ along with scenes in painted gardens that recall ancient texts,¹⁸ encourage discourse among the interlocutors on issues that are relevant to their particular circumstances. Their discussion reflects what Kenneth J.

¹⁷ See Eden for sources of these images in the *Adages* and in the *Book of Proverbs* (1998, 417).

¹⁸ Examples of these are animals described in *Aesop's Fables* and in Pliny's *Historia naturalis*. (E 1992, 229-31).

Wilson has described as humanists' mediating role between ideas of Antiquity and their own sensory world (in Kushner 1988, 36). This mediating role reflects the public role and function of the designated communities in Marguerite and Rabelais's prologues, as they establish bonds between one another by engaging in common pursuits.

II.i. COMMUNITY AND NARRATIVE

Representations of community in the prologue to the *Heptaméron* are tied to the *devisants*' displacement through the Pyrenées mountains, from the springs at Cauterets to the abbey of Nostre-Dame de Serrance. Separated by the great flooding that takes place, each *devisant* travels through the *locus terribilis* of natural disaster to a *locus amœnus*, a pleasant meadow on the banks of the Gave river. The chorographic transformation of the *mise en scène* corresponds to the formation of community, as the *devisants* gather at Nostre-Dame de Serrance and decide to wait there together while construction of a bridge takes place. The trajectory of their journey is delineated in physical space, marked by toponyms. These toponyms, which the *devisants* recognize, guide them in terrain that is unfamiliar and often menacing. When they reach Nostre-Dame de Serrance, they decide to remain there together until it is possible to return home to Tarbes. They choose to spend the duration of their stay at Nostre-Dame de Serrance, telling tales in their *locus amœnus*. This choice reflects the fraternal bond that connects this group of individuals, who recognize one another by name and who have been through the common experience of journeying through a *locus terribilis*. Their adoption of a communal activity initiates the development of this bond through charitable approaches to discourse.

In contrast to the menacing landscape through which they have traveled, this *locus amœnus* is a verdant and peaceful space. Evoking descriptions in literary narratives that are familiar to the designated interpretive community of *devisants*, the space itself contributes to communal activity. The pleasant meadow at which the *devisants* arrive recalls the *locus amœnus* of Boccaccio's *brigata*, which also results from a

transformation of the chorographic setting.¹⁹ The *brigata*'s flight from plague-ridden Florence to the outskirts of the city illustrates a *locus terribilis* painted by a narrator who describes in detail a landscape littered with diseased and dying bodies, sources of the social discord that engulfs Florentine society. This scene transforms into the pleasant setting of the *brigata*'s peaceful villas, site of social harmony and pleasant conversation. The terrain that the *devisants* cross shows a similar transformation, illustrating instances of destruction and death that occur during the journey to Nostre-Dame de Serrance and transforming into an idyllic setting as the *devisants* begin to engage in discourse. The shift from *locus terribilis* to *locus amœnus* in Marguerite's narrative indicates that it adheres to the literary model of the *Decameron* well before the reference is mentioned, a moment during which the *devisants* decide to follow Boccaccio's work. This model thus serves as a reference point for both the narrator and the *devisants*, expressing the use of Boccaccio's text at different levels of the narrative, which in turn signals the use of familiar literary markers in the text.

The tales recounted in the *locus amœnus* have a historical base, being connected to the experience of the *devisants*, who themselves recall historical figures.²⁰ These tales fall within the parameters of their agreement to only relate events that are familiar to them. The conversational style of their discourse emphasizes their efforts to remain true to these events, all the while following Boccaccio's text. A text recently translated into French from Italian by Antoine le Maçon, the *Decameron* appears as a structural model for the *devisants*' assumed pastime of storytelling. This activity is inspired by a project begun at court but stalled due to political events of the 1540's: "les grandz affaires

¹⁹ See Gisèle Mathieu-Castellani's comparison (1999, 91 n. 2).

²⁰ Davis' *Storytellers in Marguerite de Navarre's Heptaméron* gives historical references for the identities of the Marguerite's characters (1978).

survenuz au Roy depuis, aussy la paix,” an allusion to the war against the Imperials, the invasion of France, the victory of Cerisoles, and the treaties of Crépy and Ardres.²¹

Situating themselves within historic events that are relevant to the geographic borders of France, the *devisants* construct a communal storytelling context based on a literary model drawn from fourteenth-century Florence. As the *devisants* set out to recreate the project of rendering Boccaccio’s work into French, they emphasize the importance of remaining historically accurate by avoiding embellishments brought about by rhetorical flourishes. They thus appropriate Boccaccio’s text into discourse that is relevant to their everyday lives.

The *devisants* recount tales in a space whose pleasant atmosphere encourages discourse in the manner of literary models like the *Decameron*. Marguerite’s narrator even describes the meadow as “si beau et plaisant qu’il avoit besoin d’un Bocace pour le depaindre à la verité” (M 1943, 10; 1999, 92). The *devisants* are drawn to this space, which remains unnamed, but which recalls textual descriptions of other spaces that encourage discussion. Away from the context of the court, and even removed from the religious setting of the abbey, the *devisants* take a position analogous to the liminal space of the *Decameron*, one that is “outside of ‘real’ time and space,” (Potter 1982, 95). This position allows them perspective on everyday events, including the daily readings of Scripture that they complete at the abbey. The commentary that frames the tales allows each *devisant* to contribute to the conversation and illustrates their approach to narrative as common discourse. The use of discourse within the designated space of the *locus amœnus* illustrates parallel approaches to the space that the *devisants* occupy and the discourse in which they participate. This communal approach to storytelling reflects the

²¹ Gisèle Mathieu-Castellani describes these events (M 1999, 90).

position of adages or maxims – also called *communia* – as belonging to community in the interest of common use.²² Like Erasmus' use of proverbs in the *Adages*, the *devisants* appropriate Boccaccio's text into discussion that builds community. The explicit reference to Boccaccio shows the significance of commentary in their storytelling venture.²³ The parallel situation of their journey and the journey of the *brigata* is pointed out by the narrator and shows the appropriation of older texts into current interpretive contexts. In the egalitarian space of their removed, pastoral setting, the *devisants* approach their tales as a common venue for exchange.

The *devisants*' manner of approaching storytelling gives them a unique voice within the literary corpus into which their discourse falls. Eliminating the role of king or queen that the *brigata* instate in order to select tale-tellers, the *devisants* choose their own successors at the conclusions of their tales and commentary. These actions show a reliance on the *devisants*' fraternal bonds in their development of discourse while granting full responsibility to the speakers as they take up the authoritative narrative voice of the text. This movement within the group also allows for the insertion of tales that arise from spontaneous remarks, thereby contributing to the authenticity and variety that their tales bring to the *locus amœnus*.

²² Eden describes the way in which Cicero describes intellectual property as communal, identifying this shared intellectual property with the common sayings or *communia* of the Pythagoreans (2001, 103-105).

²³ Jeanneret describes the choice of Boccaccio's text as one that is specifically made to include commentary and compares this model to those of Philippe de Vigneulles and Des Périers (1993, 97).

II.ii Landscape and Narrative

The *Heptaméron* opens with a description of the Pyrenées mountains, at a moment in September when the “baings des monts Pirenées commencerent entrer en leur vertu” (M 1943, 1; 1999, 77). The familiar topographical reference to the waters of the Pyrenées mountains, at a specific stage in their yearly development, sets forth recognizable geographic images. These images expand to incorporate literary references as the narrator paints the landscape in which the events take place. The description of swelling waters signals the impending journey that the *devisants* will undertake as a result of profuse amounts of water overtaking their paths. The plentiful baths also suggest the fecund space at which the *devisants* will arrive as a result of this journey. The view of this area of the Pyrenées from a distance, “à petite échelle,”²⁴ encompasses a large extent of land, which is soon engulfed by waters from the rising Gave river. The deluge recalls the flood described in the sixth through ninth chapters of Genesis: “Mais sur le temps de ce retour vindrent les pluyes si merueilleuses et si grandes, qu’il sembloit que Dieu eut oblyé la promesse qu’il avoit faicte à Noé de ne destruire plus le monde par eau” (M 1943, 1; 1999, 77-8). Like the flooding in Genesis that covers the entire earth, the entire section of the Pyrenées is covered in waters that are so forceful that they bring about destruction. The regeneration that succeeds the flood also follows the Scriptural model.

As the narrator’s description of the flooding progresses, the view of this extent of land becomes larger in scale, a view “à grande échelle.”²⁵ This initiates a view of the individual members of the community introduced in the prologue. The introduction of

²⁴ Lestringant contrasts a view from a distance, “à petite échelle” with a view from a closer perspective, “à grande échelle” (1993b, 50).

²⁵ Ibid.

each character brings about this closer perspective, as their movements follow the “articulations naturelles du corps terrestre.”²⁶ The narrator creates a topography through a description of these movements, eventually leading to a portrait of the people gathered at Nostre-Dame de Serrance. The trajectory of their journey toward Nostre-Dame de Serrance allows the narrator to give the readers a portrait of the extent of land that is affected by natural disaster. Flooding not only engulfs the area of the Pyrenées where the *devisants* have gone to bathe, but offsets the normal course of events in that area, disrupting the tranquil setting and bringing about chaotic episodes. As the *devisants* attempt to regain footing in a *mise en scène* that overwhelms them, they show the capacity to navigate topographies that are difficult and unprecedented. Their movement through this chorographic space brings them together, suggesting a renewal of ties of community at a moment during which these ties are vulnerable.

The area that is affected by flood lies at the border between France and Spain, national boundaries that coincide with the topographic border of the mountain range. The origins of the *devisants*' community at these borders suggest the capacity for growth that comes from disruptive events, which reflect the analogous function of disruptions in discourse. Flooding blurs these geographic and political boundaries, anticipating the subsequent disruption of narrative boundaries that occurs throughout the text. Caunterets lies in the kingdom of Navarre, territory whose borders are the subject of dispute by two bitter enemies of sixteenth-century Europe, Charles V's Spain and François I's France, as Hampton points out: “The small, multilingual kingdom was a major pawn in territorial disputes between Charles and Francis and changed hands a number of times over the

²⁶ Lestringant describes these reliefs of the earth's surface as a defining feature of the quality of an extent of land (1993b, 52).

course of the century” (2001, 130). The effects of the flood reflect this political unrest, not only by the natural disaster illustrated, but by the behavior of certain individuals who break from solidarity in times of disaster, wishing to take advantage of this scene of destruction. Examples of such behavior include attempts to seek profit from travelers’ disorientation and avarice that contradicts guises of altruism or religious devotion. Such breaks in social harmony reflect the obstacles in the mountainous landscape that are amplified by natural disaster. While the irenic scene of “plusieurs personnes tant de France que d’Espagne” bathing together at Cauterets suggests political harmony,²⁷ the disruptive waters send these parties back toward their separated *patries*. The text follows these contrary movements in its illustration of the creation of communal geographic and literary space.

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The *qualitativim* of a complex landscape emerges from the *devisants*’ movements across the specified area of the Pyrenées. Their divergent paths reveal the contours of difficult ground. The enormity of the landscape dwarfs them as they negotiate the rising river, the irregular terrain, and the wild animals that they encounter. The first *devisante* introduced is Oisille, the eldest and wisest figure, “une dame vefve, de longue experience” (M 1943, 2; 1999, 78), who is determined to make a pilgrimage to Nostre-Dame de Serrance. Modeled after Louise de Savoie,²⁸ Oisille’s authority is linked to her wisdom and to her evangelical perspective, an aspect of her personality that motivates her

²⁷ Hampton describes the unity of the scene that is implied by people from both nations being at the baths, and then the separation that occurs along national lines when the floods begin (2001, 130).

²⁸ Louise de Savoie was the mother of Marguerite de Navarre (Davis 1978, 21).

to cross difficult and unrelenting terrain: “Et fait tant qu’elle y arriva, passant de si estranges lieux et si difficilles à monter et descendre que son aage et pesanteur ne la garderent poinct d’aller la pluspart du chemin à pied” (M 1943, 2; 1999, 79). Though her progress is laborious, her ability to complete the journey on foot reflects the manner in which her spirit allows her to overcome physical difficulties. The extent of disaster appears in the heights the flood reaches, to which eight of the other *devisants* react in fear: “congnoissans l’impossibilité du passage, furent en merveilleuse craincte” (M 1943, 4-5; 1999, 83). It further intensifies when the flooding almost kills another character. When Symontault, out of impatience and boredom, attempts to cross the river, he is so badly injured and weakened that he is no longer able to stand: “non sans boire beaucoup d’eau, se traynant à quatre piedz, saillit dehors sur les durs cailloux, tant las et foible qu’il ne se pouvoit soustenir” (M 1943, 5; 1999, 84). Beaten by the effects of the flood, the lone figure of Symontault barely survives his attempt to battle the effects of the menacing terrain. The tumult caused by intense flooding accelerates with the appearance of a wild bear, which chases two of the *devisantes*, Nomerfide and Ennasuite, down a mountain of Peyrehitte. Though they escape the bear, they lose their horses and attendants, as do several of their comrades.²⁹ The removal of sustaining parties in their entourage signals the losses that members of the party endure. The characters thus experience the extreme effects of a *locus terribilis* during their journey through a troubled landscape.

In this context of natural disaster, the *devisants* encounter individuals who take advantage of the *locus terribilis* to further their personal gains. These situations of

²⁹ Davis points out the losses suffered by the *devisants* in the preamble to their storytelling and their revealing reactions to such losses (1978, 17, 30, 34, 41).

adversity illustrate philosophical difficulties that disaster presents to the building of community. The parallels between threatening natural disaster and threatening human action suggest the “destructive autonomy” that Teodolinda Barolini attributes to unscrupulous individuals in Boccaccio’s plague-ridden Florence (1983, 522).

Boccaccio’s narrator paints a tableau of the disregard for social order that results from the plague: “... the laws of God and men had lost their authority and fallen into disrespect ...” (1993, 9). Like the dead and diseased bodies scattered over the landscape, social order becomes corrupted by the effects of plague. This causes individuals to abandon tradition, to ignore family ties, and to neglect rituals such as burial. Personal neglect extends to social neglect, as “there was scarcely a man who would take care of his neighbor” and, further, to the malicious behavior of those who seek profit from these weakening social ties, such as pallbearers who receive cash for negligible care of the dead (1993, 10-11). Malice in the *Heptaméron* appears in similar forms, as with individuals who house two of the *devisantes*, Parlamente and Longarine, along with their husbands, out of connivance rather than compassion. The behavior of such individuals illustrates the nefarious effects of this chorographic setting of chaos and disaster that embodies a *locus terribilis*.

As the *devisants* come across malicious behavior in characters who disregard social order, they show a tendency toward collective action, from which they benefit. Indeed, it is these collaborative efforts, often inspired by tradition, that allow them to survive moments of social discord. Both courtly and evangelical tradition inspire the charitable acts that allow the *devisants* to overcome adversity. Courtly tradition motivates two of the *devisants*, Dagoucine and Saffredent, to assist Parlamente, Longarine, and their

husbands when they are attacked in the night by those who profess to shelter them. Inspired by love for their *dames*, Dagoucin and Saffredent rush from nearby to assist them: “s’en allèrent secourir les dames pour lesquelles ilz estimoient la mort plus heureuse que la vie après elles” (M 1943, 3; 1999, 80). Though they are outnumbered, they fight so fervently that they are able to fend off the attackers. Evangelical tradition likewise inspires the group of *devisants* gathered at Saint-Savyn, when they assist Geburon in fighting off bandits who have attacked him in his sleep. When, having stunned one of his attackers, he comes running in his nightshirt into the chapel where they are gathered, they immediately join him in fighting off the bandits. Only afterward do they recognize him as one of the party at Cauterets. The spontaneity of their charitable gesture reveals an inclination toward acting as a collective body.

These collective efforts allow the *devisants* to arrive together as a group at Nostre-Dame de Serrance. There, they are greeted by an abbot whose unscrupulous disposition, “combien qu’il fut assez mauvais homme” (M 1943, 6; 1999, 85), stands in contrast with the Christian charity they themselves have shown toward each other. Wretched and hypocritical, the abbot refuses to contribute to the building of the bridge that the *devisants* initiate in order to assist others in returning home, and only receives them at the abbey out of fear of the local lord of Bearn, who holds them in high esteem. Faced with obstacles to arriving at their destination, the *devisants* persist in their collective journey, acting in good faith, and remaining inspired by traditions that attach honor to serving others and to acting collectively.

While struggling against disaster, the *devisants* are able to draw from examples of charitable behavior that they encounter. These moments of compassion within the context

of disaster illustrate the generative qualities of a *locus terribilis*. Symontault, who remains stranded on the banks of the river, survives death as a result of an encounter with a shepherd. While caring for him, the shepherd receives a traveling monk, who safely directs Symontault toward the abbey where he is able to join Oisille. The monks at Saint-Savyn also play a significant role in bringing the *devisants* together, as they give word of those who have already arrived at Nostre-Dame de Serrance to those who stop over, causing them “une joye inestimable” (M 1943, 5; 1999, 84). Recognizing Oisille and Symontault by name, eight of the *devisants* continue along the difficult path to Nostre-Dame de Serrance, where they are overcome with feelings of gratitude at finally joining their friends and experience an overwhelming joy: “La joye fut si grande en ceste compaignye miraculeusement assemblée” (M 1943, 6; 1999, 85). Their experience of being joined together seems to be a miraculous event in wake of the disaster that has occurred. Their empathy for one another and joy at being together strengthen the fraternal bonds that develop through their collective efforts to survive the flood. The guiding figures of the shepherd and monks act as signposts in the chaotic wilderness, signaling the role of familiar literary markers in the *devisants’ locus amœnus*.

The *devisants’* moment of union takes place at the chapel, indicating their Pauline approach to community as members of one collective body. The *devisants* affirm their bonds through prayer: “allerent oyr la messe et tous recepvoir le saint sacrement de unyon, auquel tous chrestiens sont uniz en ung ...” (ibid). This sacrament of union incorporates the journey of each *devisant* into a collective experience. Their gesture follows precepts expressed in Erasmus’ *Enchiridion militis christiani*, as the narrator speaks of maintaining a collective disposition toward the experiences of fellow

Christians: “Ce que Paul nomme ‘charité,’ c’est d’édifier son prochain, de les tenir tous pour membres d’un même corps, de les regarder tous comme un seul dans le Christ, de te réjouir dans le Seigneur du bonheur des autres comme du tien propre, de remédier à leurs malheurs comme si c’étaient tes malheurs.”³⁰ Like members of the Church, who treat others’ experiences as their own, the *devisants* view their individual paths through the Pyrenées as a common journey. This perspective allows them to brave the context of overwhelming disaster and brings them great joy at seeing one another. Acting as one body, approaching their experiences as one journey, they show a desire to congregate in a space that allows them to exchange tales and to appropriate one another’s experiences. In this way, their commiseration leads to the establishment of community following a sequence of events that threatens to break communal ties.

The collective response of the *devisants* to their situation shows a completion of the portrait of landscape that the narrator has drawn, in his description of the swelling and subsiding of the waters of the Pyrenées mountains. The joy that the *devisants* experience through communion signals the correlation between individual and collective happiness. The synonymous happiness of individuals and their community appears in Marguerite’s narrator’s description of the *devisants*’ joy at hearing word of one another, a joy that only increases when they meet at the abbey. Their prolific expressions of gratitude culminate in acknowledgement of the grace of God while they are at mass. Attributing their fortune to divine power, they designate their safe journey as an example of a miraculous event, one that merits a night spent in praising God. Ecstatic at their union, they are motivated to engage in communal endeavors. This allows them to act constructively when they have experienced destruction and witnessed dishonorable acts. Their first communal decision

³⁰ Erasmus refers to I Cor 8:1; Rom 12:4; 1 Cor 12:12, 26 (1992, 584, n. 3).

is to have a bridge made to replace the one that has been washed away (M 1943, 1; 1999, 77). The second is to find a common activity.

II.ii Common Discourse

The *devisants* set out to find an activity that will engage all ten members of the party gathered at Nostre-Dame de Serrance and that will be distracting, entertaining, and edifying. Their search for a constructive activity indicates a unity of spirit that complements their common physical situation as occupants of the abbey. This unity of spirit is conducive to a charitable approach to their varied components of discourse, inspiring interpretation *in bonam partem*. Parlamente, who is described as being “jamays oisifve ne melencolicque” (M 1943, 6; 1999, 86), recognizes the importance of finding an occupation to which each member of the group can contribute.³¹ She appeals to Oisille, the eldest and wisest of the company, to suggest a pastime: “Madame, je m’esbahys que vous qui avez tant d’experience et qui maintenant à nous, femmes, tenez lieu de mere, ne regardez quelque passetemps pour adoucir l’ennuy que nous porterons durant notre longue demeure; car, si nous n’avons quelque occupation plaisante et vertueuse, nous sommes en dangier de demeurer malades” (M 1943, 6-7; 1999, 86). Parlamente recognizes Oisille’s wisdom and experience, designating her as a motherly figure for the company, and sees her as a role model for the women who are present.

Oisille takes on the role of spiritual guide for all of the company gathered at Notre Dame

³¹ Parlamente is often described as being based on Marguerite herself (Davis 1978, 23); Maclean notes that Marguerite was one of the few women to speak in metaphysical terms during the Renaissance, a trait for which she was criticized (1980, 64).

de Serrance reflecting, in this religious venue, the figure of Mary, the mother of Christ. It is she who reads Scripture to them each morning during the duration of their stay, marking the spiritual union that they have received at mass upon their arrival. She even suggests that they spend the entire day engaged in “la lecture des saintes lettres en laquelle se trouve la vraie et parfaicte joie de l’esprit, dont procede le repos et la santé du corps” (M 1943, 7; 1999, 87). Although this does not become their primary occupation, they begin their days with readings from Scripture that Oisille selects. These readings are integrated into the structure of their days, a counterpart to the activity that takes place outside the walls of the abbey.

Instead of being a passive audience for Scriptural readings, the *devisants* choose to exchange tales based on observed events. Guided by themes that they select at the beginning of each day, they build upon traditional topoi in the manner of the trilingual inscriptions in Erasmus’ *Convivium*, referring to courtly, classical, and Scriptural themes while relating as accurately as possible events that they have witnessed. This exchange takes place in a pastoral setting, at a distance from the abbey, in a “beau pré, le long de la riviere du Gave, où les arbres sont si foillez que le soleil ne scauroit percer l’ombre ny eschauffer la frescheur” (M 1943, 10; 1999, 91). The peaceful, lush place where the *devisants* gather generates goodwill and encourages contemplative dialogue. Removed from everyday life and even from the abbey where they spend their mornings and evenings, it gives the *devisants* perspective on the events in which they take part. This intimate space of dialogue stands in contrast to the vast space of epic adventure that characterizes their journey to the abbey.

The moment at which Parlamente begins to speak initiates a transition from one authoritative voice to another and establishes the type of narrative that will occur in this space.³² As the narrator's voice fades away, the *devisants'* voices take over, both in the tales that they recount and in the commentary that they give at the conclusion of the tales. This shift of narrative voices builds upon this same use of dialogue in the *Decameron*, their commentary taking on an even greater role in their storytelling. Narrative authority passes from one *devisant* to another, returning at the beginning and end of each day to the narrator. The narrator in turn has taken up the voice of Boccaccio's narrator, the principal textual reference for narrator and *devisants* alike.

The pastoral setting of the *devisants'* "beau pré" recalls the *mise en scène* of the villa to which Boccaccio's *brigata* retire when they leave Florence: "The place was set back a little from every main road and occupied a knoll; its variegated shrubs and leafy greenery were a pleasure to the eye" (1993, 19-20). The similarities between the space occupied by the *brigata* and the banks of the Gave River assure the *devisants* that the context for their own conversation will be fruitful and strengthen the communal ties that their arrival at Nostre-Dame de Serrance has affirmed. The inspiration that comes from a pastoral setting arises as a literary motif in other Renaissance works, such as the *Convivium religiosum*, in which Eusebius describes the benefits of conversing in the pastoral setting of his villa: "[L]oin d'être muette, la nature toute entière parle et enseigne beaucoup à l'homme qui la contemple, s'il est attentif et se laisse instruire" (E 1992, 222-3). This description, which occurs in the opening passage of the *Convivium*, illustrates the relationship between camaraderie and discourse that unfolds at Eusebius's

³² Jeanneret describes this moment of change from one authoritative voice to another (in Bauschatz 1993, 105).

villa.³³ The villa reveals nature's edifying role, its mimetic *trompe l'œil* on the walls of the gardens recalling proverbial statements and reflecting descriptions from works of antiquity. Like Eusebius and his friends, the *devisants* experience the relationship between nature and discourse as they approach their pastoral space, a space that recalls descriptions in older texts.

The space that is designated for the *devisants*' storytelling is emblematic of its occupants, being harmonious, egalitarian, peaceful, and contemplative. Within this space, the *devisants* adopt a conversational style that is distinct from that of the narrator and that suits the intimate space in which they converse. Reflecting the simpler, pastoral setting in which they relate tales, the *devisants* prefer a simpler mode of discourse that reflects the pastoral register of language illustrated by Virgil's Wheel, the *Rota Virgilii*. Reflecting the three stages of writing that characterize Virgil's works, this rhetorical model distinguishes epic, didactic, and pastoral uses of language that reflect elevated, intermediate, and common styles of speech.³⁴ The *devisants*' discourse evokes this Virgilian model through the use of conversational language, punctuated by frequent references to literary topoi, which include heroic courtly themes as well as pedestrian subjects drawn from everyday life. The *devisants*' intention of assuaging the difficulties of disaster through storytelling also indicates an instructive use of discourse. In this way, all three registers of the *Rota Virgilii* become integrated into discourse in the *locus amœnus*.

³³ Eden refers to this moment as an example of the manner in which camaraderie is related to discourse (1998, 415-16).

³⁴ Tarette describes the manner in which the different scales of representation of landscape reflect the various uses of epic, didactic, and pastoral registers of language (2005).

Though the *devisants* state their preference for the simpler pastoral style, they eventually experience breaks from this form, as certain narratives draw upon epic and didactic forms. Like descriptive techniques that reflect different views of landscape, the *devisants*' discourse is also shaped by the subject, the tone of the narrative, and the traditions that these narratives recall. This suggests a departure from form – the oral mode that the *devisants* have chosen – while at the same time revealing a respect for decorum, which Aristotle applies to the narration of comic and tragic genres in the *Poetics*.³⁵ This passage between different registers of narrative, as the *devisants* relate both comic and tragic events from their everyday lives, places discourse in a liminal space, between formal and conversational forms, one that resembles the liminal space of the meadow by the Gave river.³⁶ Variations in rhetorical forms suggest a “tournant entre colloque scolaire et colloque familial,” a position that Kushner attributes to the 1522 edition of the *Colloquies* (1988, 35), in which introductory pages of the *Convivium religiosum* appear (Ryan 1978, 1). At the threshold of different rhetorical registers, the *devisants*' discourse reflects an appropriation of texts similar to that which occurs in other writings, such as those of Boccaccio and Erasmus. The exchange in which the *devisants* engage thus follows deviations in theme and form in a manner that is parallel to the paths they take across the irregular terrain of the Pyrenées mountains. Their charitable approach to such deviations contributes to their collective discourse.

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³⁵ Aristotle describes the appropriate registers of language for comic and tragic genres; Horace also discusses registers that correspond to subject matter in the *Ars Poetica*; see Eden on decorum and its accommodative uses (1997, 26-8).

³⁶ Potter describes this liminal space as characteristic of the context for the conversation of Boccaccio's *brigata* (1982, 95).

The activity of storytelling assumes an edifying role among the *devisants*, as it distracts them from the aftermath of the flood and lifts their spirits. Having just lost her husband, Longarine reminds the party that they are still vulnerable to the distress and tragedy that has occurred: “Mais, qui pis est, nous deviendrons fascheuses, qui est une maladie incurable; car il n’y a nul ne nulle de nous, si regarde à sa perte, qu’il n’ayt occasion d’extreme tristesse” (M 1943, 7; 1999, 86). Her reference to the condition of being “fascheuses,” a term associated with melancholy,³⁷ recalls the dangers of melancholy that Boccaccio’s narrator points out in his proem. In the proem, the narrator specifically dedicates his work to women in love, as he finds them particularly susceptible to melancholic conditions that are brought about by idleness. Since women spend the majority of their time within the confines of their chambers, they lack recourse to the physical activities of hunting and sports that distract men. They are, as a result, more likely to fall into idle states of melancholic reverie: “And if Love’s craving leaves their thoughts tinged with sadness, they are condemned to remain gloomy unless such thoughts are driven out by some fresh distraction” (Boccaccio 1993, 4). The *devisants*, in their present state, are in a similar position to that of Boccaccio’s women, occupying a secluded space and being far away from the distractions of courtly life. There is not one of them, Longarine indicates, “nulle ne nulle,” neither the men nor the women, who has not felt the effects of the current disaster. The activity of recounting tales mimes participation in the activities of courtly life, thereby providing an occupation that alleviates distress and that serves the same purpose as Boccaccio’s tales. The equal distribution of gender among the *devisants*, which distinguishes them from the female

³⁷ Mathieu-Castellani describes the relationship between the terms “fascheux” and “mélancolique” (M 1999, 86 n. 5).

majority of the *brigata*, indicates the equal effects of melancholy on all members of community.

Storytelling also functions as a means of actively engaging participants. Rather than simply reading passages from Scripture, Oisille's initial suggestion for the passing of their hours at Nostre-Dame de Serrance, the exchange of tales based on witnessed events, provides stimulus for individuals who are susceptible to the ravages of ennui. Hircan's resistance to Oisille's suggestion draws attention to the effectiveness of physical activity as a means of alleviating distress: "mais si fault il que vous regardez que nous sommes encore si mortiffiez qu'il nous fault quelque pasetemps et exercice corporel" (M 1943, 8; 1999, 86). His objection to spending the entire day reading Scripture is founded on the idea that passive listening is not sufficient to alleviate idleness and melancholy. Instead, he favors more active pursuits. He mentions the benefits of physical activity, citing hunting, hawking, needlework, and dancing as remedies to ennui, in a manner that recalls the distractions from melancholy described in Boccaccio's proem. At one moment, Hircan even alludes to sexual activity, though this is not, as his wife points out, an activity that is "commun à tous." What she feels is relevant to the entire group, in their communal setting, is an activity that will engage all ten. She thus proposes to continue the project of creating a French version of the *Decameron*, begun by the Dauphin, the Dauphine, and Marguerite herself. Their tales will complement Oisille's daily readings of Scripture.

Storytelling in the *locus amœnus* distinguishes itself from Scriptural readings in the chapel by its reliance on empirical knowledge and by its use of conversational language to convey these observed events. While the *devisants* do refer to a literary

model in order to structure their conversation, this text is relatively recent fictional narrative written in vernacular language rather than Asiatic discourse from a distant era. Following the Dauphin, the Dauphine, and Marguerite's wish to remain true to individual experience, the *devisants* agree to follow the paradigm of tales based on "real" events, "de n'escrivre nulle nouvelle qui ne soit veritable histoire" (M 1943, 9; 1999, 90). This represents a departure from discussion that is purely text-based and sets forth the use of discourse as a response to present circumstance. The presentation of narratives in conversational form further allows each *devisant* a distinct contribution to the conversation. The polyphonic voices of conversation, which express different points of view and different traditions to which the members of the party adhere, show the varying temperaments of the *devisants*. Their narratives, in turn, reveal their various tones of voice.³⁸ In this manner, the individual novellas place an emphasis on vernacular sources for discussion based on empirical knowledge.

The *devisants*' preference for conversational language over literary language reflects the novella form that their narratives take on in the text. Such language facilitates breaks from literary structures that inform their exchange. A literary genre that develops with the appearance of the *Heptaméron* (following Boccaccio), the novella also appears in older texts such as the *Cent nouvelles nouvelles* of the mid-fifteenth century.³⁹ Prior uses of the novella form set precedents for the deviations in which the *devisants* engage as they incorporate traditional topoi into their everyday discussion. The term "nouvelle,"

³⁸ Jeanneret discusses the manner in which the *Heptaméron* reveals the *devisants*' various personalities (1993, 98); Diffley discusses the distinct voices that appear with each character (1995, 354).

³⁹ See Cazauran on the role of the *Heptaméron* in the development of the novella form, following Boccaccio (1996, 884); see Mathieu-Castellani on the influence of the *Cent nouvelles nouvelles* on the *Heptaméron*, the former also being narrated by different members of the court (1992, 10); Jeanneret attributes the *Cent nouvelles nouvelles* to Philippe de Vigneulles, placing its completion between the years 1505-15 (1993, 97).

which appears to be in common use as early as the twelfth century,⁴⁰ offers diverse uses that are related to the *devisants*' manner of relating tales. Its connotation of "news" points to the role of the storyteller as witness to the events of the narrative, as Parlamente suggests: "là, assiz à nos aises, dira chascun quelque histoire qu'il aura veue ou bien ouy dire à quelque homme digne de foy" (M 1943, 10; 1999, 91).⁴¹ It further evokes a code of authenticity, underscored by the presence of the storyteller at the scene of action, that distinguishes it from its literary counterparts (Mathieu-Castellani 1992, 20-21). The storyteller's position as the direct source of information brings up the temporal implications related to the term "nouvelle," suggesting the idea of newness. The *devisants*' narratives thus convey the impression of contemporary events that are related to their everyday lives.

The use of quotidian anecdotes as a heuristic device suggests the ethical implications of conversational language. This aspect of the *devisants*' discourse relies on the accuracy of conversational language to convey empirical knowledge. Set forth as the most suitable manner of relating personal experience, the oral mode assumes the role of representing "le monde vécu, les 'realia' de la société contemporaine," thereby setting it apart from the " 'vieux roman français,' paradigme de la prose narrative de fiction" (Mathieu-Castellani 1992, 8). These "real" events emphasize the ethical uses of narrative over the aesthetic, the desire to represent events without obscuring them by elegant,

⁴⁰ Cazauran describes origins and uses of the term, "nouvelle" (1996, 884).

⁴¹ Mathieu-Castellani describes the emphasis on storytellers as observers of the events that they relate as a distinctive aspect of the novella form (M 1999, 91, n. 4); Duval emphasizes the term "nouvelle" as expressing the idea of news or the report of anything new and refers to Godefroy and Huguët, while he takes issue with the idea of the word "nouvelle" being a French reflection of the Italian "novella" (1993, 241).

literary language.⁴² Reflecting a world that is familiar to the storyteller, this use of discourse is set forth as a means of gaining perspective on events that shape their everyday lives. In this way, the *devisants*' rhetorical choice suggests a higher purpose related to the act of storytelling: "le but poursuivi n'est pas ici de remémorer le réel, mais de le faire servir à un autre usage" (Dubois 1980, 156). Their equal participation in storytelling and their conversational style encourages an inclusive discourse that develops by the contributions of each member of the group. Their use of conversation as a means of gaining insight reflects their collaborative efforts in the construction of narrative space. It also illustrates rhetorical techniques of speech, such as those described in the *Courtier* on improving, varying, and refining conversation (Jeanneret 1993, 91). Using inclusive, everyday language, the *devisants*' tales take on an edifying role in the *locus amœnus* that complements the instructive Scriptural readings that take place in the chapel.

Conversation, while edifying, also liberates interlocutors from the constraints of rhetoric that are linked to writing. Instead of following a trajectory that is established in advance, conversation allows discourse to develop according to a "liberté de parole" (Mathieu-Castellani 1992, 21). Rhetoric of the court gives way to spontaneous conversation in a setting that is removed from artificial hierarchy. As the *devisants* interchange roles between authoritative speaker and receptive listener, they blur the boundaries of rhetorical hierarchy (Bauschatz 1993, 105). Distanced from rhetorical flourishes, "de peur que la beaulté de la rethoricque fait tort en quelque partye à la verité de l'histoire" (M 1943, 9; 1999, 90), conversation becomes animated by personal knowledge of events. Guided by inspiration, the *devisants* speak spontaneously,

⁴² Mathieu-Castellani describes the use of examples of behavior set forth in the novellas for didactic purposes (1992, 18).

illustrating “a maximum reduction of aesthetic resistance to the supernatural energy of grace” (Cave 1979, 151). Such language implies discourse that seems inspired by an exterior source that is then channeled through the voice of the storyteller. Like the literary figures before them who are inspired by the pastoral settings of conversation, the *devisants* react to their immediate surroundings, draw upon personal experience, and build upon the comments that the others make. Inspiration to speak thus develops from their immediate environment.

The spontaneity of their discourse reveals the ludic character of their speech, an aspect that guides both the storytellers and the tales that they tell. This departure from the rigidity of discourse reflects the novella’s departure from the rigidity of textual form, recalling Jeanneret’s observation that the modular structures that came into prominence during the Renaissance allowed passages to be approached separately, or in tandem with commentary, thereby dramatizing a story’s reception and problematizing it (1993, 92). This modular structure also recalls the movement of Erasmus’ adage on friendship to its position of prominence at the front of his 1508 edition of the *Adages*.⁴³ In keeping with the fluid turns in the *devisants*’ conversation, Symontault suddenly becomes the first tale-teller in the *locus amœnus* as a result of being the first to speak up. Designating his enthusiasm as grounds for this introductory role, Hircan indicates that “au jeu nous sommes tous esgaulx” (M 1943, 10; 1999, 92). As the *devisants* dismiss the façade of the court, they initiate the banter that will reverse its hierarchies, rhetoric that will itself be overturned by deviations in speech. Symontault responds to Hircan, beginning his narrative after embarrassing his *dame*, Parlamente, with an allusion to his unrequited

⁴³ Eden describes significance of moving this proverb from the middle of his 1500 publication of adages in the *Collectanea* to the initial position in the fuller *Adagiorum chiliades*, published in 1508 (2001, 25-6).

desires. Channeling these into discourse, Symontault embarks on a tale that illustrates the interactions of a woman with several lovers, exchanges between characters that reflect experiences that occur at court and in the cloister. As the *devisants* draw upon various sources that shape their individual experiences, they incorporate old texts, historic events, and immediate knowledge into conversation that develops in the *locus amœnus*.

III. COMMON GROUND

The prologue to the *Tiers Livre* sets forth images of “lieux communs” that, like those in the *Heptaméron*, arise in chorographic descriptions. These chorographic descriptions form from narratives offered as mediating interpretive space. Rather than plunging individuals into wild terrain, as in the *Heptaméron*, such descriptions in the *Tiers Livre* paint a cityscape, showing movements within political boundaries, marked off by city walls. Members of the literary audience are able to situate these walls on a political map, relating the figures and forms to literary narratives with which they are familiar. Their approach to the text reflects a common interest in exploring these figures and forms, inspired by common social and interpretive bonds that are characteristic of charity.

The prologue begins with a direct address to the readers, as the narrator asks them to recall the figure of Diogenes, the Cynic at Corinth. Confident that his readers possess qualities of sight, of reasoning, and of retaining in memory the events of classical history, the narrator begins his account of Diogenes rolling his barrel at the outer reaches of Corinth during preparations for siege. The account is familiar to the literary audience, who recognizes it from Lucian’s *How to Write History* and also recognizes Diogenes as the historical founder of Cynic philosophy.⁴⁴ The *mise en scène* is also familiar, as a city-state located on the Isthmus of Corinth, with historical and literary associations linked to its geographic position. Corinth occupies a prominent geographic position, linked to its strategic location just south of the narrow isthmus joining the Peloponnesus to the rest of

⁴⁴ Duval points out the familiarity of Lucian’s *How to Write History* to literate readers of the 1530’s and 40’s (1997, 18).

Greece, which consequently gives it control over trade and travel by land and sea.⁴⁵ Strategically situated, with harbors looking toward Asia and Italy, as Erasmus mentions in the *Adages*,⁴⁶ Corinth assumes the cosmopolitan character of a place of encounter. The presence of Corinth in the *Adages* indicates its significance in a literary corpus extending to antiquity and including works such as Horace's *Epistles*.⁴⁷ Corinth is also prominent in Scripture, as the location of the community that Paul addresses in his appeal for Christians to act as a body politic.⁴⁸ Corinth's geographically crucial position at the center of travel and trade routes signals its analogous role in literary narrative as a place of encounter, bringing up its rich literary tradition as well as the polemics of maintaining a collective identity. Whereas Corinth inspires an abundance of literary references, reflecting the benefits brought to the city through travel and trade, such a transitory space sets forth difficulties of acting collectively. This issue is addressed in Rabelais's prologue, as the narrator portrays a scene of political conflict, a reversal of collective movement, a seemingly dissonant individual figure, and an amalgamation of incongruous objects that fill the city of Corinth. As the narrator describes the scene of Diogenes rolling his barrel at Corinth, he sets forth notions of building a "lieu commun" for readers who encounter a variety of textual figures and forms.

The scene alludes to the historical moment during which the narrator writes and reveals the relationship between movements of war and the act of writing. The situation of political conflict between Corinth and King Philip's Macedonian army recalls the position of France during the Renaissance, at a moment that coincides with the

⁴⁵ ISBE, s.v. "Corinth."

⁴⁶ Erasmus cites Strabo's *Geography* (CWE 33, 317).

⁴⁷ E cites Horace (CWE 33, 318).

⁴⁸ This is illustrated in I Cor 1:12-27.

establishment of defensive measures against the Ottoman Empire and that precedes the Religious Wars.⁴⁹ The Corinthians' preparations for siege also recall the defenses built up in Paris in 1536 against the Imperials under the direction of Cardinal du Bellay and the defensive measures of 1544 after the seizure of Saint-Dizier by Charles Quint.⁵⁰ This politically charged atmosphere of the sixteenth century France extends to writing, as measures are taken against the publication of certain texts. Rabelais's works fall subject to such censorship, being condemned by the Sorbonne in 1543 (R 1995, ii). His 1546 text, appearing after a disproportionate chronological lapse, alludes to such political events that have affected writing at this historical moment.⁵¹ The prologue, in a pastiche of Lucian's writing, alludes to contemporary political events while at the same time evoking Lucian's preoccupation with the problem of writing good historical narrative (Duval 1997, 19-20). As it sets forth similar issues of writing that confront the literary communities of Renaissance France, the scene of encounter raises the question of appropriating prior texts into current narratives. Such issues involve appropriating vernaculars – both written and spoken – into writing inspired by philosophical ideas that date from antiquity.⁵² As the 1546 prologue situates the scene at Corinth within a familiar literary corpus, it offers the text as a “lieu commun.”

As a mediating space for the designated literary community, the text relies on recognizable figures to draw in the literary audience. At the same time, the text subverts these figures by forms of writing that are strange and unfamiliar: “Unlike the *Pantagruel*,

⁴⁹ See Hampton for a description of the political unrest that comes from conflict with the Ottoman Empire (1993, 61); wars between Catholics and Huguenots occurred between 1562 and 1598.

⁵⁰ Mathieu-Castellani describes these events (M 1999, 346 n. 5).

⁵¹ Huchon describes these events (R 1994, 350, n. 5) and see “Privilege du Roy,” (R 1994, 343).

⁵² Cave refers to the manner in which Erasmus lays out the problem of writing Latin in a cultural and social environment radically different from that of Cicero or Quintilian in his *De duplici copia verorum ac rerum* (1979, 8).

the sequel conforms to no known epic pattern, nor indeed to any recognizable narrative model” (Duval 1997, 15). Encouraging readers to continue reading, even at moments that are visually or conceptually disturbing, the text appeals to a sense of *familiaritas* that comes from recognition of established literary figures.⁵³ As in the prologue to Rabelais’s 1534 work, which the narrator recalls in his initial address to the readers, his “Beuveurs tresillustres,” the text offers figures that indicate a manner of approaching the text.⁵⁴ Designating his readers as tipplers, and drawing upon the image of the cornucopia, the “vray Cornucopie de joyeuseté et raillerie” (R 1994, 352; 1995, 29), the narrator suggests a coincidence between the communal setting of a symposium and the act of writing, which he reiterates throughout the prologue. This coincidence further suggests the communal gathering of the earliest Christians at the *koinonia*, the sacred meal whose term is also used to designate community.⁵⁵ As the text continually incorporates familiar literary figures into its bizarre forms, the designated space reveals a manner of appropriating older texts, thereby creating a mediating “lieu littéraire.” The current text avidly produces figures and forms that respond to these older texts: “The literary work as *locus amœnus*, as a place of plenty, always exceeds the rewriting of any part of its content” (Cave 1979, 176). As the *locus terribilis* of war transforms into a *locus amœnus* of literary communion, the text takes on the role of an interpretive space that encourages participation of members of a literary community.

⁵³ See n. 16.

⁵⁴ The prologue to Book I opens with the following: “Beuveurs tresillustres et vous Verolez tresprecieux (car à vous non à aultres sont dediez mes escriptz) Alcibiades ou dialogue de Platon intitulé, *La bancquet*, louant son precepteur Socrates, sans controverse prince des philosophes : entre aultres parolles le dict estre semblable es Silenes” (R 1994, 5).

⁵⁵ Eden describes *koinonia* as the ritual meal that encourages *amicitia* between Christ and followers, a relationship that is expressed in Erasmian colloquy (1998, 409); the ISBE describes the *koinonia* as a sacred meal from which the *agape*, or “love-feast,” developed (s.v. “Agape”).

III.i The Walls of Corinth

In the opening line of the prologue to the *Tiers Livre*, the narrator addresses his literary audience: “Bonnes gens, buveurs tresillustres et vous goutteux tresprecieux” (R 1994, 345; 1995, 13). He appeals to the members of his literary audience as a community that is linked by cultural and literary narratives, alluding to their common national identity and referring to knowledge of a corpus of literature. Offering his audience a chorographic portrait of the city of Corinth, he initiates discourse on interpretive issues linked to the appropriation of such figures in writing that takes on anomalous forms. As he welcomes readers to approach his text, he recalls the opening lines of the 1535 prologue: “Beuveurs tresillustres, et vous Verolez tresprecieux,”⁵⁶ appealing to their familiarity with the chronicles of the life of Pantagruel. Proceeding with his present text, he introduces Diogenes as another familiar literary figure: “veistez vous oncques Diogenes, le philosophe Cynic?” (ibid) and indicates the common national identity of readers who are “Tous du sang de Phrygie extraictz” (R 1994, 345; 1995, 15). This reference to the mythic Trojan origins of the Franks allows him to draw parallels between classical Corinth and contemporary France. His chorographic view of the city of Corinth sets forth a political dilemma that mirrors the current situation of France, whose political borders are susceptible to attack and whose national identity is vulnerable to untenable national boundaries. As the narrator mimetically records the movements of the

⁵⁶ The 1535 prologue opens: “Beuveurs tresillustres, et vous Verolez tresprecieux (car à vous non à aultres sont dediez mes escriptz) Alcibiades ou dialogue de Platon intitulé, *Le banquet*, louant son precepteur Socrates, sans controverse prince des philosophes: entre aultre parolles le dict estre semblable es Silenes” (R 1994, 5).

Corinthians and of Diogenes, he brings up similar issues in writing, which is also under the strain of converging cultural narratives and linguistic shifts. Appropriating this image into the polemics of writing text, the narrator creates an interpretive space that he offers to a community of readers who are affected by such narratives.

The narrator gives his literary audience a portrait of Corinth in a mimetic description of the terrain, beginning with a view of the city on a small scale, “à petite échelle,” which gradually transforms into a large-scale view, “à grande échelle.” This transformation delineates the geographic space occupied by the Corinthians, showing its political boundaries, proceeding to a cityscape, and continuing to a more detailed view of the Corinthians’ movements within the space that they inhabit. Their measures against a Macedonian offensive illustrate the movements of the Corinthians as a collective body, which are interpreted by one figure, Diogenes, who stands apart.

As the narrator’s description of Corinth becomes a view “à grande échelle,” it reveals movements in two opposing directions. One is the movement to the outer edges of the city on the part of the inhabitants while the other is a movement inward, given by the perspective of the narrator, which suggests the centripetal structure of the text.⁵⁷ The contrasting movements show a fortification of boundaries that set off a particular space while revealing the internal characteristics of the city. The centrifugal movement of the Corinthians to the outer limits of the city reinforces their political borders as they face violation of the territory that they occupy.⁵⁸ The narrator lists their defensive measures, beginning with munitions stocked at the walls of the city and then progressing to a view within the city walls, as the Corinthians prepare their domiciles for siege. The scene

⁵⁷ See Duval’s diagrams that illustrate this centripetal structure of the *Tiers Livre* (1997, 113-15).

⁵⁸ Frank Lestringant points out this movement in his comparison of the *Tiers Livre* with the work of Noël de Fail, the *Baliverneries d’Eutrapel*, chapter III (1993a, 443).

illustrates the reinforcement of the city's boundaries, catalyzed by the threat of impending destructive measures of an external force. These reinforcements come about as a result of movements of the Corinthians, recorded in detail by the narrator, who progressively describes the actions that take place behind the city walls. The narrator's description thus reverses the movement of the Corinthians, following a centripetal movement toward the interior of the city.

The series of actions in which the Corinthians engage are matched by the variety of objects that they use to reinforce their common space. These objects suggest polemics related to building communal structures. Contributing to the varied characteristics of the cityscape that the narrator illustrates, the collection of objects presents the literary audience with chronologically dissonant figures and forms. The lists of munitions give a portrait of an area that is laden with antiquated objects that are, as Rigolot notes, as anachronistic for the Corinthians as for the narrator's literary audience (1996, 100). Such discord suggests chronological encounters introduced by references to prior texts that accompany the incorporation of various narratives into the current chronicle. The incongruity between the munitions and the particular *mise en scène* at Corinth also recalls the confusion of battle tactics of different eras that appear in scenes of the *Iliad*.⁵⁹ In addition, the heaviness of the Corinthians' antiquated munitions, reflected by the cumbersome lists in which they appear, contributes to the grotesque style of the passage, which stands in contrast to the serious subject of siege (Rigolot 1996, 100). These objects are, in the end, unnecessary, since King Philip never intends to attack the Corinthians, who are themselves too accustomed to luxuriousness to provide serious defenses (Duval

⁵⁹ Edward Luttwak describes the "impossible coexistence of archaic chariots with the hoplite phalanx" in Homer's *Iliad* (2012).

1997, 17). The flustered activity of this *mise en scène* suggests a crisis of national identity that emanates from an obscure source. The conglomeration of chronologically diverse military defenses signals the inclusion of older literary references in writings that treat contemporary issues. While potentially confounding, the Corinthians' fervent preparations reveal, on the other hand, an earnest engagement in community that reinforces the boundaries of common space. Their use of antiquated objects for their current dilemma points to their city as a mediating space.

In the midst of this activity, the narrator identifies Diogenes, who stands out from the anonymous figures of the Corinthians (Rigolot 1996, 100). Playing a singular role within the body politic of Corinth, he assumes a stance that is both familiar and enigmatic, being a literary figure himself and performing actions that are puzzling in the context of the Corinthians' efforts against siege. Diogenes is as fervent as his counterparts in maintaining the borders of Corinth, yet his actions neither blend into his compatriots' centrifugal movements nor reflect the narrator's centripetal path toward the center of the city. After surveying the scene of fortification, Diogenes takes the barrel in which he resides and agitates it in as prolific a manner as that of his compatriots when stocking munitions. Displacing his abode, he rolls it down an esplanade, pushing past the city limits, and proceeding to Cranion Hill, where he rolls it up and down in an action that recalls the myth of Sisyphus, the first king of Corinth: "le [tonneau] devalloit de mont à val et præcipitoit par le Cranie, puy de val en mont le rapportoit comme Sisyphus faict sa pierre" (R 1994, 348; 1995, 19). His tub rolling seems as futile and unnecessary as the actions of the Corinthians and of Sisyphus, his predecessor at Cranion Hill. As he mimes his compatriots' preparations, he recalls the ancient figure associated

with the landscape, while deviating from the collective activity that distinguishes the *mise en scène*.

The narrator then draws a parallel between Diogenes' actions and his own writing, giving him a role that Floyd Gray has described as "a kind of Diogenes with a pen."⁶⁰ His perplexing writing reflects Diogenes' singular behavior, each possessing qualities as varied and puzzling as the Corinthians' munitions. Assuming this Diogenic role, the narrator places himself in the context of his own nation, where "un chascun aujourd'huy soy instantement exercer et travailler, part à la fortification de sa patrie et la defendre, part au repoulement des ennemis et les offendre" (R 1994, 348; 1995, 21). Contributing to nation building in as obscure a way as Diogenes' tub rolling, the narrator offers his literary audience a series of anecdotes that seem incongruous and chronologically dissonant. His manner of appropriating classical literary figures into the text reflects the *mise en scène* at Corinth, where individuals who share a national identity appropriate antiquated objects into their current political conflict. Like Diogenes, the narrator incorporates Lucian's anecdote into his own text, which he vigorously writes, giving his literary audience prolific variations on the theme of encounter. These themes are anticipated by the lengthy lists with which he records in detail the actions of the Corinthians and Diogenes. In this way, the narrator offers his readers a text that incorporates classical figures into writing that deviates from familiar forms.

As he agitates his Diogenic pen, the narrator offers his text as a manner of participating in the creation of a "lieu commun": "Prins ce choys et election, ay pensé ne faire exercice inutile et importun, si je remuois mon tonneau Diogenic, qui seul m'est

⁶⁰ In his description of the contrasting lexical aspects of R's prologue, Rigolot refers to Gray's description from his seminal article on the 1546 prologue as an emblem for reading the text (1996, 101).

resté du naufrage fait par le passé on far de Mal'encontre" (R 1994, 349; 1995, 23). He recognizes that his desire to contribute to building a "lieu commun" as a chronicler of events may be offset by his Diogenic writing. Like the wreckage to which he alludes, his discourse may resemble a conglomeration of the vestiges of old texts. His writing, like Diogenes' tub rolling, sets him apart from other chroniclers of contemporary France, a break that indicates "a subtle but unmistakable signal that this sequel to the history of Pantagruel acknowledges, but deliberately ignores, the rules of writing good history" (Duval 1997, 20). Assuming his Diogenic role with regard to the literary corpus, the narrator not only disregards established methods of writing historical accounts, but breaks from familiar forms of writing (Duval 1997, 15). The older narratives, whose author is designated as Alcofribas Nasier, an anagram of François Rabelais, take on epic forms that relate a chronology of the lives of the heroes. The 1546 narrative, by contrast, unfolds through events that are digressive and anecdotal, and that develop within the text's centripetal frame (see above). The narrator, in Diogenic fashion, takes on a deviant role with regard to the literary corpus.

Deviations in the prologue anticipate similar turns in the main narrative, illustrating the way in which digressive language, which may appear cumbersome and repetitive, develops the narrative in new and unanticipated ways. Diogenes' actions with his barrel prepare the literary audience for the repetitive discourse that will arise in Panurge's search for an answer to his conjugal questions: "The quest and the book, like Diogenes' pantomime, appear perfectly Sisyphus-like in their pointlessness, repetitiveness, endlessness, and infinite futility" (Duval 1997, 17). The prologue signals the circular path of a narrative that, like the Sisyphus figure condemned to incessantly

roll a boulder up a hill, will trace and retrace its steps toward an elusive message. In deviating from the rules of writing established in Lucian's text, the prologue recalls classical sources of the images that he sets forth. Evoking the comically tragic writing of *How to Write History*, as well as the digressive anecdotes that appear in the *Histories*,⁶¹ the current text becomes an amalgamation of scenes of encounter. In the manner of Lucian and of Herodotus, his mimetic writing records observed events, all the while recalling ancient myths and traditions. In this way, deviations in the narrative contribute to establishing a "lieu commun."⁶²

Through use of these digressive and anecdotal forms that fold back on themselves, the text illustrates a manner of incorporating old texts into a "lieu commun." The text reflects the narrator's peculiar stance within the literary community he addresses: "Puis doncques que telle est ou ma sort ou ma destinée: (car à chascun n'est outroyé entrer et habiter Corinthe) ma deliberation est servir et es uns et es autres: tant s'en fault que je reste cessateur et inutile" (R 1994, 349; 1995, 23). The creation of a common interpretive space is accompanied by the cryptic appearance of old writings within the text. Like the antiquated munitions that appear in the narrator's portrait of Corinth, these writings pose difficulties to members of the literary community who may find the text cumbersome and unwieldy. In this way, the text reflects the proverbial difficulties set forth by the city of Corinth, which the narrator glosses in a parenthetical reference to the proverb: "Non est cuiuslibet Corinthum appellere" ["It is not given to

⁶¹ Duval describes Lucian's work as describing "a comically tragic epidemic of *history writing* stimulated in an excessively literary Greece by the events of current wars" (1997, 19); Duval specifies the *Histories* as a prototype of the *Tiers Livre* and mentions that Lucian praises Herodotus, whose text is characterized by digressions and implausible stories (1997, 22).

⁶² Cave specifies R as one of four writers who demonstrate such uses of language; Erasmus' *De duplici copia verborum ac rerum* is a model for this use of language (1979, xviii).

everyone to land at Corinth”]. This proverb, found in the works of literary figures such as Horace and Aulus Gellius, described in the *Adages*,⁶³ and appearing in the *De copia*,⁶⁴ draws upon the preeminent role of Corinth within a familiar literary corpus. Its stance as an emblem in the prologue suggests the manner in which textual citations take shape in new and unexpected vernacular forms.

The chorographic scene of Corinth assumes the role of an inscription within chronicles that build nation. This scene brings up narratives in a manner that reflects the use of proverbial forms illustrated by Erasmus in the *Adages*.⁶⁵ Like Erasmus’ description of the ocean of philosophy that is opened up by a tiny proverb, the scene inscribed on the narrator’s text evokes numerous scenes of encounter.⁶⁶ The proverb glossed in the narrator’s parenthetical statement sets forth images that are connected to its precarious geographic situation, images of “things which are dangerous and difficult to approach,” as Erasmus describes (CWE 31, 317). Reflecting the difficulties of approaching Corinth by sea (a description that Erasmus attributes to Suidas), the proverb points to the converging cultural narratives that arise in a context of travel and trade. The challenges of practices considered deviant, such as indulgence in luxurious habits and unstinting sexual license, reflect challenges of negotiating boundaries that occur within the walls of Corinth, challenges that appear in Strabo’s *Geographica* (8.6.20) and in the Pauline

⁶³ Erasmus describes proverbs and their uses in the Introduction to the *Adages* (CWE 31, 3-28); see Huchon (M 1994, 349, n. 19) and CWE 31 (318) for references to Horace and Aulus Gellius.

⁶⁴ The proverb appears in the opening passage, in which E discusses the dangers of copious writing.

⁶⁵ Eden describes the manner in which the proverb as a discursive practice takes on an analogous position to *amicitia* as a social practice (1998, 406).

⁶⁶ Erasmus describes the way in which Pythagoras’ remark: “Between friends all is common,” the first proverb discussed in the *Adages*, evokes classical and Pauline descriptions of friendship (CWE 31, 15).

Epistles.⁶⁷ Referring to these narratives, and incorporating them into his own act of writing chronicles, the narrator acknowledges the difficulty of establishing a “lieu commun” in a context of flux and exchange.

The proverbial reference to Corinth, in its analogous position to the initial chorographic portrait, thus becomes a “terrain qui devient livre.”⁶⁸ And like the portrait of Corinth, the appropriation of the proverb gives it new form. As figures in the text generate images, catalyzed by the scene at Corinth, they assume a position that displays the topologies and tropologies of writing.⁶⁹ Writing mimes scenes, reflecting the observed reliefs and irregularities of the landscape, and affecting the textual body that takes shape, thereby showing its “morphologie de la surface terrestre.”⁷⁰ In this way, writing reveals the individual peculiarities of the designated space, a representation that is characteristic of chorography.⁷¹ Like the chorographies in works such as Pierre Apian’s *La Cosmographie* (Lestringant 1993b, 53), writing mirrors the contours of the landscape and the activity that characterizes this “lieu commun.” Literary figures take shape in the text in the manner of proverbs at Eusebius’s villa, where they assume forms of inscriptions and painted images, and are incorporated into the dialogue of the interlocutors. Literary figures in Rabelais’s prologue appear in representations of collective activity, individual action, and inscriptions that become integrated into communal discourse. The text incorporates these figures, reflecting its desire to neutralize

⁶⁷ Erasmus describes Strabo’s description of Corinth as a luxurious and decadent place, due to its location as a place of trade and travel (CWE 31, 317-18); the ISBE describes the attacks Paul made on immoralities at Corinth in his Corinthian letters (s.v. “Corinth.”).

⁶⁸ Besse describes the role that writing takes on in the chorographies that he describes (2000, 106).

⁶⁹ Cave describes the figure of consubstantiality that occurs in mimetic writing as the text takes on the role of a body (1979, 150).

⁷⁰ Lestringant compares descriptions of the text to the physical characteristics of an individual (1993b, 53).

⁷¹ Illustrating an extent of land is analogous to illustrating the peculiarities of an individual’s face, as represented in Pierre Apian’s *La Cosmographie* (see fig. in Lestringant 1993b, 53).

and naturalize foreign bodies (Cave 1979, 141). As the text presents disparate figures, such as Diogenes and the dancing camel, it links them to common literary themes, such as those suggested by the figure of Corinth. The moments during which figures in the text appear to be incongruous are moments at which they reveal boundaries of the text, the manner in which the text is pushed to its limits. Writing assumes its position in the chronology of a literary corpus, recalling prior narratives while reflecting empirical observation of designated space.

III.ii Inscribing Community

“A Silenus of this sort was Diogenes,
commonly regarded as a dog; but in this
dog something of the divine must have
been detected by Alexander the great ...”
Erasmus *Adages*, III, iii, 1.

The *captatio lectoris* of the scene at Corinth draws the audience into a mediating interpretive space that extends writings of previous texts, amplifying them with variations on the theme of encounter and creating a “lieu littéraire.”⁷² This interpretive space encourages members of the literary audience to approach the text *in bonam partem*. The narrator’s Diogenic pen draws upon an endless well of inspiration as it develops this scene:

⁷² This use of *captatio lectoris* resembles its use in the prologue to *Gargantua*, as Defaux describes (1985, 197).

Envers les guerroyans je voys de nouveau percer mon tonneau. Et de la traicte (laquelle par deux præcedens volumes (si par l'imposture des imprimeurs n'eussent esté pervertiz et brouillez) vous feust assez congneue) leurs tirer du creu de nos passetemps epicenaires un guallant tiercin, et consecutivement un joyeux quart de sentences Pantagruelicques. Par moy licite vous sera les appeller Diogeniciques (R 1994, 350; 1995, 25).

Drawing from previous chronicles “de la traicte,” these variations place the text in the position of a symposium, a communal space of discussion and drinking. Figures in the prologue point to this coincidence, recalling the figure of consubstantiation from the 1535 prologue and punctuating the text with references to the drinking that takes on a role synonymous with writing. This occurs in the narrator’s interjections, such as the draft he takes before recounting the episode of Ptolemy’s travels to Egypt: “Attendez un peu que je hume quelque traict de ceste bouteille” (R 1994, 349; 1995, 23). The text, of course, deviates from this anecdote, as it refers to its own inspiration. Reaching into its literary repository, it cites classical authors inspired by drink as it glosses Erasmus and creates an atmosphere that resembles Plato’s *Symposium*. This atmosphere of communal discourse, developed by themes, anecdotes, and improvisational speech, is parallel to the space illustrated in Erasmus’ *Convivium religiosum*. Like this communal space, one that is custom-made for discourse, in which each detail has something to say (Eden 1998, 416), the prologue sets forth figures and fragments of texts that speak to the literary audience and that encourage discourse.

With these familiar literary figures and fragments, the narrator signals a manner of approaching the text that recalls similar approaches to prior texts. The image of imbibing the text recalls similar appeals to the literary audience in the previous chronicle. The narrator’s references to drinking recall the 1535 prologue to this chronicle, in which he asks the readers to “fleurer, sentir, et estimer ces beaulx livres de haute gresse, legiers

au prochaz : et hardiz à la rencontre. Puis par curieuse leçon, et meditation frequente rompre l'os, et sugcer la substantificque mouelle" (R 1994, 7). Following the example of Plato's dog, readers are enjoined to approach a text by ingesting it, and in this way become familiar with writing that they may not initially recognize. The text shares characteristics with the figure of Socrates, who resembles a silenus (Defaux 1985, 201). Like the vividly painted boxes in apothecaries' shops to which the narrator of the 1535 prologue refers, boxes painted with droll figures but containing wondrous drugs, Socrates – and, by extension, the narrator's text – possesses amusing external characteristics that stand in contrast to the great wisdom and knowledge contained within. In the manner of the prologue that precedes it, the 1546 prologue prefigures the current text as another type of silenus, whose grotesque exterior differs from what is found inside. Faced with a text that is as difficult to approach as Corinth and as enigmatic as a silenus, the readers pursue obscurities in the text by imbibing them and by experiencing literary figures and textual fragments as they assume curious and unexpected forms.

The anecdote of Diogenes at Corinth thus introduces a series of anecdotes that may not be what they seem at the outset, indicating the uses of a charitable reading of texts. The anecdote that follows illustrates an episode of Ptolemy presenting the Egyptians with spoils of war that, like the scene of siege, are accompanied by dissonant objects. His offering of a black camel and bi-colored slave provokes a horrified reaction to what the Egyptians consider an "erreur de nature" (R 1994, 350; 1995, 27). The visual reference adds to the oddities presented by the space of encounter that is initiated through the figure of Corinth. The episode of Ptolemy's spoils of war anticipates the possibility of readers' disturbed reactions to anomalies that arise in the text. Posing the question of

incorporating strange figures into this “*lieu littéraire*,” the text sets forth its own relationship to such aberrant forms, acknowledging moments that may startle or distract readers. These alien forms amplify the theme of encounter with which the prologue opens, extending the role of the literary figures that it incorporates, and revealing the narratives inspired by fragments of text.

These fragments act in the manner of proverbs, which generate “an ocean of philosophy,” as Erasmus describes, when speaking of the many uses of a knowledge of proverbs (CWE 31, 14, 15). Proverbs themselves reveal aberrations of nature, which appear in figures that are as extraordinary as those that shock the Egyptians. These include a dancing camel, “*le chameau qui danse*,” an image from an adage that appears in the *trompe l’œil* at Eusebius’s villa in the *Convivium religiosum* (E 1992, 230).

Represented alongside other images inspired by proverbs and classical texts, such as those of Lucian and Pliny,⁷³ the dancing camel takes its place among images of exotic foliage, foreign bodies of water, and other animals whose actions transgress customary behavior. Embodying ungainly attempts to act against one’s natural aptitudes (E 1992, 230 n. 1), the dancing camel reflects textual transgressions that occur in the prologue. The camel and the other foreign figures occupy space at the villa alongside its natural surroundings, embellishing the pastoral setting with variations on chorographic scenes.

Instead of repelling the interlocutors, extraordinary figures intrigue the literary audience. Such figures speak to a literary audience guided by a charitable disposition to explore enigmatic moments in the text. As with the images on the walls of Eusebius’s villa, such figures contribute to the communal atmosphere that pervades a literary space. In the manner of the *captatio lectoris* of Corinth, or of Plato’s dog, such aberrations in

⁷³ See Eden for sources of these images (1998, 417).

nature capture the attention of the readers of the 1546 prologue. Like the proverbs at Eusebius's villa, which take on different visual and written forms, thereby inspiring discourse among interlocutors, these alien forms in the text rivet readers by their originality. Such anomalies resemble proverbs in their capacity to accommodate: "The proverb must be able not only to endure but to change, and to change in such a way that surprises us by its newness" (Eden 1998, 409). Entering into a "lieu littéraire" that speaks to its audience, these images take on a variety of forms that illustrate the narrator's use of *varietas*, the rhetorical figure of abundance.⁷⁴ Linked to the image of the cornucopia, which the narrator mentions toward the end of the prologue, this use of *varietas* enriches the encyclopedic knowledge set forth in the text. In this way, the text assumes the role of antiquated figures that serve as markers in the text while also presenting new figures that draw in the literary audience.

Encyclopedic techniques of taking inventory encourage charitable approaches to the text, as these allow the incorporation of varied figures and forms that speak to a wide audience. At the same time, the text warns against the rhetorical dangers of empty repetition. The lists of the Corinthians' munitions and Diogenes' actions in the situation of siege reflect this inventory of knowledge which again points to the appropriation of prior writings: "Following Pliny and the compilers of late antiquity, encyclopedism flourished throughout the Middle Ages, constituting a wide-ranging store or *res*" (Cave 1979, 8). The narrator acknowledges the dangers and difficulties of offering compilations of textual fragments to the literary audience, thereby alluding to the danger of falling into the empty repetition of *loquacitas* (Cave 1979, 5). These difficulties of writing appear in repetitive lists that may cause readers' attention to wander, in unexpected textual forms

⁷⁴ Cave describes *varietas* as a figure of abundance linked to the term *copia* (1979, 5).

that may elude them, and in aberrant images that may alienate them. Embodying the *varietas* that constructs this “lieu littéraire,” such apparitions in the text reflect back on the difficulties of using precarious forms of writing. They thereby build upon the opening scene at Corinth, developing the proverb described in the *Adages* and that introduces the *De copia*.⁷⁵ This last work, one that treats the foundations of abundant style, anticipates the perils of loquaciousness: “many mortal men who make great efforts to achieve this godlike power of speech fall instead into mere glibness, which is both silly and offensive” (CWE 24, 295). Acknowledging the ways in which reliance on abundant figures may fall short, the text specifies approaches to *copia* that avoid potential disasters of tiresome and unstimulating language. Showing ways of circumventing such vacuous discourse, the work illustrates techniques of expanding language, techniques that are incorporated into the 1546 prologue, as the narrator generates new and unexpected forms in this “lieu littéraire.”

As this “lieu littéraire” responds to the fragments of texts that it incorporates, it assumes various registers of language, which at times is comic and at times is tragic. This amalgamation of genres allows the text to assume various appearances and to take on various roles. Offering this tragicomic scene to his readers: “chevalereux personnages, qui en veue et spectacle de toute Europe jouent ceste insigne fable et Tragicque comedie” (R 1994, 349; 1995, 21, 23), the narrator delivers his prologue in a manner that reflects an amalgamation of various figures and forms. A distinctive feature of the chronicles that the narrator compiles,⁷⁶ this mixed genre again denotes the risks of his own rhetoric: “Mi-

⁷⁵ The first edition of E’s *De duplici copia verborum ac rerum* was published in Paris in 1512, 12 years after the first edition of the *Adages*, which was also first published in Paris.

⁷⁶ Defaux sees this polarity as distinctive of Rabelais’s œuvre: “On retrouve là la polarité comique / sérieux qui structure le Prologue de *Gargantua* et définit l’œuvre de Rabelais dans sa totalité” (Defaux 1985, 211);

dialogue philosophique, mi-comédie, c'est-à-dire 'monstre infame,' 'ridicule' amalgame de blanc et noir, mélange contre nature de comique et de sérieux, son nouveau livre, ce 'guallant tiercin de sentences Pantagrueliques,' risque fort de connaître le même sort que les deux premiers" (Defaux 1985, 211-12). His conflation of rhetorical styles might be as off-putting as the camel and slave that Ptolemy offers the Egyptians which, as we note, expire by the end of the anecdote. The narrator's manner of expanding on the figures that he incorporates might bring about an equally negative outcome, foreshadowed by the condemnation of his first two chronicles. Yet the mixed genres that the narrator offers his readers also have precedents in earlier texts. Such precedents are signaled in his reference to Lucian, who explicitly mentions the use of mixed genres in writing: "Or, précise Lucien, 'j'ai cependant osé allier des choses si différentes par leur nature, et de réunir ce qui ne paraissait susceptible d'aucune association'" (Defaux 1985, 211). Like the 1535 prologue, which enjoins readers to be "saige" as they approach the text, all the while alluding to the idea that such readers are "folz" (Duval 1985, 1), the 1546 prologue sets forth a text that embodies two opposing genres of writing. As enigmatic as Diogenes, "un exemple de sagesse dérisoire ou risible en apparence, dont la profondeur ne se révèle qu'au regard attentif et pénétrant,"⁷⁷ the text appeals to readers who are able to draw from their knowledge of comic and tragic genres, a characteristic that reflects the qualities that the narrator initially attributes to his readers. The text, like Diogenes' actions, takes on a variety of meanings and forms, indicated by the figure of the cornucopia.

Individuals who respond to such a text possess exceptional qualities, as the narrator indicates: " Je recognois en eulx tous une forme specifique et propriété

Rigolot also describes this mixed genre as a distinctive characteristic of R's text (1996, 1); Huchon indicates that R's use of the term "Tragicque comedie" is one of first (R 1994, 349 n. 1).

⁷⁷ Céard describes these enigmatic characteristics of Diogenes (R 1995, 12, n. 2).

individuale, laquelle nos majeurs nommoient Pantagruelisme, moienant laquelle jamais en mauulvaise partie ne prendront choses quelconques ilz congnoistront sourdre de bon, franc et loyal couraige” (R 1994, 351; 1995, 27). Linked by metonymy to the hero of text, these “lecteurs Pantagruelicques” are willing to approach the text, however obscure it may be. Such qualities are inscribed beneath the title of the first chronicle: “Livre plein de Pantagruelisme” and characterize the readers’ ability to negotiate different registers of language, to face bizarre figures, and to approach unfamiliar textual forms. These good readers approach the text with a generous spirit rather than with ignorance or callousness: “Un authentique Pantagruéliste ne sera donc jamais, par définition, ni un lecteur sot, ni un lecteur méchant” (Defaux 1985, 214). Their disposition toward the text allows them to interpret in a charitable manner, “au disciple de Pantagruel, qui toujours interprète *in bonam partem*” (Defaux 1985, 213). Eschewing interpretations based on insufficient knowledge or attitudes toward discourse that are too rigid, such readers show interpretive insight as they approach even the most desultory fragment of text. This literary audience shows the capacity to admit interpretive limitations, as does Socrates in Erasmus’ *Sileni Alcibiades*: “While that was a period when the ambition to advertise one’s own cleverness reached manic heights among the foolish ... Socrates was alone in declaring that there was only one thing he knew, which was that he knew nothing” (CWE 34, 263). Readers’ similar acknowledgement of their limitations, in their approach to unfamiliar textual forms, reveals characteristics that they share with this same text, in their resemblance to the Socratic figure. Inspired by the pantagruelic spirit, readers reach into a literary repository, mirroring the narrator, and assuming commonality in disparate things. Like Socrates, who constantly seeks such commonality, upholding it as ideal for

dialectical speaking and for thinking,⁷⁸ these readers reveal a willingness to seek commonality in the fragments that the text offers and to interpret these fragments as variations on common themes.

This effort toward commonality occurs in the context of a symposium. The synonymous acts of writing and drinking, reflected by the synonymous acts of reading and drinking, illustrate communal activity between the narrator and the readers. The text, which holds an analogous position to that of wine drunk in Bacchic council, “conseil Bacchique” (R 1994, 345; 1995, 13), encourages fraternal participation in dialogue in the manner of a *koinonia*. A source of the *agape*, which is defined as “love” or “love-feast,” the *koinonia* comes from the communion that characterizes the earliest days of the Christian Church, a practice encouraged by Paul at the Greek church of Corinth.⁷⁹ It represents a “highly structured coincidence between eating and talking” in the *Convivium religiosum* (Eden 1998, 417) and is related to the manner in which Rabelais’s 1546 prologue encourages readers to approach literary figures by imbibing the text. Examples of familiar literary figures associated with drinking, such as Ennius, Æschylus, Homer, and Cato, indicate the manner in which readers may assume analogous roles in their approach to the text (R 1994, 349; 1995, 23).

The narrator acts similarly when writing, revealing the parallel role of writing and reading in imbibing text. Referring to the manner in which drinking inspires discourse, the narrator offers the readers images of such literary figures inspired by drink:

⁷⁸ Eden describes Socrates’ continual search for commonality, inspired by love (1998, 414).

⁷⁹ ISBE, s.v. “Agape”: “The common meal seems to have sprung out of the *koinonia* or communion that characterized the first days of the Christian Church.”

Icy beuvant je delibere, je discours, je resoulz et concluds. Après l'epilogue je riz, j'escriz, je compose, je boy. Ennius beuvant escrivoit, escrivant beuvoit. Æschylus (si à Plutarche foy avez in *Symposiacis*) beuvoit composant, beuvant composoit. Homere jamais n'escrivit à jeun. Caton jamais n'escrivit qu'après boyre. Affin que ne me dictez ainsi vivre sans exemple des bien louez et mieulx prisez" (R 1994, 349; 1995, 23).

Referring to several adages of Erasmus, including “non est dithyrambus si bibat aquam” (IV iii 58),⁸⁰ the narrator designates drinking as the source of his abundant ideas and attributes elegance of speech to the presence of wine. The reference to Erasmus, who cites Flaccus, describes the manner in which drinking inspires the beautiful verse of illustrious poets. Designated by ancient authority as proper accompaniment to heroic or serious deliberations, drinking enhances elegance of speech and quality of argument (Screech 1980b, 259).⁸¹ It stands in contrast with halting speech, the *vituperatio* that comes with the absence of wine, the heaviness of language that comes with drinking water, a contrast that also appears in the 1535 prologue.⁸² Speech assumes a prolific and fruitful role when inspired by wine, as with the mythological figure of Silenus, the eldest, wisest, and drunkest follower of Dionysus. Recalling Silenus’s power of prophecy, an almost instinctual force, eloquent writing inspired by drinking evokes Homer’s muses, Ennius’s draft from the Hippocrene,⁸³ Æschylus’s wine,⁸⁴ and Cato’s conversation with philosophers over drink.⁸⁵ Such writing also foreshadows the forms that appear in the

⁸⁰ See Huchon (M 1994, 349, n. 14); Screech describes the gloss: “Rabelais draws here upon several *Adages*, including ii, 6, 6 *Aquam nihil boni parias* and vi, 3, 58, *Non est Dithyrambus si bibat aquam*. He also echoes Plutarch’s *Table-Talk* (which he further exploits in the *Quart Livre*), but virtually all the allusions can be paralleled in Erasmus’ essays on these adages. Horace’s defense of Cato’s occasional wine-drinking (*Odes*, iii, 21, 16) is a commonplace” (1980, 259).

⁸¹ Screech refers to Claude Mignault’s commentaries on Alciatis’s *Emblemata*.

⁸² Defaux contrasts the “éloge du rieur *vinosus*, lequel n’écrit que “après boire” with the “*vituperatio* cinglante de l’*agelaste*, lequel boit de l’eau et compose à l’huile de la lampe” (1985, 213).

⁸³ This is found in the *Annales*, proem.

⁸⁴ Plutarch’s *Symposiacs* describes this inspiration from wine: “... it is reported of Æschylus, that he wrote tragedies after he was heated with a glass of wine” (1883, III v i).

⁸⁵ Plutarch describes Cato the Younger’s friends’ explanation of his drinking that resulted from a desire for knowledge: “... being desirous of knowledge, he liked to pass the night at wine in the conversation of philosophers” (2008, 197).

body of the text. Like Silenus, and the sileni in apothecaries' shops, speech inspired by drink possesses wondrous and rare traits, traits that motivate readers to build upon the text and to participate in its prolific development. As readers imbibe the text, they too receive insight into the passages that follow the prologue, the familiar literary references as well as the foreign forms of writing. Participating in discourse, in the context of the *koinonia*, the narrator and readers come together in their appropriation of text and in their capacity to draw from a literary repository that they hold in common.

The unending variations on discourse at this communal gathering reflect inspiration that possesses mythical qualities of the Hippocrene, the fountain held sacred to the muses. As the narrator takes drafts from his bottle, he describes it as his “vray seul Helicon,” his “fontaine Caballine,” his “unicque Enthousiasme” (R 1994, 349; 1995, 23). The creative energy that he draws from it is almost divine: “Rabelais links the inspirational qualities of God-given wine, gratefully drunk among friends, with the spring of the Muses, the Hippocrene of Pegasus” (Screech 1980b, 259). Drinking inspires an unending flow of discourse that comes in the manner of *fureur poétique*, a type of abandonment to the madness that invites creativity.⁸⁶ Creativity is abundant, departing from the moderation that Screech attributes to Renaissance views on the powers of wine.⁸⁷ Discourse, like wine, like the unending well of the muses, comes from an inexhaustible source: “Ainsi demeurera le tonneau inexpuisible. Il a source vive et vene perpetuelle” (R 1994, 351; 1995, 29). Drinking and writing continually produce discourse in the manner of Diogenes' tub rolling, an action that is “rachetée par la fécondité du verbe” (Lestringant 1993a, 448). This fecund language signals discourse that encourages

⁸⁶ Screech describes *fureur poétique* (1980, 140); this figure appears in Erasmus' *Encomium moriae* (*Praise of Folly*) and in the body of Rabelais' text, as we see in Chapter III.

⁸⁷ Screech refers to Guy Demerson (1980b, 259).

exchange and that invites the participation of all readers who desire to approach the text. In this way, writing continually opens into new forms, incorporating both familiar and bizarre figures that establish the mediating role of the text.

IV. CONCLUSION

As the prologues to the *Heptaméron* and the *Tiers Livre* illustrate charity in the contexts of community, they set forth examples of the “lieux communs” in which their designated communities form. Charitable approaches to discourse assume a central role in establishing these “lieux communs,” allowing individuals to create contexts of shared identity. Such contexts allow them to engage in common pursuits. The verdant meadow in which Marguerite’s *devisants* relate tales and the *koinonia* at which Rabelais’s literary community participates in discourse reveal a desire to engage in collective activity, incorporating common references and personal experience into their exchange. This creation of a medium for exchange allows a *locus amœnus* to emerge out of contexts as difficult as natural disaster and military offensive. Despite difficult circumstances set forth by a *locus terribilis*, or perhaps in response to them, individuals seek commonality by drawing from a repository of textual knowledge and by using such knowledge to respond to their current circumstances. As they engage in common approaches to these circumstances, they are able to achieve moments of social concord. Such moments are reflected by representations of harmony in the physical world.

As members of community create common spaces that are conducive to discourse, they inevitably come across obstacles that limit communal approaches to space and to dialogue. Negotiating the parameters of community becomes increasingly difficult as external pressures threaten to erode the borders of these designated spaces. Under the menaces of attack by unscrupulous individuals, such as bandits who strike in the night or the Macedonian army that looms over the city of Corinth, members of community face

challenges to maintaining the spaces that they have designated as communal. Internal obstacles to creating communal space prove just as challenging. Individuals who are deterred by irregularities in discourse or who are hostile to new forms of discourse that emerge resist exchange and take on roles within community that are emblematic of a menacing terrain. The presence of such individuals in the prologues anticipates obstacles to community that arise within narratives related in the bodies of the texts. Such narratives reveal the limits of established structures that build community, described in accounts of courtly relationships and in the establishment of a utopian colony, which we will examine in Chapter II. These “lieux communs” which take on an essential role in building community are thus susceptible to disruptions that might occur during the various encounters that the designated communities experience.

While illustrating the significance of charitable structures in these political contexts, the prologues show the flexibility of such structures, as they are continually redefined and reinstated. The chorographies that appear in the prologues reveal the manner in which communal structures respond to the particular situations with which they are faced. The *devisants' locus amœnus* is a meadow that possesses specific characteristics, but whose spatial position is only determined by its remoteness to the abbey, a position that, as we see later, is easily diminished.⁸⁸ Corinth, while being surrounded by walls, remains susceptible to attack and is only fortified by antiquated munitions. These walls are quickly left behind by Diogenes as he pushes his barrel past them in an effort to participate in communal action. Reflecting the irregular terrain illustrated in these settings, the peculiar movements of individuals subvert the “lieux communs” that develop, suggesting moments in the text that break from established

⁸⁸ This is described in the frame-narrative of the second day (see Chapter III).

structures. Attempting to incorporate such irregularities into these structures can cause narratives to collapse, but such movement ultimately expands the text, enriching it with the characteristics of *varietas* that create a literary *locus amœnus*. In this manner, the prologues anticipate converging narratives and their effects on the communities into which they are incorporated. Discourse reflects the dynamic spaces in narratives that develop, thereby signaling notions of community that contribute to a common understanding.

CHAPTER II

CHARITY AND FRIENDSHIP

I. INTRODUCTION

Descriptions of friendship in the *Heptaméron* and the *Tiers Livre* illustrate the intimate bonds that hold individuals together. Edmond Huguet's *Dictionnaire du seizième siècle* defines "amitié" as "Affection, amour, attraction," terms that intersect with those that denote charity.⁸⁹ In the *Heptaméron*, discourse on "amitié" focuses on medieval examples of fealty and courtly love while also introducing sixteenth-century polemics related to marriage. Illustrations of "amitié" in the *Tiers Livre* also allude to medieval models – its hero is, after all, a prince accompanied by the traditional figure of a *comes*⁹⁰ – but develop in a colonial setting related to sixteenth-century exploration and unfold in discussions that explore the question of marriage. The relationship of marriage is prominent in both texts and is often described using language that is similar to descriptions of "amitié." Descriptions of conjugal relationships illustrate the way in which notions of "amitié" extend to include various types of bonds between two individuals.

Pauline descriptions of *caritas* serve as the basis for the relationships of "amitié" described in Marguerite and Rabelais's works. In I Cor 13:4-5, St. Paul describes the characteristics of charity: "Charity is patient, is kind. Charity does not envy, does not act

⁸⁹ The *Dictionnaire du seizième siècle* describes these as: "amour, affection, tendresse" (s.v. "Charité"); see Introduction.

⁹⁰ Duval describes the transformation of Panurge from an epic *comes*-disciple into an ordinary vassal when he is given rule of Salmiguondin (1997, 38).

wrongly, is not inflated. Charity is not ambitious, does not seek for itself, is not provoked to anger, devises no evil.” These characteristics distinguish the ideals to which friendship is held in the texts, as we see during the *devisants*’ commentary on the edifying, uplifting qualities of friendship and how its purest forms develop honor and conscience and lead to divine love.⁹¹ Pauline precepts of charity also appear in the reference to “pantagruélisme,”⁹² linked metonymically to Pantagruel, who reacts charitably to events such as Panurge’s disastrous rule of Salmiguondin and Bridoye’s trial at the court of Myrelingues.⁹³ These references to attitudes that show patience and kindness and that eschew jealousy form the basis for bonds of friendship in Marguerite and Rabelais’s narratives.

Examples of friendship in the texts indicate its effects on larger social units, extending to family and community. The narratives describe aspects of friendship that contribute to the edification of community and point out the domestic and political repercussions of friendship. From an Aristotelian perspective, friendship ideally possesses characteristics that cause individuals to contribute to larger social structures. Friendship is described as the basis for cohesive political structures in Books 8 and 9 of the *Nicomachean Ethics*:

Friendship seems too to hold states together, and lawgivers to care more for it than for justice; for unanimity seems to be something like friendship, and this they aim at most of all, and expel faction as their worst enemy; and when men are friends they have no need

⁹¹ After his “Lorenzaccio” tale, Dagoucin states that a “parfaicte et honneste amityé” would only add to the honor and conscience of a true *serviteur* (M 1943, 95; 1999, 211), while Oisille praises the conversion of an “honneste amityé” into a love of God after Ennasuite tells a tale of sublimated love (M 1943, 151; 1999, 289). We will examine these tales in this chapter.

⁹² The prologue sets forth this characteristic as characteristic of readers who interpret *in bonam partem* (see Chapter I).

⁹³ He reacts as a friend and reacts in good part, as we will see in this chapter.

of justice, while when they are just they need friendship as well, and the truest form of justice is thought to be a friendly quality.⁹⁴

The unanimity in a state that functions as a body politic⁹⁵ is implied in the relationship of friendship, which has characteristics of familiarity, constancy, and the possession of a common soul.⁹⁶ Dissent brings about splintering of social bonds and suggests disparity between individuals. Literary tradition reveals friendship as intrinsic to social unanimity, following descriptions found in Renaissance works, such as the treatises and *encomia* of Erasmus,⁹⁷ and extending through writings that are subsequent to those of Marguerite and Rabelais, such as Estienne de la Boétie's *De la servitude volontaire* and Montaigne's "De l'amitié," which the preceding work inspires.⁹⁸ The way in which friendship may assume the various functions of justice in the aforementioned Aristotelian manner is parallel to the Pauline emphasis on *caritas* over the many laws of the Old Testament in Scripture. The fraternal bond of *caritas*, the basis of friendship, leads individuals toward common approaches to discourse, allowing them to interpret *in bonam partem*. Erasmus expresses this Pauline emphasis on approaches to discourse in the introduction to the *Adages*: "One precept and one alone He gave to the world, and that was love; on that alone, He taught, hang all the law and the prophets"⁹⁹ Illustrating the way in which one proverb generates a

⁹⁴ NE VIII, i; also see Langer (1994, 24).

⁹⁵ The body politic is an image of individuals contributing to community in their unique ways, following Pauline descriptions in I Cor 12:12 (see Chapter I).

⁹⁶ This description of friends possessing a common soul appears in the *Adages* I i 2; see Langer on the attributes of true friends (1994, 31).

⁹⁷ Eden describes the importance of friendship in Erasmian texts illustrated in the placement of "Amicorum communia omnia" at the beginning of the 1508 edition of the *Adages* (2001, 4).

⁹⁸ La Boétie's text was published posthumously in 1576; it is mentioned in Montaigne's 1580 edition of the *Essais*, I xxviii.

⁹⁹ The translation uses "love" for "caritas" (CWE 33, 15); for Jerome's use of the term *caritas* to translate *agápe*, see ISBE, s.v. "Love"; see Olin (1994, 63) on charity assuming the position of the unique law of Christ in the utopian works of Erasmus and More; see Eden (1997, 57-8) on charity correcting for the rigidity of the law; see Duval (1997, 155-69) on the unique law of *caritas* replacing the many laws of the Old Testament; see Rummel on the link between intellectual friendship and piety in the *Adages* (2004, 41-

store of knowledge, Erasmus emphasizes the parallel between fraternal and interpretive bonds. Notions of friendship act in this way, establishing bonds between individuals that lead to mutual love and understanding. The reciprocal relationships forged in friendship form the underpinnings of the larger structures of community.

Friendship is also the basis for economics, a domain that is explored in the passages we will study in this chapter, through relationships that we consider domestic. These relationships include courtly love and marriage, as well as the filial bonds between parents and children. By “economic” we refer to individuals’ happiness in relation to domestic affairs, as Maclean describes (1980, 48). The term is derived from the Latin term *economicus*, related to the Greek term *oikonomikos*, meaning “of domestic economy,” a term related to *oikos*, meaning “home.”¹⁰⁰ The corresponding French term, “*Économique*,” is likewise defined as “propre à administrer une maison, économe.”¹⁰¹ Like the political settings of community, economic settings refer to individuals in relation to a greater number but designate smaller social units. The economic domain appears prior to politics, a position that stems from its proximity to nature.¹⁰² Economic unity characterizes that which pertains to an *oikos*, a household in the Greek sense, which includes household friends as well as relatives. Derived via Latin from an amalgamation of the Greek terms *oikos* (house) and *nomos* (administration),¹⁰³ the term “*économe*” designates the management of a household by a “*ménager*,” indicating the significance of the “*art de vivre ensemble*.” Settings at court, in a castleship, and within conjugal bonds

2); Montaigne also argues for greater universality and simplicity of laws (*Essais*, III xiii), an idea introduced by Aristotle and repeated by Cicero and Quintilian (Eden 1997, 101-2).

¹⁰⁰ *Pocket Oxford Greek Dictionary*, s.v.v. “*Οικονομικός*,” “*Οίκος*” and *A Latin Dictionary for Schools*, s.v. “*Æconomicus*.”

¹⁰¹ *Dictionnaire du seizième siècle*, s.v. “*Économique*.”

¹⁰² Maclean refers to the precedence Aristotle gives to “economics” from the view that the household comes before the state; he refers to the *Economics* 1.1-2 (1980 48, 48 n. 6).

¹⁰³ *Le Grand Robert*, s.v. “*Économe*.”

in the *Heptaméron* and the *Tiers Livre* reveal the significance of friendship paradigms in this art of living together.

Bonds of friendship arise from mutual esteem between individuals. Friendship develops between individuals who admire each other and who value the bonds that connect them: “[Perfect friendship] is truly friendship for its own sake, through which someone is loved because of himself, and because of the good which is between the friends.”¹⁰⁴ This pure, unadulterated view of friendship represents an ideal to which friendship is held for individuals who experience the bonds of affection, love, and attraction. Examples of friendship set forth in the narratives illustrate the way in which these bonds take on different forms, linked to the contexts in which they arise. Terms for friendship themselves are determined by context, as Ullrich Langer explains: “Once we enter the domain of the French vernacular, ‘ami,’ ‘amant,’ ‘amour,’ ‘amitié’ often seem interchangeable, signifying relationships of affection whose degree is determined by the context of their use” (1994, 118). These relationships evoke models of friendship described in classical treatises and letters, as well as ancillary classical writings.¹⁰⁵ They also recall figures of couples in classical writings and in Scripture.¹⁰⁶ These models, as Langer points out, are primarily male, female literary figures being less developed than their male counterparts.¹⁰⁷ While referring to idealized forms of friendship in classical tradition, Marguerite and Rabelais’s texts integrate female figures into discourse on friendship through discussions of courtly love and marriage. Perspectives on idealized

¹⁰⁴ Langer quotes Jacques Lefevre d’Étaples, who comments on *Nicomachean Ethics*, (1994, 20).

¹⁰⁵ These include Aristotle’s *Nicomachean Ethics* and *Eudemian Ethics*, Cicero and Seneca’s treatises and letters, and ancillary classical writings such as those of Lucian, Plutarch, and Epictetus, as Langer describes (1994, 23-4).

¹⁰⁶ Examples include: Orestes and Pylades, Achilles and Patroclus, Æneas and Achates, Damon and Phintias, Jonathan and David (Langer 1994, 22-3).

¹⁰⁷ Langer mentions female models, though these are limited (1994, 116-7).

friendship are applied to new and unexpected situations, an effect of the *devisants*' source material for their storytelling and of Panurge's unpredictable actions.¹⁰⁸

Discourse on fraternal, romantic, and conjugal relationships appears in N12, N19, N21, N40, N47, and N55 of the *Heptaméron* and in chapters I-V, XXX, XXXIX-XLIII, and XLVIII of the *Tiers Livre*. These episodes reveal changes in notions related to "amityé" that occur in various contexts. Examples of notions of friendship that adapt to context reflect uses of the classical term "exemplum," as well as the vernacular terms affiliated with this term: "example," "exemple," "esempio," "ejemplo," etc., a relationship reflecting broadening uses of the term in Renaissance texts (Lyons 1989, 11). This dual position of "example," illustrated by the French term "exemplaire,"¹⁰⁹ arises in discussions on topics that relate to courtly love and marriage, such as "honneste amityé" and "cocüage." These discussions recall particular events that become integrated into a broader treatment of notions of friendship. Descriptions of friendship based on empirical knowledge may diverge from theoretical friendship models, thereby illustrating Lyons's observation of the dilemma posed by uses of example: "There is nonetheless a tension between the concept of example as narrative and the example as movement 'outside,' into the world of action" (1989, 76). Arising in the economies of court, castleship, and marriage, examples of "amityé" in the *Heptaméron* and the *Tiers Livre* reveal efforts to adhere to friendship models while addressing situations that disrupt these models. The texts illustrate the relevance of various friendship models to the political and economic situations that they present while also showing inevitable breaks from these models.

¹⁰⁸ Myriam Marrache-Gouraud describes Panurge as one of Rabelais's most perplexing figures, linked to his continually changing attitude and surprising actions (2003, 9-10).

¹⁰⁹ "Exemplaire" takes on the sense of a model and a copy, as Lyons describes; also see *Le Petit Robert*, s.v. "Exemplaire."

As characters consider narrative models in their approaches to friendship, they come across discrepancies between these references and the particular situations with which they are faced. Attempts to resolve these tensions emphasize the attention to context entailed by the use of equity. As an interpretive method associated with legal texts, equity is understood to be an “extenuating corrective to the generality and consequent rigidity inherent in the law” (Eden 1997, 2). Allowing for corrective measures that counter the rigidity of the law, equity considers the circumstances surrounding an event in order to emphasize intentionality. Equity is associated with a “broad range of near-synonyms” including *caritas* and even *veritas*, as Maclean describes.¹¹⁰ Like *caritas* in Scriptural interpretation, equity seeks the intended meaning of written legal statements by attention to the context in which these statements appear. Equity allows for interpretive flexibility, taking into account the limitations of a written statement and the variability of human existence.¹¹¹ These measures reflect a commitment to finding *veritas*, the truthfulness or reality of a statement.¹¹² Equity is linked to “natural and divine law in men’s hearts,” an idea that has sources in Scripture, specifically Romans 2:15: “For they reveal the work of the law written in their hearts, while their conscience renders testimony about them, and their thoughts within themselves also accuse or even defend them.”¹¹³ These Scriptural origins imply a moral function of equity, which we see in the association of *aequitas naturalis* with conscience, Christian thought, and, further, in

¹¹⁰ These include: *aequalitas, paritas, gratia, misericordia, benignitas, humanitas, caritas, bona fides, conscientia, bonum publicum, publica utilitas, mediocritas, mitigatio poenae*, even *veritas*. Maclean also gives four principal definitions of equity from the medieval period (1992, 175).

¹¹¹ See Eden on *caritas* as the basis of a hermeneutics of charity (1997, 58); on the alignment of equity with intentionality as a tradition that Cicero inherits from Aristotle (1997, 15); on equity as a necessary corrective to law’s generality (*epanorthoma*), by taking into account infinite variety of human circumstance (1997, 13).

¹¹² *A Latin Dictionary*, s.v. “Veritas.”

¹¹³ Maclean describes Scriptural sources for ideas on equity (1992, 176).

definitions affiliated with clemency. These definitions of equity are derived from descriptions of jurisprudence as the *ars æqui et boni*, the combination of *æquum* and *bonum* suggesting that equity is in part deliberative and in part moral.¹¹⁴ In the *Heptaméron* and the *Tiers Livre*, uses of equity extend the structures introduced in the prologues, structures presenting aberrations that distort the appearance of familiar figures in the text and then illustrate attempts to resolve these aberrations. Discourse in the bodies of the works shows a similar attempt to resolve narrative friendship models with situations drawn from everyday life. Equitable interpreters would engage in a flexible approach to such scenarios and avoid interpreting in their own interest.¹¹⁵ Uses of equity in the bodies of Marguerite and Rabelais's texts recall appeals to charitable approaches to discourse set forth in the prologues and suggest an approach to interpretation *in bonam partem*.

Interpretation takes on a different function without the good faith characteristic of a charitable approach to discourse. The absence of good faith can lead to its opposite, interpretation in bad faith. Maclean refers to this type of interpretation as cavillation.¹¹⁶ Its characteristics include fallacious uses of terms and reasoning: "Cavillation resides in a misuse of language and logic; Aristotle's *De sophisticis elenchis*, 165b23 provides a codification of it into arguments false in their premises (*materia*), or in their logic (*forma*), or in both; this is widely quoted" (Maclean 1992, 137). In Marguerite and Rabelais's narratives, unscrupulous characters rely on techniques of cavillation when using the language of reciprocity for personal gain, as does the duke in N12, who makes

¹¹⁴ See Maclean for related terms, such as *benigna interpretatio* (1992, 176).

¹¹⁵ See Eden on equity surpassing law by its power to accommodate and on equitable individuals as those who do not enforce the law's stringency on their own behalf (1997, 13).

¹¹⁶ Maclean describes aspects of cavillation as a way of purposely avoiding the goals sought out by charitable interpretation (1992, 135).

allusions to the unity of the soul when asking his friend to help him seduce his sister, or Panurge, when he reformulates classical and contemporary descriptions of love in his self-serving praise of debts. These rhetorical techniques reveal ulterior motives for participating in “amityéz.” Manifestations of cavillation arise in excessive verbosity, illustrating its characteristic redundancy. This aspect of cavillation is associated with certain ways of circumventing the law, by means of vexatious litigation, or by resemblance to legally viable methods, including standard rhetorical uses of *amplificatio* (Maclean 1992, 135,6).¹¹⁷ Such use of language is akin to the *loquacitas* addressed in the prologues, a rhetorical characteristic that follows the form of *copia* while lacking the *varietas* that develops discourse (see Chapter I). Such lack of spirit translates into a disregard for the intended meaning of various kinds of discourse: “But cavillation is not a vice confined to the law; it is much cited in theology, where it is often linked to scholastic hairsplitting and unevangelical adherence to the letter and not the spirit” (Maclean 1992, 137). Contrary to the corrective function of equity, uses of cavillation may rely on taking terms out of context, by dissociating words from their frame of reference. In addition, cavillation is dangerously close to legal fiction, an accepted technique of treating a situation with a law that was not originally intended for it.¹¹⁸ The question of whether or not interpretation takes place in good faith brings up the role of intention in the actions of individuals, which can provide turning points in narratives on friendship.

¹¹⁷ Vexatious litigation involves insufficient grounds, often set forth with the intent of annoying the defendant (Maclean 1992, 135).

¹¹⁸ Maclean describes techniques of legal fiction: “Fictional legal arguments can take various forms – inductive, privative and translative – which Coras illustrates; they are distinguished from cavillation not in their formal or material elements (i.e. their argument or premises) but in their purpose. Legal fictions are inspired by equity and are designed to further the common good; cavillation is motivated by self-interest and the good of the individual, and seeks to evade the force of law” (1992, 139).

The role of intention brings up sources of participation in friendship models – factors such as will, choice, inclination, disposition, affection – that would cause individuals to engage in paradigms delineated by friendship. We can describe such motivation to participate in friendships as *voluntas*. The term is also used to indicate an individual’s final wishes in a bequest: “defensio testamentorum ac voluntatis mortuorum.”¹¹⁹ As illustrated by the circumstances of a last will and testament, seeking an individual’s *voluntas* entails uses of equity. Indeed, Cicero notes in the *De inventione* that the advocate of *voluntas* necessarily supports his case with a claim of equity (Eden 1997, 14). In the *Heptaméron* and the *Tiers Livre*, characters’ search for *voluntas* is brought out by discussions, which serve the equitable function of resolving friendship paradigms with observed behavior between two individuals in relationships of mutual esteem. As in the larger context of community, friendship as a social model reflects friendship as a discursive model, interpreters illustrating equitable approaches to friendship by revealing their own *voluntas* as they seek out the *voluntas* of others. This reflects a reader’s equitable approach to texts in a “hermeneutics of charity.”¹²⁰ As a voluntary relationship, friendship is distinct from relationships that are determined by family line or written contract, revealing *voluntas* as the underlying thread in the shifting paradigms that are illustrated. In the case of marriage, the issue becomes confused by its legal, written component and by its role in lineage. Yet the reciprocity attributed to spouses in Marguerite and Rabelais’s texts places it among examples of friendship. Such

¹¹⁹ *A Latin Dictionary*, s.v. “Voluntas.”

¹²⁰ Eden describes the role of *voluntas* in charitable approaches to texts: “Indeed, a hermeneutics of charity defines a disposition toward the text rather than any doctrine, in that the discovery of *caritas* within the text not only finds support elsewhere – indeed, everywhere else – in the text, but also qualifies the *voluntas* of the reader by qualifying his or her way of reading as equitable or, in Augustine’s terms, spiritual in that it searches out the *voluntas* of the writer” (1997, 58).

representations of the conjugal union reflect descriptions found in the broader Renaissance corpus, and particularly in descriptions found in Erasmus' texts on marriage, which in turn share language with his descriptions of friendship.

The friendship paradigm, like the *voluntas* that underlies it, appears as a thread throughout Erasmus' treatises and *encomia*. These follow the parallel between friendship as a social practice and as a discursive practice indicated by the placement of "amicorum communia omnia" at the beginning of the 1508 edition of the *Adages* (Eden 2001, 25-6). This call for friendship continues in the second adage, "amicitia æqualitas, amicus alter ipse," which also appeals to commonality by illustrating the reciprocal nature of friendship. Such commonality appears in Erasmus' description of two individuals possessing one soul, for which he refers to Pythagoras: "friendship is equality and having one soul" (CWE 31, 31).¹²¹ This unity characterizes discourse on various forms of "amitié" that appear in Marguerite and Rabelais's texts. As characters continually seek out the *voluntas* of those who participate in fealty, courtly love, and marriage, they illustrate the alliance between *voluntas* and equity. This alignment also appears in works of Erasmus published in the years following the *Adages*, such as the *Institutio principis christiani*, the *Institutio christiani matrimonii*, and the *Encomium matrimonii*, which appears in the *De conscribendis epistolis*.¹²² Treating the relationships between monarch and subject, husband and wife, tutor and pupil, these writings set forth a fraternal model that reflects Pauline notions of *caritas* while incorporating classical images of friendship

¹²¹ The same idea appears as a "famous classical dictum" in the *Nicomachean Ethics* 1166a 31-32: "a friend is another self" (Langer 1994, 78).

¹²² The works are composed in 1516, published in 1526, first printed in 1518, appearing in 1522, respectively.

into these descriptions. In this manner, they show the significance of charity in relationships of friendship.

II. FRIENDSHIP AND NARRATIVE

As the *devisants* embark on their activity of storytelling, they draw from personal experience, focusing on events that they consider relevant to their current situation. Their vernacular, unstylized language reinforces this emphasis on everyday experience. While accentuating the uses of oral language over written language, they remain inspired by their literary model, the *Decameron*. Indeed, their motive for telling tales evokes the proem of the *Decameron*, in which Boccaccio's narrator speaks of the use of discourse to alleviate melancholy. Stricken by the effects of lovesickness, Boccaccio's narrator describes the curative role that friendship has played in his recovery from an unendurable love: "In this unhappy state I derived so much refreshment from pleasant conversation with friends and their admirable support, I cannot doubt but that if I'm still alive it is thanks to them" (Boccaccio 1993, 3). Like Boccaccio's narrator, who transforms his agonizing lovesickness into pleasant conversation with friends, the *devisants* transform the bleakness of their stranded situation into an enriching context of storytelling, an activity that takes on an instrumental role in their recovery. Their use of storytelling to counteract the demoralizing effects of their hazardous journey follows the Boccaccian model of discourse as an antidote to melancholy. Referring to their literary model, they seek comfort in discourse, which is used as a means of resisting the melancholy brought about by brooding and idleness.

The *devisants'* manner of using discourse to alleviate melancholy suggests the edifying role of discussion in the *locus amœnus*. This aspect of their tale telling reflects Pauline descriptions of discourse: "When you gather together, each one of you may have

a psalm, or a doctrine, or a revelation, or a language, or an interpretation, but let everything be done for edification” (I Cor 14: 26). These uses of discourse point to the unified moral purpose of the different forms discourse takes on. They also suggest an inclusive view of the various members of community, alluded to by the varied forms of discourse that speak to a broad audience. The Pauline appeal of edification as a common goal, “omnia ad ædificationem fiant,” suggests the constructive process of building a “lieu commun” attained through such discourse. This constructive attitude toward speech guides the *devisants* in their tale telling, whose curative purpose is stated at the outset. As the *devisants* pursue these edifying goals, they tell tales that examine different forms of friendship. Both their focus on “amitié” and their conversation illustrates “la quête ardente d’union spirituelle” that Lucien Febvre describes as the principal interest of Guillaume Briçonnet, Marguerite’s spiritual guide.¹²³ Their own epistolary exchange solidifies an “amitié” between them in which they emphasize Pauline approaches to topics of love and marriage.

The edifying role of the *devisants*’ discourse helps shape the didactic aspect of the tales recounted in the *locus amœnus*. This comes about in the selection of a theme upon which the *devisants* speak on a given day and the commentary that follows. The view of the *devisants*’ tales as primarily didactic is prominent though some take exception to this view.¹²⁴ We can expand upon the conclusion that the *Heptaméron* goes beyond being solely didactic by recalling the ways in which the *devisants*’ discourse is affected by both

¹²³ Febvre describes this relationship between Marguerite and Briçonnet (1944, 75); the relationship is also set forth in Marguerite’s letter to Briçonnet, which opens the *Correspondences* v.1, in which she asks him for “secours spirituelle” (1975, 25).

¹²⁴ Jourda, Gelernt, and Lebègue express views of the *Heptaméron* being principally a didactic work, as MJ Baker points out; Baker takes exception to the view that Marguerite is an exclusively didactic writer (1971, 84); Tetel takes exception to Marguerite being viewed above all as a moralizing author and speaks of her craft of fiction being closely integrated with the didactic aims of the work (1973, 15).

the pastoral space that they occupy and by the medieval epic themes of fealty and courtly love that influence their tales. As they express various notions of friendship, the *devisants* adopt different registers of language, thereby drawing upon various aspects of Virgil's Wheel, the *Rota Virgilio*.¹²⁵ Corresponding to the triadic career of Virgil, this image is illustrated in the form of concentric circles: "a quasi-cosmic image in which the texts of Virgil come to stand for all possible forms of human life and expression."¹²⁶ Linked to visual representations of the cosmos, this image reflects the broad scope of experience that the *devisants* ascribe to the notion of "amitié."¹²⁷ Descriptions of "amitié" in the contexts of fealty, courtly love, Christian charity, and marriage in N12, N19, N21, N40, N47, and N55 give portraits of "amitié" that encompass experience and tradition. In this manner, their topics of discourse, like the registers of language that they adopt, express stages of the *Rota Virgilio*. Inspired by the pastoral setting of the *locus amœnus*,¹²⁸ the *devisants* recount scenarios that draw upon medieval epic as well as didactic anecdotes.

Portraits of friendship arise in narratives that attempt to illustrate the effects of love on individuals. This again suggests the experience of Boccaccio's narrator, as his consuming passion for a love-object becomes assuaged by conversation with friends. The *devisants'* descriptions of friendship often result from an intent to describe forms of

¹²⁵ Virgil's Wheel, called the *Rota Virgilio*, is explained in the four-line proemium of unknown authorship appended to Renaissance editions of the *Æneid*: "I am he who, after singing on the shepherd's slender pipe and leaving the woodside for the farmlands, urged the plowed lands ever so much to obey their eager tenant; my work was welcome to the farmers, but now I turn to the sterner stuff of Mars" (*Spenser Encyclopedia*, s.v. "Virgil").

¹²⁶ The *Cambridge Companion to Virgil* describes the way in which the concentric form of the *Rota Virgilio* evokes images of various human experiences, using epic, didactic, and pastoral registers of speech (s.v. "Virgil").

¹²⁷ The image evokes different spheres of existence, as indicated by writings on cosmography, such as Apian's *Cosmographie* (Lestringant 1993b, 53), as well as different uses of language to approach various topics of discourse.

¹²⁸ The *mise en scène* of the *devisants'* *locus amœnus* evokes a "beautiful place" (see Chapter I).

love.¹²⁹ The link between love and friendship has classical sources, appearing in Cicero's *De amicitia*: "For it is love (*amor*) from which the word 'friendship' (*amicitia*) is derived, that leads to the establishing of goodwill."¹³⁰ The range of relationships that friendship denotes is reflected by its semantic and etymological links to love, yet the breadth of this range also results in contradictory perspectives on friendship. Contradictory uses of the terms, "amour," "amitié," and their cognates refer to relationships that range from Christian charity to concupiscence. Interpretive differences arise from the disparity in usage of these terms, thus leading to disagreements among the *devisants* over the significance of the events that are related and detracting from the unity and harmony promised by the mythologies attached to love.¹³¹ In addition, certain forms of love appear to interfere with one another, as with romantic love and perfect friendship, or marriage and spiritual love. As the *devisants* attempt to express ideal models of friendship in their everyday narratives, they inevitably come up against tensions between models and samples, exemplary characters and deviant actions, and shifting contexts that affect the paradigms set forth in the *locus amœnus*.

Whereas these perceptions of friendship diverge at some points, they also express the role of the *devisants*' narratives and commentary in constituting a collective identity, an exchange that in turn gives the *devisants* perspective on themselves. In fact, their exchange alleviates "the blindness of each individual to himself or herself" and reveals the need for external representation, aspects of storytelling stressed in Marguerite's work

¹²⁹ Ennasuite, for example, makes the following comment before recounting her take of sublime love in N19: "Il me semble ... que toutes les amours du monde soient fondées sur ces follyes ; mais il y en a qui ont aymé et longuement perseveré, de qui l'intention n'a point esté telle" (M 1943, 142; 1999, 277).

¹³⁰ "Amor enim (ex quo amicitia est nominata) princeps est ad benevolentiam coniungendam" (in Langer 1994, 118).

¹³¹ Nancy Frelick describes the range of terms associated with "amour" and "amitié" and the conflicts that arise among the *devisants* as a result of interpretive differences related to these terms (2010, 331).

(Lyons 1989, 73). Notions of friendship take shape through an exchange based on examples, a use of narrative that is parallel to the moral function of religious *exempla*. Like religious *exempla*, whose intended use of narratives as models upholds their exemplary stance,¹³² the *devisants'* narratives attempt to illustrate assertions that they make about friendship and love. While offered as illustrations of certain values affiliated with love and friendship, the narratives stray from their status as models as they unfold. Such divergence seems to pull the narratives from their original "use," yet they provide material for the *devisants'* commentary, which ultimately expands ideas on "amityé." In this way, the *devisants'* discursive presentation of events that they have experienced builds upon the Latin origins of the term "exemplum," which emphasize the contrast necessary in order for an image to take shape.¹³³ The *devisants'* conversation, including their conflicting opinions and their different registers of speech, seeks out a greater understanding of friendship. Debate occurs out of a search for meaning rather than a desire for ambition. Deviations in conversation and departures from common perspective reflect the image, given by Lefèvre d'Étaples, of a ship during a tempest that is driven by a strong wind rather than by the will of individual sailors, reflecting the yielding of individuals to the authority of the gospel (2009, 313). This image is echoed by the yielding of one narrative voice to another in the *locus amœnus*.

The *devisants'* use of narrative also reflects Erasmus' presentation of *exempla* in the *De copia*, which includes figures of speech such as "fables, *apologi*, judgments, parables or collations, images or analogies," as well as "*sententiæ*, metaphors, and adages." These in turn reflect Erasmus' presentation of *adagia* : "*sententiæ*, metaphors,

¹³² Lyons describes the equivalence between *exemplum* and narrative (1989, 11).

¹³³ The term refers to a clearing in the woods; the use of example reflects the dependence of woods and clearing on each other for their respective forms (Lyons 1989, 3).

parables, paradigms, *exempla*, similes, images, and that kind of schemata.”¹³⁴ Such figures entice and delight readers by appealing to a sense of familiarity; the variety of figures expands discourse.¹³⁵ In a similar vein, the *devisants*’ narratives, inspired by events that are relevant to the characters’ present situation, develop notions of friendship through the series of examples that the interlocutors give. Their digressions signal the function of obscure figures in narrative which, according to Erasmus, force readers to investigate and learn (Tracy 1972, 79). Their commentary shows the manner in which exchange develops their perspective, at times causing them to reconstitute their notions of “amityé.” In this manner, the *devisants* reveal the effects of rhetorical decisions on the witnessed events that they illustrate, thereby showing the role of discourse in their expanding notions of friendship.

II.i A Friend is Another Self

N12 and N47 introduce friendships between characters whose relationships initially fulfill the tenets of perfect friendship. Each narrative paints a detailed portrait of the characteristics of these perfect friendships, focusing on the perception of the two friends as a single person and reflecting the idea expressed in Erasmus’ second adage: “amicus alter ipse.” N12 describes two friends who assume the same identity, being perceived as one person by members of the court to which they belong and even

¹³⁴ Tracy describes these similarities in his discussion of the role of familiar discourse in Erasmus’ education models; the figures of speech that Erasmus includes under “adagia” are virtually identical with those included in the *De copia* (1972, 78).

¹³⁵ Tracy describes Erasmus’ manner of appealing to an audience in the *De copia* and also describes Erasmus’ effort to build education around familiar discourse (1972, 78).

described as sharing one soul. N47 describes two friends who are presented as having one heart and sharing all possessions, thereby embodying the precepts expressed in Erasmus' first adage: "amicorum communia omnia." The relationships begin as examples of ideal masculine love, recalling medieval models of fealty and classical models of *amicitia*. Situations of romantic love and marriage confound these relationships. Although the presence of a third female party is the cause of one friend's deviation from friendship in each of the novellas, it is the friend with the love interest who perpetuates the conflict and initially experiences feelings of the loss of friendship. This suggests the internal conflicts of individuals who attempt to adhere to different friendship paradigms. The interior settings in which these conflicts erupt – a bedchamber and a small house – reflect these internal conflicts.

Each of these tales is related by Dagoucin, whose actions and language reveal an idealistic character. Dagoucin acts honorably in the prologue, defending his ladies and their husbands when they are attacked in the night. Throughout the narrative, he speaks of courtly love and friendship in idealistic terms. He not only adheres to courtly ideals, but shows an affinity for other conceptions of love, such as those that are Neoplatonic (Davis 1979, 33). His focus on love and friendship emphasizes the magnitude of charity in social interaction, an attitude that recalls the Pauline designation of charity as greatest of all graces.¹³⁶ Dagoucin seems motivated by the value he places on the power of love. The examples he sets forth inspire the *devisants*' discourse on the admirable qualities of "amityé" and on the way in which different forms of love affect "amityé."

¹³⁶ "But for now, these three continue: faith, hope, and charity. And the greatest of these is charity" (I Cor 13:13).

Dagoucin's tale of "amitié" between a duke of Florence and one of his gentlemen in N12 opens with a presentation of their common identity, the gentleman assuming the role of a second self to the duke, "le second luy-mesmes" (M 1943, 90; 1999, 204). While their closeness fulfills precepts of perfect friendship, their individual characters raise the question of whether perfect friendship is possible when participants show bad character. The duke is revealed to be tyrannical, asking for the gentleman's assistance in arranging an extra-marital liaison between himself and the gentleman's sister and refusing to listen to the gentleman's pleas to not implicate him in the project. The gentleman, in the meantime, appears capable of rescinding his oath of allegiance of fealty, as he eventually promises to assist the duke, but instead arranges for his assassination. The conflict between family and feudal honor erupts in a skirmish with political repercussions that overturn the power structures of Florence.

The origins of Dagoucin's tale are found in political events of the Medici court. Based on the 1537 assassination of Alessandro de' Medici,¹³⁷ Dagoucin's tale assumes the point of view of the assassin, a gentleman modeled after Lorenzino de' Medici, also known as Lorenzaccio.¹³⁸ This perspective suggests sympathy for the Lorenzaccio figure, as it follows his plight and reasoning and leaves his family honor intact. Other accounts of the incident diverge from this perspective, as in Benedetto Varchi's description of the relationship as one that neither possessed the attributes of great friendship nor granted Lorenzino a position of power in Alessandro's entourage.¹³⁹ Other Italian chronicles describe Lorenzino and Alessandro's relationship as one based on mutual self-interest

¹³⁷ See Mathieu-Castellani's description of the event (1999, 203, n.4).

¹³⁸ Frelick notes that this is apparently one of the first versions of the story of Lorenzaccio (2010, 3, n. 3).

¹³⁹ Johnson describes the historic sources for this view (2003, 90).

rather than mutual esteem.¹⁴⁰ In addition, Alessandro's love interest may have been Lorenzino's married aunt rather than his sister, presenting historical ambiguity over the identity of Alessandro's love interest.¹⁴¹ The more sympathetic view of Dagoucin's narrative describes the assassination as an event that saves the Lorenzaccio figure's sister while freeing the Republic of Florence. This version of these historic events shows the manner in which family honor, personal honor, and honor of the state coincide.

The relationship between the duke and gentleman illustrates the effects of friendship on the larger political sphere. The two characters initially embody ideal friendship models of figures that appear in chivalric texts originating in the twelfth century.¹⁴² They also recall classical portraits of military relationships that relate honorable performance in battle to love of a fellow soldier, as described by Phædrus, the first speaker in Plato's *Symposium*.¹⁴³ In addition, they reflect the sharing of a single soul that recalls Erasmus' second adage (see above).¹⁴⁴ The opening passage of N12 echoes this adage twice: once in the description of the duke's love for the gentleman, "que le duc aymoît comme luy-mesme," and once in a description of the gentleman's role as confidant, which is cause for identifying one with the other: "Et n'y avoit secret en sa maison ny en son cueur qu'il ne declairast à ce gentilhomme, en sorte que l'on le pouvoit nommer le second luy-mesmes" (M 1943, 90; 1991, 204). The unanimity that these descriptions attribute to the duke and gentleman carries over into the manner in which

¹⁴⁰ Schachter describes the origins of this view (2011, 167); Langer distinguishes between friendship based on use and loving others for themselves, what he refers to as perfect friendship (1994, 105).

¹⁴¹ Johnson (2003, 90) and Schachter (2011, 171) describe the historical ambiguity of Alessandro's love interest, a view shared by Renja Salminen in her edition of the *Heptaméron* (Genève: Droz, 1999 v. 2, 85).

¹⁴² Examples include Chrétien de Troyes' *Le Chevalier de la Charette* and his *Erec et Enide*.

¹⁴³ Phædrus sets forth an idealized version of male friendship, based on military participation, in the *Symposium*.

¹⁴⁴ This view of friendship is ascribed to Pythagoras, with sources in Aristotle's *Magna Moralia*, Book 2, as well as Plato's *Laws*, Book 6 (CWE 31, 31)

other members of the court respond to the gentleman, who possesses “tant d’autorité en sa maison, que sa parole estoit obeye et craincte comme celle du duc” (ibid). This grants the gentleman power at court that is almost equivalent to that of the duke. This equivalence of power illustrates a shift from servant-master or courtier-prince to that of perfect friendship (Schachter 2011, 167). The equal footing on which the gentleman finds himself with the duke also recalls the ceremony of the oath of allegiance taken by a vassal, during which his lord physically raises him from a kneeling position to his own height.¹⁴⁵ This ceremonial act emphasizes the reciprocity of the lord and vassal, reflected by the gentleman’s ascent to a relationship of *æquitas* with the duke through their “amitié.”

The narrative then reveals the differences between these two figures, rescinding the unanimity between the protagonists, their relationship of *æquitas* sliding back into *iniquus*, a relationship that is “uneven” or even “unjust.”¹⁴⁶ This rupture in their friendship arises from the duke’s concupiscence, a base form of love that disrupts the elevated characteristics of their “amitié.” The commanding tone of the duke’s words recalls the characters’ unequal social standing, which counteracts ideals of equality and commonality that characterize friendship. The dissolution of their friendship, from unanimity to animosity, comes out in the dialogue between the two men, as their confidences become words of concealment, an exchange in bad faith. When the duke asks for the gentleman’s “service” to help save him from a silence that he describes as mortal, he uses the language of friendship for ulterior purposes: “je vous declaireray un

¹⁴⁵ Leushuis describes this symbolic act, referring to Georges Duby and Robert Mandrou’s *Histoire de la civilisation française. I Moyen Âge – XVIe siècle*. (Paris: Colin, 1968 and Duby, *France in the Middle Ages*, 68 and 74) (2004, 6).

¹⁴⁶ *A Latin Dictionary*, s.v. “Iniquus.”

secret, dont le taire me met en l'estat que vous voyez, duquel je n'espere amendement que par la mort ou par le service que vous me pouvez faire" (M 1943, 90; 1999, 204-5).

The gentleman responds enthusiastically, not only affirming his duty as a vassal: "je suis vostre creature : tout le bien et l'honneur que j'ay en ce monde vient de vous" (M 1943, 91; 1999, 205), but as a friend, alluding to the commonplace of friends possessing a single soul: "vous pouvez parler à moy comme à vostre ame" (ibid).¹⁴⁷ His pledge of loyalty suggests the Aristotelian idea of being able to render services to a friend who cannot accomplish what he wishes on his own (Schachter 2011, 173).

Yet when the duke's desires become clear, the gentleman recants, imploring the duke to spare him from disgracing his family and appealing to the duke's empathy as an "amy." This break in their friendship reveals the incongruity of their desires and values, contradicting the image of a single being who shares one soul. The duke's response shows a lack of empathy and even a lack of humanity, as he bites his nails in an almost animal-like gesture, while denouncing the gentleman as possessing "nulle amityé" (M 1943, 91; 1999, 205). The gentleman's response fulfills the duke's words, as he cunningly promises to speak to his sister while biding his time for an attack. His deceptive language is accompanied by deceptive uses of his intimate knowledge of the duke's personality, which allows him to play upon the blinding force of the duke's desires: "Le duc, qui desiroit ceste nouvelle, la creut facilement" (M 1943, 92; 1991, 77). The language used in the narrative thus presents a shift from the expression of a relationship characterized by confidence and equality to one that is characterized by coercion and deceit. Their language, like their actions, lacks the charity that would give them common pursuits and values.

¹⁴⁷ See Schachter on the commonplace of possessing a common soul (2011, 173).

The political repercussions of their personal conflict point to the perils of governance without friendship. The duke's actions contradict notions of governance that place friendship at the center of duties constituting a civic life.¹⁴⁸ His refusal to listen to the gentleman reveals a tyrannical attitude toward his position of power. The narrator explicitly states the duke's tyranny at the moment the gentleman decides to "delivrer sa patrye d'un tel tyran" (M 1943, 92; 1999, 206), and reiterates the tyrannical aspect of the duke's character at various moments throughout the novella, including the assessment by several of the *devisants* that "le gentil homme avoit faict son debvoir de saulver sa vie et l'honneur de sa seur, ensemble d'avoir delivré sa patrie d'un tel tirant" (M 1943, 95; 1999, 210). The image of tyrant appears with the overthrow of the duke, as the gentleman emerges from their skirmish "victorieux de son grant ennemy, par la mort duquel il pensoit mectre en liberté la chose publicque" (M 1943, 93; 1999, 208). The duke's death becomes equivalent to the liberation of "la chose publicque," the *res publica* in the classical sense, the republic of Florence. Dagoucin's conclusion to the tale takes up the reference to tyranny, when he speaks of the nefarious consequences of abuses of power: "Et doibvent bien craindre les princes et ceulx qui sont en auctorité, de faire desplaisir à moindre que eulx" (M 1943, 94-5; 1999, 210). Citing divine protection of those who resist misuses of authority, Dagoucin's concluding remarks anticipate criticism of tyranny, which is often juxtaposed with friendship, a topos that appears in later writings, such as Estienne de la Boétie's "Discours de la servitude volontaire," and Montaigne's "De l'amitié," (see above).¹⁴⁹ The effectiveness of friendship over tyranny expressed in

¹⁴⁸ See Langer on friendship as central to civic life (1994, 115-16).

¹⁴⁹ See Langer on the incompatibility of friendship with tyranny (1994, 22); such views draw from the Aristotelian ideas of friendship as superceding justice in the establishment of laws, as stated in the *Nicomachean Ethics* (VIII, i); see Johnson on the wide belief that Montaigne, at least in its initial stages,

these works draws upon the same classical notions that are found in Erasmus' *Institutio principis christiani* and Thomas More's *Utopia*, both published in 1516. Evoking Aristotelian themes of friendship as the foundation of the state, these works show the unifying role that friendship takes on among individuals who are members of various social units. Experiencing a bond that occurs through common interests, friendship constitutes the core of civic life and is solidified through a divine presence. The incompatibility of friendship with tyranny appears as a factor in the disintegration of the "amitié" between the duke and gentleman of N12, a situation that can be juxtaposed with precepts expressed in these other works.

The frame-narrative points to other possible sources of the dissolution of "amitié," including the disposition of the two principal characters. The relationship between the two men does not meet classical or contemporary notions of perfect friendship as "a relationship of good men with each other through their goodness" (Langer 1994, 20).¹⁵⁰ Although the gentleman's decision to attack the duke is brought about by circumstance, as the *devisantes* indicate later on in their defense of the gentleman, his relationship with the duke, to whom he initially assumes the position of a second self, makes his own capacity for friendship suspect, as several of the *devisants* point out (Schachter 2011, 170). The gentleman's deceptive language is partially motivated by his knowledge of the duke's cruelty when, "congnoissant la cruaulté de son maistre" (M 1943, 91; 1999, 205), he gives the false impression that he will speak to his

wrote the *Essais* in order to replace his companionship with the late La Boétie (Johnson 2003, 98); Montaigne, like Marguerite, played an important role in the national politics of his day (ibid.).

¹⁵⁰ Schachter refers to Aristotle in his description of the relationship between individual character and the ability to be a friend: "The perfect form of friendship is that between the good, and those who resemble each other in virtue." He also refers to Cicero's descriptions of friendship only existing between good men, in the *De amicitia* and Castiglione's description in *Il Cortegiano*: "the friendship of the wicked isn't friendship" (2011, 170).

sister on the duke's behalf. This brings his own character into question, as the two have assumed a unanimous identity at court. For the *devisants* who have personal experience with the codes of fealty, the gentleman's behavior reveals a flawed fulfillment of his role as vassal: "c'estoit trop grande ingratitude de mectre à mort celluy qui luy avoit faict tant de bien et d'honneur" (M 1943, 95; 1999, 211). This use of power against the one who bestows it points to a flawed character. Although illustrating the awkward position in which the gentleman is placed, the narrative brings into question his capacity to fulfill the precepts of friendship.

A second friendship, appearing more briefly in the narrative, illustrates the fulfillment of precepts of friendship. The gentleman's relationship to his own servant suggests that he is capable of unity with another individual in mind and spirit and also suggests that this unity is possible between individuals of different social rank. Whereas the narrative does not describe their feelings and desires, it indicates through their brief exchange and unanimous action that they are of one mind. Evoking ideals of friendship expressed in the works of Plato and Erasmus (see above), the gentleman's servant shows loyalty and faithfulness to him, derived from military participation, while his words express the possession of a common spirit. Before attacking the duke, the gentleman appeals to his servant's loyalty much in the way that the duke appeals to his own: "Aurois-tu bien le cueur de me suyvre en ung lieu où je me veulx venger du plus grand ennemy que j'aye en ce monde?" (M 1943, 92; 1999, 207). Like the gentleman, the servant affirms his loyalty, but goes even further in his declaration of faith to complete the gentleman's train of thought: "Ouy, monsieur, fust-ce contre le duc mesmes" (ibid).

This allusion to the unanimity of spirit between the gentleman and his servant recalls descriptions, such as those in the *Adages*, which illustrate the extent to which the souls of friends are intermingled. It is furthermore played out in the skirmish with the duke, when the gentleman, in need of assistance, calls out to the servant for help. The servant discovers the accuracy of his hypothetical statement at the moment he enters the duke's chamber and, without deliberating, assists in the struggle to suppress the duke. His actions fulfill notions of faithfulness in war, as Langer describes: "the true test of friendship involves physical help in battle or other life-threatening situations," (1994, 115). The servant shows valor during the skirmish, striking mortal blows and helping to move the duke's body once it has expired. In addition to his help in battle, the servant also advises the gentleman strategically. He urges the gentleman to flee the scene rather than to continue to slay the duke's entourage, believing that this is the best way for him to escape arrest. The gentleman heeds the servant's advice, his attention to the servant's insight standing in contrast to the duke's refusal to listen to his own words. The servant thus proves to be an essential part of the duke's overthrow, embodying ideals of friendship based on military participation and allowing the gentleman to fulfill his own capacity for friendship. He thus contributes to the triumph over tyranny illustrated in the narrative and to the realization of ideals of friendship to which the narrator, Dagoucin, adheres.

The skirmish between the duke and gentleman takes place in a domestic setting, alluding to conflict within an *oikos*. Not only does the skirmish take place at court, but it is fought within the duke's chamber, the interior setting alluding to internal conflict. The intimacy of this conflict, between two figures who are initially represented as sharing a

soul, illustrates the conflict of values to which participants in this *oikos* adhere. While the intimacy of the scene could suggest erotic overtones, as Edward Joe Johnson describes,¹⁵¹ their struggle giving a portrait of physical intimacy, it also gives a visual representation of the conflation of personalities and of their violent separation. Despite the fact that the gentleman enters the duke's chamber armed and strikes the duke with his sword, the duke is able to seize him by the torso, transforming the scene into an unarmed struggle at close quarters instead of one that resembles movements on the battlefield. The blending of personalities described at the beginning of the tale is echoed in the conflation of their bodies, as they struggle with each other. During the struggle, the duke bites the gentleman's thumb as he has bitten his own nails during their dialogue, performing a gesture on the gentleman that he originally performs on himself. At the last stages of the skirmish, when the gentleman calls for help, their bodies become so intertwined that the gentleman's servant can barely distinguish one from the other: "trouvant le duc et son maistre si liez ensemble qu'il ne sçavoit lequel choisir" (M 1943, 93; 1999, 208). Their conflated physical image reflects the unanimity that their personalities have taken on at court.¹⁵² The servant is obliged to pull them apart in order to stab the duke, who continues to fight until he grows weak from a loss of blood. Drained of his livelihood, he illustrates the expiration of one friendship that is defeated by the acts of another. The movements of the characters show a dissonance between different values of the *oikos* while also reflecting the degeneration of friendship that has occurred during their dialogue.

¹⁵¹ Johnson describes the duke's attraction to the gentleman's sister as being an extension of the duke's attraction to the gentleman himself and notes several images that give the encounter an erotic tone, such as the gentleman's dressing and undressing of the duke in preparation for the assignation, the gentleman's arrival on the scene with an "espée toute nue," and the biting of the gentleman's thumb as an expression of erotic desire (2003, 95,6). He also refers to medieval models of masculine love that their language evokes during their dialogue (2003, 95).

¹⁵² See Wack on the assimilation of lover and love-object (1990, 65) (see Chapter III).

The philosophical dilemmas suggested by this struggle come out in the *devisants'* commentary, when those who have participated in relationships of fealty – mainly the men – criticize the gentleman's actions while those who are concerned with maintaining an honorable reputation – mainly the women – applaud him. The dilemma into which the friendship between the duke and gentleman falls illustrates the strain that different social codes may place on friendships. Conversely, the dissipation of friendship between men who lack affection and the solidification of friendship between men who behave as of one mind show that the effects of love may fall upon various members of the court, regardless of their social standing.

Dagoucin points to the universal effects of love in the conclusion to his tale, a view that suggests allegorical descriptions of love in medieval narrative. This view refers to love as a powerful passion, governing individuals in their actions. His romantic view of love comes out in an allegorical reference to the effects of extreme love as a “*petit dieu*” (M 1943, 94; 1999, 210). Taking on the role of a lesser god, this baser form of love assumes demonic qualities acting as a force “*qui prent son plaisir à tormenter autant les princes que les pauvres, et les fortz que les foibles*” (ibid), thereby causing individuals, regardless of rank and fortune, to abandon their conscience, their faith, and their own lives. This description of love as a separate entity, and one that interferes with the love that builds ideal friendships, introduces uses of allegory into Dagoucin's rendering of historical events.

Parlamente's response to Dagoucin's warning, which he attributes to women's beauties, rejects love as a coercive force and emphasizes its uplifting qualities. She expresses her views on love as ennobling and constructive by also drawing from

medieval sources: “*La Belle dame sans mercy* nous a appris à dire que si gratieuse malladye ne met guere de gens à mort” (M 1943, 95, 1999, 211). Her citation of Alain Chartier’s text uses allegory to dissociate love in its less noble manifestations, a “si gratieuse malladye,” from the demonic qualities of a “petit dieu,” instead aligning it with lovesickness, a physical condition considered curable from a medical point of view.¹⁵³ In this way, Parlamente shifts responsibility for the nefarious effects of base love from the love-object to the lover. This perspective recalls the lovesickness in the *Decameron* that is tempered by friendship, a weaker form of love that becomes dwarfed by true friendship. While giving contrasting opinions on various forms of love, the exchange between Dagoucin and Parlamente places the historical events of the Medici court within a literary continuum of discourse on love.

Dagoucin shows a continuing preoccupation with friendship in another tale he tells of an idealized friendship between two men, one he describes as a “si grande et parfaicte amytié que ce n’estoit que ung cuer, une maison, ung lict, une table et une bource” (M 1943, 311; 1999, 524). Not only do these friends in N47 share a heart, but they also share finances, as well as the domestic space of a home and the intimate space of a bed. The extent of their shared lives emphasizes a relationship of *aequitas*, a relationship between friends illustrated in Erasmus’ second adage: “For there is nothing not shared when there is equality of fortune; nor is there any dissension where the mind is one and the same, nor any separation where two are joined in one” (CWE 31, 31). Dagoucin’s emphasis on the sharing of possessions indicates the two men’s similar fortunes, while his elimination of references to social standing through the omission of

¹⁵³ See Ferguson on Galenic views of symptoms of lovesickness and proposed cures (in Polachek 2003, 123).

names and titles also points to their equal standing. Likeness of mind and spirit is thus reinforced by their social equality, causing the portrait of friendship to focus on internal shifts in the spirit of individuals that cause the demise of friendship.

Although the circumstance of marriage appears as an intervening relationship in the men's friendship, the origins of its dissipation remain abstract. Dagoucin points out that even after one friend marries, the two men continue to live as before: "L'un des deux se maria; toutefois, pour cela, ne laissa-il à continuer sa bonne amitié et tousjours vivre, avecq son bon compaignon, comme il avoit accoustumé," going so far as to share a bed when needed: "et, quant ilz estoient en quelque logis estroit, ne laissoit à le faire coucher avecq sa femme et luy : il est vray qu'il estoit au milieu" (M 1943, 312; 1999, 525). In addition to continuing to share space, they continue to share possessions: "Leurs biens estoient tous en commung, en sorte que, pour le mariage ne cas qui peut advenir, ne sceut empescher ceste parfaicte amitié" (M 1943, 312; 1999, 525). The friends thus show the capacity to live within in a communal setting, regardless of their differing married and unmarried states. This emphasizes the role of the mind and spirit in friendship, which remains constant in cases of true friendship.

The married friend's change of heart comes from an unspecified source, arising "sans nulle occasion," which Dagoucin attributes to the susceptibility of earthly happiness to unexpected changes: "la felicité de ce monde, qui avecq soy porte une mutabilité, ne peut durer en la maison, qui estoit trop heureuse" (ibid). This description points to an ill-founded source of the married man's suspicion of infidelity. Although certain factors in the tale might indicate economic disparities as a source of the rupture between the friends, such as the ability for one man to marry and this friend's

appropriation of the house after the friendship dissipates (Johnson 2003, 85-6), other factors suggest that sources for the end of the friendship are internal. The termination of the happy state of the home suggests, for Marcel Tetel, an implacable fate attached to the human condition that is expressed throughout the narrative.¹⁵⁴ Though nebulous in origin, this internal discord solidifies in the absence of dialogue between the two friends. The married friend ceases to speak of his true feelings of jealousy and forbids his wife to speak to his friend and only through the wife does his friend become aware of these measures to block communication. The unity in friendship that Dagoucin emphasizes in his detailed illustration of the friends' shared possessions and spirit dissipates when the married friend ceases to speak openly to his friend, reflecting the lack of a charitable spirit. The absence of charity empties their home of the kinship and harmony that leads to the true possession of all things in common.

The fading of the charitable bond between these friends illustrates a Pauline emphasis on charity as the most important characteristic of individuals in all of their actions and behavior. I Cor 13:3 illustrates the emptiness of acts, such as the sharing of goods and the offering of one's own body, without charity: "And if I distribute all my goods in order to feed the poor, and if I hand over my body to be burned, yet not have charity, it offers me nothing." The distribution of wealth in the home of the men and their lives as one body similarly become meaningless when the married man grows suspicious of his friend, prevents his wife from speaking to him, and refuses to admit his jealousy. His jealousy not only interferes with his demonstrations of *caritas*, but remains unacknowledged and thus able to freely act upon the relationship. The married friend's

¹⁵⁴ Tetel indicates that Marguerite suggests this view of human nature in more than one tale (1973, 11).

silence on his jealousy shows an obstruction of the discourse that builds up friendship. Jealousy consequently replaces charity as the guide for the married friend's behavior.

The married friend's refusal to discuss his jealousy with his friend is set forth as the greatest obstacle to their friendship, suggesting the relevance of Boccaccian and Erasmian descriptions of discourse as coincidental with friendship. Erasmus' dialogic works that illustrate the communion experienced between friends and Boccaccio's narrator's references to his own conversation with friends, as well as the storytelling of the *brigata* that he offers to his readers in the spirit of friendship, emphasize the central role discourse plays in building and sustaining friendship. Dagoucin's tale, on the other hand, points to an absence of dialogue between the two friends that allows the married man to succumb to his fears of cuckoldry. Both speeches that the unmarried man gives focus on his friend's attempts to hide his jealousy; his words are the only instances of direct discourse in the tale. This friend initially shows compassion toward his friend, acknowledging the coercive power of jealousy: "Je sçay bien que la jalousie est une passion aussi importable comme l'amour" (M 1943, 312; 1999, 526). Echoing Dagoucin's observation of the strength of coerced forms of love, he states the importance of counteracting such feelings by speaking openly about them and thereby maintaining the intimacy of those who share all things. At the end of the tale, when his friend fails to communicate with him in good faith, he restates his views: "Si vous estes jaloux, mon compaignon, c'est chose naturelle; mais, après les sermens que vous avez faitz, je ne me puis contanter de ce que vous me l'avez tant cellé" (M 1943, 313; 1999, 527). The unmarried friend's frustration points to his friend's dissimulation as the cause of the separation of their soul. Their different approaches to jealousy reveal different states of

mind, a separation of spirit that is only accentuated by the role of liaison that the wife takes on between the two men, who have ceased to be of the same heart and mind.

The interior setting of this drama reflects the interior rupture that causes the friendship to desist. The close quarters of the house, signaled by its small rooms and the single bed that seems to accommodate its inhabitants (Johnson, 2003, 89), contribute to the small, intimate portrait of the friendship and indicate the internal nature of their conflict. Whereas the men are initially presented as possessing one mind and spirit: “tant ilz vivoient non seulement comme deux freres, mais comme ung homme tout seul” (M 1943, 312; 1999, 524-5), the narrative introduces the question of the degree to which they are, in fact, identical. The marriage of one man and not the other suggests incongruous paths in life. The presence of the wife as the exception to their sharing of all things also indicates disparate experiences. The wife’s entry into the space of the small house occupied by two friends suggests an imbalance that offsets the identical access that the men have to all things and to each other.¹⁵⁵ Even without the physical separation of the two friends into different living circumstances, the new *ménage* creates distances between them linked to life experience, a source for the separation of their souls.

The unmarried friend’s confrontation of his friend illustrates an attempt to bridge the gap between their emotional differences. This shows an understanding of their divergent paths, which his friend rejects. Assuring his unmarried friend that he has no jealous feelings, the married friend entreats him to remain in the house: “... le pria de faire en sa maison comme il avoit accoustumé” (M 1943, 313; 1999, 526). His refusal to acknowledge his own emotional state suggests that he continues to have feelings for his

¹⁵⁵ Johnson describes the marriage as interfering with a homosocial world in which two men have complete access to each other (2003, 87).

friend and wishes circumstances between them to remain identical to the way they have been. This reveals the difficulties of attaining a common understanding when two friends have unidentical experiences. It also illustrates the difficulties of long-standing friendships, as they experience changes and transformations.

Jealousy corrodes the friendship in the end, reversing the charity that initially holds the friends together. The unmarried friend ends the friendship, citing their unidentical feelings as the cause of this rupture: “*puisque le soupçon vous a séparé de mon amitié, le despit me separera de la vostre*” (M 1943, 314; 1999, 528). Rather than experiencing a reciprocal love, they adopt a reciprocal enmity, their separation finalized by the division of their belongings and the abandonment of their shared space. What they do share in the end are the wife’s attentions. The repayment that the unmarried friend gives for the injury he feels occurs through the cuckoldry of his former friend, as he frankly states: “*je vous jure et promectz ma foy que seray tel que vous m’estimez, et ne cesseray jamais jusques ad ce que j’ay eu de vostre femme ce que vous cuydez que j’en pourchasse*” (M 1943, 314; 1999, 527-8). Mirroring his frankness at the beginning of the descent of their friendship into enmity, the unmarried friend reveals his intention to fulfill his worst fear. Jealousy thus becomes the most lethal weapon against love, as Dagoucin states at the conclusion of his tale: “*Et qui dict que la soupçon est amour, je luy nye, car, combien qu’il en sorte comme la cendre du feu, ainsi le tue-il*” (M 1943, 314; 1999, 528). This view of jealousy as counteracting friendship reflects Pauline descriptions of its divisive power: “*And since there is still envy and contention among you, are you not carnal, and are you not walking according to man?*” (I Cor 3:3). Dagoucin’s tale of the demise of friendship reflects these carnal flaws, which come from limitations of spirit

rather than limitations posed by flesh. His tale illustrates charity as an essential component of friendship, giving life to the sharing of possessions and being sustained by dialogue between friends.

II.ii Friendship and Sublime Love

Toward the end of the second day, Ennasuite recounts a tale of a constant love that transforms an “amityé.” Her tale focuses on charity as the principal bond between the two “amys” that allows their bond to endure the various stages of life, attaining an infinite, eternal state at the tale’s close. This “amityé” departs from descriptions of masculine love, illustrating the enduring love between the heroine, Poline, and her *serviteur* at court. The transformation of their “amityé” from one that follows courtly ideals to one that expresses Pauline precepts of *caritas* reflects love as constant, regardless of the various forms it takes on. This view of love shows the way in which its evolution and development uplifts individuals who experience friendship.

Ennasuite introduces a woman as a participant in a perfect friendship that fulfills precepts of friendship stemming from courtly, classical, and evangelical traditions. Not only does the love fulfill the model of *fin’amors* but extends beyond the courtly model to a fulfillment of classical ideals of sublime love. The triumph of love in the cloister emphasizes the significance of Pauline precepts of *caritas*, underscored by the heroine’s name, Poline. The introduction of women into friendship models recalls Renaissance

debates on women's capacity for true friendship.¹⁵⁶ This portrait of perfect friendship challenges notions of true friendship being uniquely masculine.

The relationship between Poline and her *serviteur* begins as a relationship of courtly love. Courtly love, referred to as *fin'amors* in Troubadour poetry, illustrates the way in which love that is romantic – even erotic – may transform into an elevated, sublime form of love. Sublimation functions as an effect of the deferred realization of erotic desire: “La *fin'amors* évolue ... en fonction de la récompense espérée, de la jouissance physique de l'amour” (Lazar 1964, 72). This deferred moment plays a significant role in courtly love, bringing about both melancholic and ecstatic moments for the lovers. The “amitié” experienced between a *dame* and her *serviteur* focuses above all on a declaration of faith that resembles the oath of loyalty that ties a vassal to his lord: “Le vocabulaire et les gestes de la *fin'amors* sont, en effet, empruntés à la féodalité : c'est à genoux que l'amoureux rend l'hommage à sa Dame, qui lui cède les gages ; il lui doit désormais fidélité.”¹⁵⁷ This bond between an “amy” and “amye” transfers the allegiance of a feudal relationship, one that draws from military participation, into an intimate setting of reciprocal, romantic love. The principal relationship between the “amys” in this tale is also mirrored by a minor relationship that stems from military tradition.

Ennasuite's portrait of “amitié” reflects Petrarchan descriptions of the value of friendship, which include descriptions of the manner in which friendship allows individuals to overcome adversity.¹⁵⁸ Such uses of friendship also recall the Boccaccian model set forth in the proem of the *Decameron*. Like Boccaccio's narrator, the

¹⁵⁶ Langer describes traditional doubts on women engaging in true friendship (1994, 125).

¹⁵⁷ *Dictionnaire du Moyen Âge*, s.v. “Amour courtois.”

¹⁵⁸ Descriptions of friendship allowing individuals to overcome adversity appear in the *De remediis utriusque fortunæ* (Langer 1994, 25).

protagonists of Ennasuite's tale overcome hardships – even those posed by their own romantic attachment – through their friendship. Their “amitié” thus acts as an example of the virtues of friendship, evoking a didactic model that builds upon literary tradition.

Following Petrarchan epistolary tradition, the events of N19 revolve around a letter addressed to the heroine of the tale, Poline, from her *serviteur*. The letter illustrates the intimate knowledge between interlocutors that contributes to knowledge of text in the manner of such tradition.¹⁵⁹ This paradigm signals an approach to text based on *familiaritas*, an intimate knowledge between interlocutors implied in letter writing.¹⁶⁰ Such *familiaritas* distinguishes the relationship between Poline and her *serviteur*, whose “amitié” shows an affinity of the soul. It also characterizes the letter that appears in the narrative, which is written in the form of a “ritournelle,” after a familiar Italian air.¹⁶¹ The gentleman appropriates this traditional air, “De laquelle le chant est italien et assez commun,” in order to relate the events of his own experience, the content of which Ennasuite renders into French: “mais j’en ay voulu traduire les motz en françoys le plus près qu’il m’a esté possible” (M 1943, 146; 1999, 283). Appropriation of text thus occurs in the frame-narrative as it does in the tale. The letter plays a role in the text that shows expanded uses of textual forms, taking up friendship paradigms in its assumption of an intermediary role between *dame* and *serviteur*, narrator and audience.

The letter occurs as a result of separation between the *dame* and *serviteur*, a motif that recurs in the narrative, emphasizing the closeness of the “amys” in spirit that

¹⁵⁹ See Eden on the authorizing interpretive principle for Petrarch as intimacy (1997b, 231).

¹⁶⁰ The *familiaritas* between interlocutors in an epistolary relationship corresponds to the Augustinian tradition of *caritas* (Eden 1997b).

¹⁶¹ Salminen includes the Italian model of this song in the notes to her edition of the *Heptaméron* (Genève: Droz, 1999, 93): “Le modèle de ce poème est une *ritournelle* populaire italienne publiée dans *La Poesia popolare italiana* (Studi de A. ANCONA, Livourne, 1906, pp. 94-95).”

transcends physical separation. Their separation results from the political situation of war and the domestic situation of the cloister. They are also kept from speaking to each other by their superiors. The narrative distinguishes between physical separation and spiritual separation, a theme that continues to the end of the tale, when the “amys” enter separate orders but remain united in spirit by the love of charity. The *serviteur*’s love for Poline persists even when he is imprisoned during war, a situation of undetermined duration. His secondary friendship with another prisoner of war sustains him during this separation. The sympathy he experiences for his comrade, who also pines for his beloved, leads to the discourse that comforts them in this moment of crisis: “Et quant ilz se trouverent compaignons de leurs fortunes, ils commencerent à descouvrir leurs secretz l’un à l’autre” (M 1943, 143; 1999, 279). Their commiseration follows the Boccaccian model of discourse helping to overcome the trials of adversity. This friendship further foreshadows the benefits of prudently chosen friendship, a theme carried out by the protagonists.¹⁶² Though experiencing the bonds of commiseration, the gentleman’s friend expresses skepticism for the *serviteur*’s fulfillment of his love by marriage or by entry into the cloister. Yet rather than becoming discouraged, the *serviteur* becomes resolute in his love for Poline. This moment initiates a conflation of the beloved with his love, a topos found in medieval works and characteristic of a perfect lover.¹⁶³

The separation that occurs through the *serviteur*’s entry into the cloister results in an epistle he writes based on the Italian “ritournelle.” This written account of their love inspires Poline to follow the religious path of her *serviteur*. The letter appears as a

¹⁶² Prudently chosen friendship allows individuals to survive the trials of adversity and the deceptions of good fortune, as Langer describes (1994, 25).

¹⁶³ This conflation is found in the model of medieval lyric poetry or in imagery such as that of the *Roman de la rose*.

moment *en abyme*, reflecting the events of the narrative that precede its reception, as well as those that follow. It projects the future state of the protagonists' "amitié," apparent in the use of the future tense of the refrain: "Que dira-elle / Que fera-elle," matched by the final line of each stanza (M 1943, 146-8; 1999, 283-5). The familiarity of the "ritournelle" on which the letter is based contributes to its inscribed role in the narrative, a citation of a traditional Italian air that the audience recognizes, placed into the context of current circumstance.¹⁶⁴ The role that the letter takes on underscores the influence of tradition and familiarity on the protagonists' friendship, one that is built upon the intimacy of *amour courtois*. It further underlines the intimacy and exclusiveness that perfect friendship is taken to incarnate (Langer 1994, 25). The letter evokes the proximity attained through "amitié" that overcomes their separation, thereby illustrating the Aristotelian tradition of writing that helps to overcome distance. The epistolary form of the appeal also recalls St. Paul's epistles to the Corinthians, in which he entreats members of the Church to follow the precepts of *caritas*.

Stages of "amitié" appear in the letter, showing the transformation and endurance of their love. The "parfaicte amitié" between the protagonists is described as a union of souls, characterized by a reciprocity that occurs through an affinity to God. Perfection in friendship comes from its eternal character, one that suggests its accomplishment in the divine. Compared to worldly arrangements, such as matrimony, a state set forth "pour nous tenter" (M 1943, 147; 1999, 284), the protagonists' "parfaicte amitié" reveals a divine union that occurs through the espousal of God: "Nous respondrons que nostre ame

¹⁶⁴ The inscription of the *ritournelle* in the *devisants*' conversation reflects the role of the proverb, which passes into common currency while retaining distinctive characteristics recommended by its antiquity and erudition (CWE 31, 4-5). The application of proverbs to current circumstance appears, for example, in Erasmus' illustration of the relevance of "amicorum communia omnia" to conflicts over property (Eden 2001, 27).

/ Est de Dieu amie et femme, / Qui point ne la changera” (ibid). The union of souls that corresponds to this espousal shows the constancy of divine union, which is distinct from earthly union, surpassing its susceptibility to coercion and artifice. With divine love as its end, reciprocal love takes on the quality of endurance: “Car nostre amour mutuelle / sera tant spirituelle / que Dieu s’en contentera” (ibid). Such reciprocity in the form of *caritas* raises the protagonists’ “amityé” to a form of perfect friendship, signaled in the letter when the *serviteur* addresses Poline as an “amye” – “Viens doncques amye ne tarde mye” – and indicates the perfect state of their friendship – “Après ton parfaict amy.” (M 1943, 148; 1999, 285). His belief in the ability to realize perfect friendship with an “amye” not only indicates that perfect friendship can be accomplished with a woman but suggests that all members of the Christian community can strive for such friendship.

The letter signals a rebirth of their “amityé” that resembles baptism, or the vows that are taken to indicate rebirth as a member of the religious orders. The *serviteur*’s letter, while an appeal to the eternal nature of their love, is also an elegy to the romantic love that they have experienced on earth. Images of the habit taken on by members of the religious orders, “L’habit de cendre,” reflects cessation of life at court: “Fuyant ce monde ennemy” (M 1943, 148; 1999, 285), a world that they can no longer inhabit as *dame* and *serviteur*. The image of death, signaled by ashes, indicates an end to hopes of marriage and participation in an “amityé” at court: “Car, d’amityé vive et forte, / De sa cendre fault que sorte / Le phœnix qui durera” (ibid). At the same time, the image of ashes contributes to the idea of regeneration, which appears in the reference to the phœnix, a symbol of rebirth. This image affirms the necessity of leaving behind the worldly existence of the

court in order for their love to transform, so that they may realize an eternal, perfect friendship.

The abandonment of an earthly “amitié” in favor of one that is spiritual suggests a union of the soul that endures beyond worldly matters. Rather than completing an earthly marriage, which ends with death, the “amys” are united by a spiritual marriage akin to Christ’s espousal to the Church. The image evokes descriptions of spiritual marriage, as described by Guillaume Briçonnet in a letter to Marguerite in which he distinguishes carnal and spiritual marriage, also using the image of ashes to indicate the transitory nature of earthly existence: “... que peult dire terre et cendre? Il faut laisser la chair et prandre l’esprit, habandonner la terre et survoller vol transcendant toute veue et prinse entrer la lumiere caligineuse aveuglant tout esprit, entendement, et comprehension” (1979, 203). The sublimation of the love between Poline and her *serviteur* reflects the abandonment of earthly matters for matters of the spirit in their union with the Church. This direction of their love allows their spirit to take flight from the earth, as with the phoenix who rises from the ashes of their earthly love. Poline and her *serviteur* experience the spiritual marriage of the Church and Christ through their decision to experience their “amitié” within the cloister, an environment that will liberate their spirits and raise their “amitié” to unprecedented heights.

The end of the narrative signals the achievement of this perfect friendship, as the two “amys” confirm their devotion to each other through their participation in love through Christ. Poline arranges to meet her *serviteur* privately in a chapel, where she affirms the conversion to this spiritual love: “Celluy qui est le vray, parfaict et digne de nommer Amour, nous a tirez à son service, par une amitié honneste et raisonnable,

laquelle il convertira, par son saint Esperit, du tout en luy” (M 1943, 150; 1999, 287-8). The conflation of beloved and love becomes complete with the figure of Christ, referred to by Poline as “Amour.” It is through serving the Christ figure that the protagonists are able to attain the virtue of an “amitié honneste et raisonnable.” As an “amitié” based on *caritas*, their relationship illustrates the Augustinian view of God as author and final cause of friendship (Langer 1994, 23-4). They similarly evoke descriptions of Erasmus’ Christian soldier in the *Enchiridion militis christiani*, finding Christ as the goal of all their endeavors. Poline’s *serviteur* becomes a “serviteur religieux,” (M 1943, 150; 1999, 288), a servant of God and of the Church, while Poline takes on a role as the embodiment of Pauline precepts.

The *mise en abyme* position of the letter reflects the unity of the diverse experiences of love in charity that Poline and her *serviteur* experience. Such unity is illustrated by the reference to Mary Magdalen at the end of the tale, when Ennasuite concludes with a description of the saintliness and devotion of the “amys” within the cloister:

Et depuis vesquirent Poline et son serviteur si saintement et devotement en leurs Observances, que l’on ne doibt doubter que Celluy duquel la fin de la loy est charité, ne leur dist, à la fin de leur vie, comme à la Magdelaine, que leurs pechez leur estoient pardonnez, veu qu’ilz avoient beaucoup aymé, et qu’il ne les retirast en paix ou lieu où la recompense passe tous les merites des hommes (M 1943, 151; 1999, 289).

The Mary Magdalen figure, based on descriptions in the gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John that refer to a woman named Mary, evokes a figure of medieval legend and hagiography whose life reflects various human experiences (Lefèvre d’Étaples 2009, 35). The reference that Mathieu-Castellani gives for Ennasuite’s comment points to the

figure in Luke 7:47-50 who, having bathed Christ's feet with her tears and wiped them with her hair, is forgiven for her sins "because she has loved much" (Luke 7:47).¹⁶⁵ This figure, whose diverse roles and appearances in Scripture are attributed by Lefèvre d'Étaples to its amalgamation of three individual women named Mary, incorporates the diverse roles of sister, redeemed sinner, and a woman possessed by demonic spirits.¹⁶⁶ The unification in charity that this Magdalen figure illustrates in Ennasuite's tale suggests the unity through perfect charity that Lefèvre d'Étaples sees in the approach to these three images of Mary as a single figure (2009, 251). The love between Poline and her *serviteur* becomes all the more powerful from the stages through which it passes, having endured imperfect forms of earthly love and following a path toward the perfect spiritual love of charity.

The sublimation of the protagonists' love in friendship suggests Neoplatonic descriptions of a divine love that occurs through the elevation of the soul. This trajectory appears in works such as Marsilio Ficino's *Commentary on Plato's Symposium*, a work that resolves classical and evangelical descriptions of love.¹⁶⁷ Such views are espoused by Oisille, Geburon, Parlamente, Longarine, and Symontault. Oisille sees the protagonists' love as an exemplary case of sublimation: "d'aymer honnestement en la jeunesse, et puis de convertir ceste amour du tout à Dieu" (M 1943, 151; 1999, 289). Their "honneste amityé," rather than remaining an unrequited earthly love, is a vehicle toward the enduring love of *caritas*. The tale also inspires Parlamente to give a Ficinian

¹⁶⁵ See Mathieu-Castellani's description (M 1999, 289, n. 2).

¹⁶⁶ These roles are that of a woman named Mary, assumed to be a prostitute, who washes Christ's feet with her hair, a woman named Mary who is the sister of Martha and Lazarus at Bethany, and a woman named Mary who is purged of seven devils (Lefèvre d'Étaples 2003, 34-5).

¹⁶⁷ Published in 1484, Ficino's *Commentary on Plato's Symposium* was often read in tandem with Plato's *Symposium* during the Renaissance, the two frequently being published alongside each other.

description of the soul that seeks to reunite with the divine: “car l’ame, qui n’est créée que pour retourner à son souverain bien, ne fait, tant qu’elle est dedans le corps, que desirer d’y parvenir.”¹⁶⁸ Parlamente alludes to the idea of the soul being released from the constraints of the body, an idea corroborated by the faltering bodily states of the “amys,” illustrated by Poline’s fainting in response to her *serviteur*’s decision to enter the cloister and the *serviteur*’s stumbling in the chapel from an unexpected encounter with Poline. Such difficulties illustrate the trials that confront individuals who choose to follow a path toward the divine.

The transformation of this love causes the *devisants* to discuss the relevance of earthly love to divine love. Geburon comments on the obscurity of the manifestation of divine love on earth and reminds the company that the sources of divine love may be difficult to understand and even unintelligible to certain individuals: “Dieu a plusieurs façons de nous tirer à luy, dont les commencemens semblent estre mauvais mais la fin en est bonne” (M 1943, 151; 1999, 289). Certain characters in the tale show an inability to recognize enduring love, such as the superiors of Poline and her *serviteur*, who prevent their marriage, and the *serviteur*’s comrade in arms, who sees no other religion in his comrade than love for his *dame*. Parlamente, who often emphasizes divine and cerebral forms of love, acknowledges the significance of participating in earthly relationships in order to proceed to a more divine love: “Encores ay-je une opinion . . . que jamais homme n’aymera parfaitement Dieu, qu’il n’ait parfaitement aimé quelque creature en ce monde” (M 1943, 151; 1999, 289). Longarine adds that individuals who love in an earthly context cultivate their ability to love, whereas those who do not experience love

¹⁶⁸ See Mathieu-Castellani’s description of Parlamente’s Ficinian description of the soul (M 1999, 290, n. 2).

on earth lack the ability to love at all: “car la terre de son cueur est sterile, froide et damnée” (M 1943, 152; 1999, 291). Symontault points out that loving what is on earth is beneficial to spiritual love, quoting from Scripture: “ ‘celluy qui aime son frere qu’il voit, comment aymera-il Dieu qu’il ne veoit point?’ Car, par les choses visibles, on est tiré à l’amour des invisibles.” Symontault’s reference to I John 4:20 (M 1943, 152; 1999, 292) indicates the significance of experiencing less abstract forms of love in order to make it a part of everyday experience. Fraternal love gives individuals personal experience in love that allows them to carry out precepts of *caritas* expressed in Scripture. As an earthly phenomenon, *caritas* can be cultivated and approached in a perseverant manner, as illustrated by Poline and her *serviteur*.

Yet some of the *devisants* find the love in the tale to be too intangible. They interpret this example as a failed love. Hircan goes so far as to call this love “folie,” describing the outcome of Ennasuite’s tale a result of thwarted love. Associating the effects of their love with “melancolie” and “desespoir” (M 1943, 151; 1999, 289), Hircan sees their genre of “amitié” as stagnating in unfulfilled desire. Saffredent also sees the “amitié” as an almost non-existent form of love: “Qu’appellez-vous parfaitement aymer? ... estimez-vous parfaictz amans ceulx qui sont transiz et qui adorent les dames de loing, sans oser monstres leur volonté?” (M 1943, 151; 1999, 289-90). He finds fallacies in defining perfect love that is neither seen nor heard. Lacking the accessibility of a more earthly love, this abstract love falls short of human experience. He compares such love to the sustenance of a chameleon, which is said to consist of air (M 1943, 152; 1999, 292). Both Hircan and Saffredent focus on Ennasuite’s narrative as a description of failed human love.

The tale's description of a love completed through Christ emphasizes the significance of *caritas* in conceptions of "amitié." The enduring love between Poline and her *serviteur* illustrates an "amitié" made possible by the view of Christ as the goal to all endeavors, as expressed in Erasmus' *Enchiridion militis christiani*. The protagonists' friendship guides them toward this end, as stated in the fourth canon of this work: "... que tu places devant toi le Christ comme l'unique but de toute la vie, auquel tu rapportes toute ton application, tous tes efforts, tout ton temps de repos et d'activité" (E 1992, 561). This shows the way in which love can guide individuals through difficult moments of their lives, sustaining them and strengthening them through adverse conditions. This portrait of love indicates parallel uses of friendship as an affinity that surmounts adverse situations and that allows individuals to experience unity of the soul.

II.iii Marriage is a Union of Souls

The following tales are two related tales of clandestine marriage, N21 and N40. In fact, Parlamente, the narrator of both tales, signals to her audience that the tales are connected, each dealing with members of the same family who meet the same fate. The heroines of the tales, Rolandine and her aunt, complete clandestine marriages that they treat as spiritual unions rather than as economic or political arrangements. This approach to marriage suggests its status as a sacrament, thereby raising historical debates over views of marriage as an indissoluble relationship. While the clandestine marriages in the

tales end tragically, the attainment of emotional intimacy that they illustrate points to a need for companionship between spouses, which is solidified through discourse.

The bonding of souls illustrated by the marriages in these narratives shows parallels between friendship and matrimony. The language of the narratives resembles writings on friendship, such as those of Erasmus' *Adages*. Erasmus' reference to Pythagoras in his second adage illustrates the affinity between two souls that makes them indivisible: "friendship is equality and having one soul" (CWE 31, 31). As two individuals with a shared soul, friends become reflections of each other, partaking in the same turns of fortune and assuming equivalent status within their friendship. Their shared fortunes and destinies characterize the indissoluble union into which married individuals enter when they complete the sacrament of marriage. Erasmus' *Institutio christiani matrimonii* reveals these similarities in another reference to Pythagoras: "Among the ancients ... Pythagoras described friendship as 'sharing a soul,' but marriage goes even further and also means 'sharing one body'" (CWE 69, 218-19). In the case of matrimony, bodily union contributes to the mingling of destinies. This view is also found in other texts that influence Erasmus, such as Vives' *De Institutione feminae christianae* (1524) (Furey 2011, 31). These writings reveal matrimony as a state that is built upon precepts of friendship. Rather than detracting from friendship or from attention to spiritual matters, it develops the close bonds and shared destinies characteristic of friendship. Parlamente's heroines illustrate this view of marriage by the matrimonial states that arise from their "amityez."

The focus on clandestine marriage indicates its significance in the *devisants'* social circle. Sixteenth-century debates on marriage focused on its interpretation as a

sacrament, an outward sign of grace. Contentions arose from the ability to complete such a union, viewed as indissoluble, without parental consent, thereby interfering with family alliances and with social structures to which upper class families in particular adhered. While marriage contracted without parental consent was permitted by canon law, clandestine marriage was criticized by reformers such as Calvin in 1541, strongly discouraged by Henri II in 1556, and finally outlawed by French law under Henri II in 1579.¹⁶⁹ Based on love rather than political alliances, these marriages overturned the structure of courtly society, as Lucien Febvre observes in his remarks on the role of marriage in maintaining social hierarchy.¹⁷⁰ The clandestine marriages in Parlemente's tale focus on women from the Rohan family, who seem to have made a practice of clandestine marriage (Bauschatz 2003, 404). Referring to these historical figures, Parlemente shows how their marriages are indeed guided by love, but describes this love as a human desire for spiritual love rather than carnal love.

Parlemente's use of figures who participate in clandestine marriages brings up several difficulties in her illustration of a spiritual "amitié." Clandestine marriage is frowned upon by the *devisants*, even by Parlemente herself. Parlemente condemns the practice in the conclusion to her tale of Rolandine's aunt: "Je prie à Dieu, mesdames, que ceste exemple vous soit si profitable, que nul de vous ayt envye de soy marier, pour son plaisir, sans le consentement de ceulx à qui on doibt porter obeissance" (M 1943, 277; 1999, 474). Geburon holds a similar opinion, speaking of the fleeting nature of a union of those who are "prins par amour" and who give no thought to household or position, instead relying on "ceste grande amitié indiscrete" which can "tourne souvent à jalousie

¹⁶⁹ For dissenting views on clandestine marriage see Bauschatz (2003, 400) and Screech (1958, 44).

¹⁷⁰ Lucien Febvre notes that marriages completed out of love also overturned the hierarchy of gender, placing women in a raised position that was "régante et adorée" (1944, 252).

et en fureur” (M 1943, 280; 1999, 478). Warning against the fleeting nature of love, Geburon’s description of heeding its vagaries recalls Dagoucin’s descriptions of coerced forms of friendship. The unhappy outcomes of the marriages of Rolandine and her aunt support these reservations toward the idea of clandestine marriage.

The second issue that Parlamente’s examples bring up concerns the use of marriage as a means toward achieving spiritual unions. This focus seems to relegate women to finding friendship through marriage, rather than experiencing it independently of the social structures in which women were expected to participate. Rather than illustrating the strength of female friendship outside of the conjugal union, Parlamente chooses to illustrate the exemplary conduct of these women as wives. A comparison between Parlamente’s tales and the first tale of the fourth day of the *Decameron*, in which the heroine is also kept from marrying by an avaricious father but nonetheless experiences physical and spiritual union with a lover, emphasizes the particular focus on marriage in the *Heptaméron*. Related to the *devisants*’ current circumstances, marriage brings up differences between spiritual and carnal love, a theme that recurs incessantly in Marguerite’s writings (Febvre 1944, 66-7) and develops an image on which Briçonnet focuses in his letters to Marguerite, on Christian marriage as a reflection of Christ’s marriage to the Church. This image evokes the vitality given to the Church by each member of the Christian community.

Both Rolandine and her aunt are prevented from making legitimate marriages by the compte de Jossebelin, whose avarice and overbearing affection cause this attitude toward his daughter and sister. His miserly and selfish demeanor indicates the extenuating circumstances of these women’s clandestine marriages, which appeal to the

sympathy of Parlemeute's audience. In each case, the comte finds out about the secret marriages and shuts up the heroine in a tower, symbolizing constraints placed upon these women in the social hierarchies of which they are a part. Their "amityez conjugales" are set forth as the antidote to such hierarchies, their marriages reflecting Erasmian ideas of the equal footing on which individuals find themselves through friendship. The equalizing quality of friendship is emphasized by the women's union with husbands of lower social standing. The women's constancy in love reveals attributes of charity, which endures all, as stated in I Cor 13:7.

The women's piety comes out in their respect for certain symbolic gestures and words that solidify their conjugal unions. Their gestures suggest gestures of sacrament, which are inspired by the scene of the wedding at Cana in John 2:1-11, in which Christ performs the miracle of changing water into wine.¹⁷¹ Interpreted as a rite bringing grace to its participants, this gesture grants matrimony its sacramental status, an interpretation written into canon law in 1563.¹⁷² In N21, Rolandine's marriage is completed by the exchange of oaths and rings, in accordance with canon law, as well as a kiss at the chapel in the presence of God.¹⁷³ Her marriage remains unconsummated, yet she refuses to rescind her oath, even when facing the pressure of her superiors and the eventual abandonment of her husband. Her aunt likewise respects her marriage vows, even after the death of her husband. Rather than quelling her attachment to her husband, his murder only precipitates her ascent to sainthood, her isolation in a tower emphasizing her

¹⁷¹ The marriage at Cana is a principle figure for the sacrament of marriage, one of a sparse quantity in the Bible (Leushuis 2003, 5-6); the gospels have relatively little to say on the matrimonial question, but the model that appears regularly as an *exemplum* is the wedding at Cana (CWE 69, 207).

¹⁷² The definition, including its status as sacrament, was given at the twenty-fourth session of the Council of Trent (CWE 69, 205-6).

¹⁷³ See Mathieu-Castellani's description of an oath and exchange of rings completing marriage under canon law (1999, 319, n. 2).

devotion. These professions of faith show a unity in spirit that reflects the indissolubility of sacrament.

Rolandine's particular position of a spouse who respects the marriage vow without consummating the marriage points to her faithfulness to the words she has spoken, with God as witness. Her respect for the gestures of her marriage vow supports Parmentier's belief in women's affinity for elevated forms of love.¹⁷⁴ This refutes attitudes that grant a role to women in marriage that is primarily sexual, a view that Constance M. Furey attributes to Augustine: "In his exegesis of the creation story in *Genesis*, Augustine focuses on sex because he could not imagine any other reason for the creation of woman: if companionship were the goal, it's obvious that a male friend would be preferable."¹⁷⁵ This reveals Parmentier's attempt to dissociate women from baser forms of love. During the discussion after the tale of Rolandine, Parmentier contrasts women's love, "l'amour de la femme," which she states is "bien fondé sur Dieu et sur honneur," with men's, which she states is based on "plaisir" (M 1943, 174,5; 1999, 324). She thereby reverses ideas that associate women with base love and men with elevated love.

Rolandine's aunt also shows constancy in her "amitié" in courtship, as a wife, and as a widow. Described as "la plus grande et parfaite amitié" in all of Christendom, her "amitié" appears as the burgeoning of the companionship that arises between two "amys." It eventually assumes the status of an *exemplum* as she becomes a venerated figure. Rolandine's aunt's pious existence after her spouse's death, her refusal to remarry,

¹⁷⁴ Davis describes Parmentier's beliefs that the love of women is founded on God and honor, as opposed to the love of men, which is based on pleasure (1978, 26).

¹⁷⁵ Furey refers to James Turner's illustration of the way in which Augustine pairs descriptions of the fundamental distinctions between Adam and Eve with discussions of how they overcame disparity (2011, 37).

and her decision to live out the remainder of her life in ascetic devotion to God illustrate a bond with her spouse that transcends death. It reflects the unity attributed to spouses in the *Institutio christiani matrimonii*, which places it at the pinnacle of the diverse laws to which individuals are subject: “But among all relationships, natural, voluntary, or both, there is none closer or more holy than marriage, because it involves the complete and perpetual intermingling of two destinies, and connects, unites, and joins body to body, spirit to spirit in such a way that it seems to make two people one” (CWE 69, 219).

Matrimony is brought about by affinity between individuals, a coincidence of wills that leads to spiritual, emotional, and physical union.

The tales reveal a desire for companionship as the main motive for the conjugal union, alluding to Erasmian themes of the prominence of discourse in relationships of friendship. In Rolandine’s case, companionship comes from commiseration: “comme souvent ung malheureux cherche l’autre, [le gentil homme] vint aborder ceste damoiselle Rolandine, car leurs fortunes, complexions et conditions estoient fort pareilles” (M 1943, 159; 1999, 302). Stricken with the misfortune of not being able to complete legitimate unions, the gentleman from his poverty and social position as a bastard, Rolandine from the neglect and avarice of her superiors, they engage in conversation that helps to assuage the difficulties that they experience. Her aunt’s companionship also develops from frequent contact and conversation with her brother’s page: “l’envoyant soir et matin devers sa seur, que, à la longue frequentation, s’engendra une grande amitié entre eulx” (M 1943, 275; 1999, 470). Such “grande amitié” reflects the devotion that these women experience as they converse with their “amys,” eventually seeing them as soul mates.

They thus indicate the manner in which discourse, the basis of friendship, is also the basis for matrimony.

Discourse is the center of these “amitez conjugales,” bringing these couples together and allowing their relationships to develop. The beginning of Rolandine’s aunt’s relationship with the comte’s page is solely based on conversation: “ne prindrent en leur amitié autre contentement que la parole” (M 1943, 275; 1999, 470). Likewise, Rolandine and her companion develop a relationship by discussing their misfortunes: “se complaignans l’un à l’autre de leurs infortunes, prindrent une très grande amitié” (M 1943, 59; 1999, 302). Even when they are barred from speaking to each other, they find ways to communicate, such as meeting discreetly at adjoining windows and writing to each other secretly. The exchanges between these characters show the relevance of discourse to “amitez” that eventually become marriages.

The women’s imprisonment in a tower represents an obstruction of discourse through silencing. The image of their isolation in the tower reflects the institutional constraints placed upon them, illustrating in turn the dismissal of their capacity for friendship. Johnson describes the way in which Marguerite rewrites what Cholakian refers to as the phallogentric *fabliau*, part of a medieval generic tradition in which women were “silenced, mocked, and trafficked as commodities” (2003, 79). Rather than becoming completely silenced by their confinement to the tower, Rolandine and her aunt find their voices within institutional constraints, Rolandine making a speech to her superiors and her aunt becoming venerated as a saint.¹⁷⁶ Spiritual development occurs in these women despite misuses of power by the figures that have authority over them.

¹⁷⁶ Lyons describes the role of Rolandine’s speech in finding her voice within institutional constraints (1989, 94).

Rolandine's act of speaking also reverses hierarchies by revealing her friendship as a rational love. Her eloquence and use of reason, characteristics traditionally attributed to male figures, reveals an elevated spirit. As Langer indicates, Rolandine sets forth a model for a "voluntary, rational, and virtuous relationship aristocratic women were mostly prevented from considering" (1994, 125). The prevention of such a relationship appears in a similar tale of the *Decameron*, recounted at the beginning of the fourth day, which describes the relationship of its heroine, Ghismonda, with a page of her father's court. Although Ghismonda does not secretly marry the page, she becomes united with him in body and spirit, as do Rolandine's aunt and the page of the comte. As in the case of Rolandine, her father prevents her from marrying and, like Rolandine, she gives a speech pointing to her father's own role in the secret relationship. Her defense of her actions points to the unreasonable constraints he has placed upon her and to the human need for companionship. Although she eventually commits suicide following the death of the page, she is buried beside him, illustrating a bond with him that transcends death.

Ghismonda's defense of her actions includes references to the laws of nature, pointing to higher laws that govern her actions. Describing her desires as universal, she compares them to her father's: "although, as a man, you spent the best of your years soldiering in the army, you should, nevertheless, know how idleness and luxurious living can affect the old as well as the young" (B 1982, 255). Her description of desires springing from idleness and luxury recall the narrator's words in Boccaccio's proem (1993, 4). Stagnant in her state of loneliness, Ghismonda seeks out companionship as a means of pacifying her youthful ardor. While inclined to seek a lover out of an "amorous desire" made all the more acute by her previous marriage, Ghismonda also exercises

prudence, choosing her lover: “with deliberate consideration and careful forethought” (B 1982, 255). This shows Ghismonda’s use of reason within the domain of natural law. Her manner of incorporating physical love into an enduring friendship illustrates a composite form of sensual and spiritual love that is relevant to the marriage of Rolandine’s aunt.

Both N21 and N40 illustrate liaisons that defy social rank, an aspect of the tales that also follows the *Decameron* model. Ghismonda explains this transgression in her reference to natural law. This reference not only counteracts the limits that her father places upon her, but subverts the social hierarchy to which he clings. Her reference to fleshly appetites evens out the unequal positions that she, her father, and her lover occupy at court. These appetites, she argues, can be found in both authoritative and subordinate figures at court and come from the fleshly form that all individuals share: “you will observe that we are all made of the same flesh and we are all created by one and the same Creator” (B 1982, 255). Her manner of equalizing all members of court through references to their bodily form extends to the possession of “equal powers and equal force and virtue” (ibid), also coming from a common source. She thus departs from the boundaries of social convention, revealing these as artifice and showing the manner in which they are imposed on individuals. Ghismonda’s description of friendship coincides with classical ideals expressed, for example, by Aristotle via Aquinas, which describe friendship as depending “less on who the friends are – on each individual’s social status – than on what friends do for one another,” (cited in Furey 2011, 38). Her act of speaking itself transgresses certain hierarchical ideas that would silence her, either for her status as daughter of the governing prince or as a result of her feminine role. In the same manner, Rolandine and her aunt subvert social hierarchy, marrying social inferiors, valuing

aspects of their beloveds' character above all else, and speaking in their own defense. Their ability to articulate precepts of friendship gives weight to female friendship figures.

The women show insight, reason and even more eloquence than their superiors. The queen, a party interested in the comte's fortune who has barred Rolandine from speaking to her husband, is rendered inarticulate and only cries out in rage once Rolandine has spoken. Unable to respond "par raison," she instead becomes angry and cries. Ghismonda's father quits her after she gives her speech. The comte likewise loses the ability to speak when confronted with the scene in his sister's chamber: "le despit luy osta la parole" (M 1943, 276; 1999, 471), and can only demonstrate violence in his act of drawing his sword to slay the gentleman. His confinement of his sister to a tower comes out of fear that she will reveal his injustice to others. The authoritative figures' inability to engage in reasonable dialogue with the heroines admits their moral inferiority. Their departures from the scene signal a rejection of reason and a rejection of the use of reason on the part of these female figures. As the more reasonable figures in these narratives, the heroines show constancy in friendship.

These women seem to be primarily motivated by a need for discourse, a topos set forth by their predecessor, Ghismonda, that takes up friendship paradigms revealed in prior texts. Seeking out an "amy" with whom to pass the time and sympathize and, when misfortune strikes, with whom to commiserate, they develop bonds that solidify through exchange. These unions rest upon familiarity expressed in Petrarchan descriptions of epistolary correspondence. They show intertwining destinies, in the Erasmian sense, "amityez" that endure and transcend death. The commonality evoked by the union of two souls brings female friendship into a "context that invokes utilitarian language of

common possessions and common interests,” which distinguishes the language of friendship (Furey 1997, 42-3). This appears particularly in the idea of marriage as a sacrament, the sacramental framework of marital friendship encouraging humanists to expand their theories of likeness beyond restrictive dichotomies (ibid.). Romantic involvement thus grows from discourse, a meeting of minds that extends into the unity experienced by matrimony. Woven into this portrait of friendship, the romantic involvement of the heroines of these tales sets forth the need for dialogue which reflects the *devisants*’ situation at Serrance and their desire to participate in storytelling. Charity is thus set forth as the principal attribute in these “amityez conjugales.”

II.iv Last Will and Testament

At the midpoint of the sixth day, Nomerfide relates a tale that focuses on the finances of a household. N55 focuses on the interpretation of the last will and testament of a merchant who asks his wife to carry out the distribution of the bulk of his wealth to the poor. The wife adheres to the terms of the request, while retaining most of the sum in question. While the wife’s interpretation of her husband’s request points to discontinuities in the terms of the request and the intention behind it, descriptions of the circumstances of the request place it within the context of the husband’s character, thereby recontextualizing the wife’s sophistry. An examination of these contexts brings the *devisants*’ focus to the *voluntas* of the characters, each of whose actions reveal tendencies toward extreme literal interpretation. While this manner of interpreting recalls

“scholastic hairsplitting and unevangelical adherence to the letter and not the spirit” that theological descriptions attribute to techniques of cavillation (see above), certain *devisants* indicate the outcome of the tale to be consistent with an equitable management of the couple’s household.

The tale is offered by Nomerfide as a response to Symontault, who expresses doubts about women’s conscience. Instead of trying to prove him wrong, Nomerfide offers him an example of a perfect female companion. The tale is not something she has planned to offer to the company but, at the urging of Saffredent, she relates the events that have suddenly sprung to mind, illustrating the way in which spontaneous conversation contributes to the *devisants*’ discourse. Reflecting uses of figures of speech and adages that Erasmus describes in the *De copia*, Nomerfide’s spontaneous reference to a woman’s preference for material things over the words of her husband captures the attention of her audience, which has recently experienced both material and personal loss. In this way, the *devisants*’ spontaneous comments illustrate the manner in which new and unexpected turns of conversation affect discourse in the *locus amœnus*.

The events of N55 surround the death of a merchant who, having been miserly throughout his life, wishes to assure a place for himself in heaven and leaves a considerable amount of his income to be distributed to the poor through the sale of a horse. His wife carries out his wishes while retaining most of the income by selling the horse for one ducat, along with a cat for ninety-nine, and distributing the income from the horse. Her strict adherence to the letter of her husband’s request while sidestepping its intent is criticized by Geburon, who finds in her actions a neglect for the “testamens des amy z trespassez” (M 1943, 346; 1999, 576). His view of her neglect of her husband’s

intentions is corroborated by the secrecy of the way in which she executes her husband's request, which is carried out with the help of a *serviteur*. The covert manner in which the wife satisfies the request suggests that it would not generally be regarded as a satisfactory interpretation of her husband's last will and testament. The *serviteur*'s assistance, on the other hand, indicates that this interpretation is satisfactory for those with a personal knowledge of the situation.

The wife's justification for her literal interpretation of the request relies on a description of her husband's state of mind at the time the request is made. She alludes to his weakened mental state, with which Parlemente concurs in the commentary: "voiant que à la mort la plus part des hommes resvent" (ibid), and to the seduction of priests, who have convinced him that giving away sums of money upon his death will ease his path toward heaven. She contrasts this altered mental state with the character he has shown throughout his life: "le pauvre homme, seduict par l'avarice des prebstres, a pensé faire grand sacrifice à Dieu de donner après sa mort une somme dont en sa vie n'eust pas voulu donner ung escu en extreme necessité" (M 1943, 345; 1999, 575). The wife offers her actions as a corrective measure against her husband's weakened faculties and the undue influence she attributes to members of the clergy. She also sets forth her own actions as consonant with the *voluntas* her husband has shown throughout his life.

The wife's execution of her husband's last will and testament involves an extension of the request of the sale of his horse. Her technique of adding the sale of the cat suggests another technique of cavillation, one that comes close to legal fiction. Relying on inductive techniques to predict the behavior of her husband "s'il eut vescu quinze jours davantaige," she describes her addendum to the sale of the horse as "encores

mieux ce qu'il eust fait" (ibid). As she recasts the terms of her husband's request, the wife illustrates a manner of circumventing its intention by extending the context for the request in a self-interested way. Such actions contradict the search for *voluntas* illustrated by an equitable approach to given terms, thereby suggesting interpretation in bad faith.

Yet the *devisants* hesitate to point to the wife's actions as entirely faithless. This comes in part from the spirit of the request itself. The husband's about-face on his deathbed reflects character flaws that come out in a description of the acquisition of his assets: "que peut estre avoit acquis avecq mauvaise foy" (M 1943, 345; 1999, 574), as well as his motivation for distributing his wealth: "pensa que, en faisant quelque petit present à Dieu, il satisferoit, après sa mort, en partye à ses pechez" (ibid). Both Nomerfide and Oisille criticize this attempt to treat God's grace as a commodity. Nomerfide's comment during her own narrative: "comme si Dieu donnoit sa grace pour argent!" (ibid) is echoed by Oisille in the commentary: "Vrayement, je m'en suis maintesfoys esbahye ... comment [les plus grands usuriers] cuydent apaiser Dieu par les choses que luy-mesmes estant sur terre a reprovées, comme grands bastimens, dorures, fars et painctures" (M 1943, 347; 1999, 577). Oisille contrasts these external professions of faith with internal signs of grace, which provide a true path toward the grace of God. Referring to St. Paul's description of the faithful as the temple of the living God I Cor 2:16-17), Oisille describes daily acts as the true sign of faith. Her rejection of these outward signs reflects a rejection of the emptiness of the husband's charitable gesture which, significantly, he leaves to his wife.

Parlemente not only dismisses critical views of the wife, such as those of Geburon, but attributes her actions to a desire for the well-being of the household. In this

light, the wife's hairsplitting interpretation of her husband's request is granted an equitable stance, as it becomes a manifestation of her love for her children: "Je pense ... qu'elle ayroit bien son mary ... elle qui congnoissoit son intention, l'avoit voulu interpreter au proffict des enfans : dont je l'estime très saige" (M 1943, 346; 1999, 576). Parleme's contextualization of the wife's actions in the context of the *oikos* attributes a wise disposition to the wife, who not only takes care of her family, but also fulfills her promise to her husband. Her literal interpretation thus takes its place in the wider scope of love for her family.

The tale shows strict adherence to the letter of the law on the part of both husband and wife, as the husband attempts to correct his behavior in life with the sale of one horse and the wife attempts to correct for the sale of the horse with the addendum of the cat. As the *devisants* discuss the motivations behind these characters' actions, they place an emphasis on seeking out the *voluntas* of individuals in order to approach their situations equitably. While the tale illustrates the hairsplitting of terms that contradict charitable approaches to discourse, it also invites equitable approaches to the circumstances of the tale on the part of the *devisants*. Their attention to context illustrates an attention to mitigating factors in the situations brought up by the tale, which in turn reflects their approaches to other tales recounted in the *locus amœnus*. As the *devisants* approach this example of extreme literal interpretation, their observations and exchanges lead to a deeper knowledge of the situation that Nomerfide describes. In this way, the *devisants* reveal equitable uses of storytelling in the *locus amœnus*.

III. THE COUNSEL OF FRIENDS

“nam uetus
verbum hoc quidemst,
communia esse amicorum inter se omnia”
Terence, *Adelphæ*, V, iii 803.

Friendship distinguishes the relationship between the two principal characters of the *Tiers Livre*, Pantagruel and Panurge, who participate in common endeavors and whose dialogue brings about the development of the narrative. Their friendship bears characteristics of “affection, amour, tendresse” that are attributed to charity (see above) and that originate at their first encounter. They have met and become friends in the preceding chronicle, at the walls of the city of Paris, when Pantagruel meets Panurge, “lequel il ayma toute sa vie” (R 1994, 246). Determined *ab ovo* during this meeting,¹⁷⁷ their friendship not only solidifies through discussion, but expands through counsel with experts in various domains of study. Their immediate attraction occurs despite certain difficulties, including obscure forms and uses of language that appear as they speak to each other. Such difficulties arise as early in their relationship as their initial encounter, during which Panurge responds to Pantagruel’s offer of help in thirteen different languages before replying in French, the language of the original question. These difficulties resurface in Panurge’s curious uses of forms of discourse, as with an encomium to speak of debt and gestures to inquire into the question of marriage. This sets the stage for discourse on friendship in the *Tiers Livre*, illustrated by the various approaches of these two friends to the topics that are introduced.

¹⁷⁷ See Langer on the declaration of friendship in the *Pantagruel*: “Je vous ay jà prins” (1994, 30); see Duval on the *Pantagruel* beginning “ab ovo, ‘au commencement du monde’” rather than *in medias res* (1991, 3).

As the opening chapters, I-V, give an image of the newly established colony of Dipsodie, they point to Pantagruel's display of love that he shows toward Panurge at their meeting. This opening sequence of the third chronicle illustrates Pantagruel's nurturing manner toward his subjects, treating them as "enfant nouvellement né" (R 1994, 354; 1995, 35). His generosity as a ruler again extends to his charitable treatment of Panurge when the latter botches his own rule of the castleship of Salmiguondin. His response to Panurge's use of discourse in his praise of debts follows suit, reflecting his reaction to Panurge's reduced physical condition at their first meeting in II, IX and illustrating the metonymic "pantagruélisme" that the narrator describes in the prologue. This charitable approach to those under limited circumstances or of limited capacities reflects a Pauline attitude toward approaching an interpretive audience in a manner appropriate to current circumstance: "And so, brothers, I was not able to speak to you as if to those who are spiritual, but rather as if to those who are carnal. For you are like infants in Christ" (I Cor 3:1). Pantagruel's approach to governance and friendship continues in his approach to dialogue throughout the narrative, illustrating the role of *caritas* in the discourse that develops.

The opening chapters of the *Tiers Livre* illustrate a transitory space between political and economic spheres,¹⁷⁸ much like N12 of the *Heptaméron*, revealing friendship as the basis for the development of government and household. The dialogic narrative also reveals friendship as the basis for an approach to discourse, its quasi-oral form introducing topics in a manner similar to that of the *Heptaméron*.¹⁷⁹ As the text introduces contexts of colony, castleship, and marriage, it builds upon structures that the

¹⁷⁸ See Duval on transition from *politica* to *œconomica* and *ethica* illustrated by the move from government of colony to management of castleship (1997, 39).

¹⁷⁹ Cave describes R's narrative as quasi-oral (1979, xii).

narrator sets forth in the prologue, offering anecdotes that indicate the significance of friendship paradigms and then subverting these by other figures in the text. In contrast to the *Heptaméron*, the narrative builds upon previous chronicles that have been written on the lineage of its hero, Pantagruel. The opening chapters of the third chronicle (III, I-V) develop closing passages in the second on the arrangement of a colony (II, XXXI), while the question of marriage extends the final chapters in the first on the arrangement of the Abbaye de Thélème (I, LII-LVIII).¹⁸⁰ While appearing in a continuum of chronicles, the text acts in an unexpected manner, thereby fulfilling projected themes and figures introduced in the prologue. The deviations in the text reflect quandaries brought up by discussion on debt and marriage.

As indicated in the prologue, the text deviates from traditional narratives, including its own previous chronicles, and takes on unrecognizable forms. The form of the current text seems to be anomalous. As Duval notes, it begins with an ending, ends with a beginning, and moves in a centripetal manner toward its Socratic message, *conosce te ipsum*.¹⁸¹ This structure suggests a break from traditional epic forms, which begin *in medias res*, a literary structure that follows the Horatian model of excellent composition.¹⁸² At the same time, it recalls the abandonment of linear development in prior texts, such as the *Aeneid*.¹⁸³ Like the anti-teleological struggle found in Virgil's work, the centripetal movement of the *Tiers Livre* suggests a circular paradigm of closure

¹⁸⁰ We will refer to R's 1532 *Pantagruel* as his second chronicle, II and his 1535 *Gargantua* as I, as designated by Huchon's edition of the *Œuvres complètes*, and in accordance with Guy Demerson's argument for R's projected order of the chronicles (1986, 129).

¹⁸¹ This is expressed during the encounter with Her Trippa (Duval 1997, 126).

¹⁸² Duval describes the way in which the *Tiers Livre* breaks from the form of classical epics, which begin *in medias res* (1997, 15). Oratorical economy closely resembles the most excellent poetic composition – *mos Homericus* – characterized earlier by the well-known Horatian phrase *in medias res* (*Ars Poetica*, line 148). This type of composition takes as its starting point relation between whole and parts (Eden 1997, 28-9).

¹⁸³ See Martindale on this movement in the *Aeneid* (2000, 157).

that counteracts the linear closure of the other books. Such breaks in form are reflected by turns of narrative that are just as perplexing. The theme of self-knowledge, emphasized in so many of the episodes, comes up against figures in the text that deemphasize this method of approaching marriage. *Conosce te ipsum* is confronted with the theologian Hippothadée's addendum to his conjugal advice: "Si Dieu plaist." It is similarly countered by the condemnation of clandestine marriage by Pantagruel's father, Gargantua. The encounter with the jurist Bridoye abandons the question of marriage entirely. His appearance not only causes cessation of the main theme of the narrative, but also shifts its focus from Panurge to himself. In addition, the episode illustrates a break in the symmetrical form of the text (Duval 1997, 132).

Such perplexing turns of narrative, while disruptive, again recall figures that have been previously introduced, including figures in the prologue to the current chronicle, such as Diogenes and the black camel. Like these aberrant figures with which the narrator presents the readers, the episodes involving Gargantua and Bridoye pose interpretive difficulties by breaking from the Socratic theme of the narrative as well as its centripetal structure. Requiring similar interpretive approaches to the text, these breaks recall the narrator's appeal to the pantagruelic spirit that distinguishes good readers.¹⁸⁴ This disposition allows interpreters to approach phenomena such as the appearance of figures that seem to disrupt themes and forms of the narrative. The appeal to interpreters' pantagruelic spirit is punctuated by allusions to familiar figures and forms, also in the manner of the prologue. These include figures that carry over from the previous chronicles, such as the "Æneas-like hero of the *Pantagruel*" (Duval 1991, 11), as well as

¹⁸⁴ The narrator describes the exceptional qualities of readers that approach the text in good part (R 1994, 351; 1995, 27) (see Chapter I).

paraphrases of writings from texts on the subjects of debt and marriage.¹⁸⁵ In this way, the narrative addresses concerns of an *oikos* in relation to exemplary friendship paradigms.

Such contrapuntal figures in the text mirror the discourse of the two principal characters, as they present arguments and counterarguments to the topics they approach, such as debt, divination, and language.¹⁸⁶ Their behavior provides a similar contrast. Panurge's dissipated behavior as ruler of Salmiguondin brings Pantagruel's thriving economic model to ruin, while his argument for such behavior reuses the language of classical and contemporary *encomia* in support of self-involved pleasure. His approach to the question of marriage reveals similar self-involvement, a disposition that paradoxically defers the fulfillment of his desire. Preoccupied with determining the outcome of his marriage, he causes an inversion of the Socratic dialogue in the current chronicle by taking on the role as interrogator in the *convivium* of counsellors, as Gary Masters notes: " ... unlike Socrates who personifies truth, [Panurge] can not even look for it in proper perspective because his slavery to passion unfavorably prejudices his quest. He therefore inverts the principle of the Socratic *conosce te ipsum* that Rabelais has established as the main theme of the banquet" (1969, 48). Blinded by his *philautia*, the excessive self-love that motivates his futile quest, Panurge directs outward a question to which only he can know the answer. The outward direction of his search for knowledge causes him not only to seek out the advice of others, but to search for answers in divinatory signs. His

¹⁸⁵ Comparisons are made between Pantagruel and Panurge and Æneas and Achates in II, IX and XXIV and the parallel chapter to the latter in III, XLVII, when Pantagruel and Panurge decide to set sail in a quest for the oracle of the Dive Bouteille; Panurge reinterprets Seneca's *De beneficiis* and Ficino's *Commentary on Plato's Symposium* in his praise of debts, (Duval 1997, 44-6) ; Hippothadée glosses I Cor 7 in his advice on marriage (Screech 1958, 69-71) .

¹⁸⁶ The question of divination appears as a cluster of consultations that Duval describes as the "Divinatory quartet" (1997, 115); Pantagruel and Panurge's various approaches to language recall Cratyllic debates (see Chapter III).

outward search also reverses the initial centripetal movement of the narrative in the prologue, recalling Diogenes' outward movement with his barrel toward Cranion hill.

The figure of Panurge introduces other inverted forms of discourse that appear in the narrative, recalling writings of Lucian, whose mock-encomium of flies treats a trivial topic with elegant language and Erasmus, whose *Praise of Folly* is given by the object of praise herself.¹⁸⁷ In this way, he contributes to the expansion of the narrative by consistently bringing out contrasts in the various forms that the narrative takes on. The way in which these contrasting textual forms shape the narrative reflects a use of example in the manner of the medieval term *exemplum*, as Lyons describes (1989, 3). Like this image of woods and clearing, each emphasizing the presence of the other, the contrasting textual forms shape notions of friendship that constitute the text.

These paradigms appear in the opening chapters, which show communion and dissent in their description of colony and castleship. They develop further in the following chapters on the question of marriage, which expands into different domains of study. Variations upon the economic themes of debt and marriage occur through “accidents, absurdities, and etymological conditioning to which any use of language is subject” (Cave 1979, xvii). These variations build upon themes in the text, showing uses of rhetoric in the manner of the *De copia* (see above). As a way of attaining equity, the text allows for unforeseen events, including figures, forms, and turns of phrase from various sources and registers of language. Following these movements of language, the text reveals uses of equity that stand upon friendship paradigms.

¹⁸⁷ Lucian's *Muscae encomium* describes the habits, virtues, and lineage of the fly (Marsh 1998, 152) and Erasmus' *Encomium moriae* illustrates a “spectacular revival of a classical genre which had been practically extinct for a thousand years, the paradoxical encomium” (E 1979, xiv).

III.i Friendship and Domestic Economy

The opening chapters of the third chronicle (III) present the utopian colony of Dipsodie, established at the end of the second chronicle (II). This utopian setting illustrates friendship as the basis for the ideal relationship between ruler and subjects while also appealing to a sense of familiarity on the part of the literary audience, who recognizes the scene from the second chronicle. The relationship between Pantagruel and his subjects bears characteristics of reciprocity and goodwill informed by Erasmian friendship paradigms, which we see in citations of his 1516 work, the *Institutio principis christiani*, and in allusions to his 1508 publication of the *Adages*. The speech and rebuttal signal the transition to the dialogic form of the body of the text. This form recalls prior texts that illustrate friendship in dialogic form.¹⁸⁸

The dialogic form of the current chronicle allows the protagonists themselves to guide the narrative. Their speech reveals a contrast between Pantagruel's behavior as an exemplary Erasmian prince (Duval 1997, 37-8) and Panurge's spontaneous and outrageous behavior, his "[s]ubites volte-face, actions à contre-temps, discours au rebours," which establish his role as a comic figure (Marrache, Gouraud 2003, 9). Their interaction in the opening chapters shows the way in which they personify expressions for waste and virtue, embodying and inverting figures of abundance. Their speech and rebuttal initiate a performance of friendship, a central component of the abundant figures and forms that the text offers. Cave describes the way in which performance contributes

¹⁸⁸ These include works of Erasmus, such as the *Convivium religiosum* and *Ciceronianus*, as well as Plato's *Symposium*.

to themes of *copia* in Renaissance texts: “Performance is the primary manifestation of the figures of abundance, which are often personifications (Panurge, Bacchus, Montaigne) acting out a celebration of textual productivity” (1979, xx). Acting out figures of abundance through their speech and debate, Pantagruel and Panurge demonstrate figures of *copia*, developing themes introduced by Diogenes and his barrel. Likewise, their praise and condemnation of debts demonstrates ideal and deviant behaviors with respect to the friendship paradigms to which the prologue alludes.

Chapter I begins with a description of Pantagruel’s exemplary rule, setting the stage for the application of precepts of benign rule found in prior texts to governance that is based on *caritas*. The narrator compares Pantagruel’s Pauline disposition to descriptions of benevolent rulers in classical texts, including Osiris, Hesiod, Hercules, and Alexander the Macedonian. The narrator then contrasts the benevolent rule of these figures with tyrannical rule, which he associates with Machiavellian figures, describing the former as the more effective form of governance.¹⁸⁹ His description evokes the Homeric references in Erasmus’ *Institutio principis christiani*, a work that describes the cultivation of good morals and the assets of the benevolent demeanor of a ruler who carries out the “philosophia Christi” of the *Enchiridion militis christiani* (Rummel 1990, 249). In fact, the narrator’s description of Pantagruel’s rule opens and closes with the Homeric epithets that Erasmus uses in the former (Duval 1997, 32). Behaving similarly as both prince and friend, Pantagruel embodies the exemplary figure in Erasmus’ texts.

This approach successfully appeals to the Dipsodians, all of whom value the building of the colony of Dipsodie. Pantagruel’s nurturing rule inspires adoration in the

¹⁸⁹ Duval describes the second half of the opening chapter of III as a meticulously composed reply to Machiavelli’s *Il principe* based on Erasmus’ *Institutio principis christiani* (1997, 31-37).

Dipsodians, who “Seulement se plaignoient, obtestans tous les cieulx et intelligences motrices, de ce que plus toust n'estoit à leur notice venue la renommée du bon Pantagruel” (R 1994, 354; 1995, 35). The goodwill inspired in the Dipsodians motivates them to contribute to the building of their colony, revealing the *voluntas* that develops friendship paradigms. The resulting harmonious environment illustrates a communal approach to shared things, recalling appeals to friendship present in Erasmus' *Adages*. Opening with an appeal to commonality, this work illustrates precepts of friendship that form the underpinnings of a society “in which possessions are held in common and a close community of living and sharing prevails,” (Olin 1994, 62). Referred to as a utopian work, the *Adages* express themes of commonality illustrated in Thomas More's *Utopia*.¹⁹⁰ Both works reflect a Pauline approach to community through *caritas*, a “sharing of life and property ... the very thing Christ wants to happen among Christians,” which Erika Rummel attributes to Erasmus' opening adage (Rummel 2004, 41-2). Rabelais's exemplary prince follows suit, his “pantagruélisme” suggesting an appeal to the fraternal love of *caritas*, as he shows care and concern for the inhabitants of Dipsodie. Responding to their needs, he introduces a portrait of an ideal society that sets forth a paradigm to which discussion on debts and marriage can refer.

The Dipsodians' *voluntas* recalls that of the inhabitants of the Abbaye de Thélème in chapters LII – LVII of the first chronicle.¹⁹¹ This abbey presents a harmonious environment that has abandoned authoritarian rule and where the inhabitants are fair and good-natured, as described in the inscription over the door of the abbey. The rejection the

¹⁹⁰ For comparisons between the E's *Adages* and More's *Utopia*, see Chapter 4: “Erasmus' *Adagia* and More's *Utopia*” in Olin (1994, 57-70); also see Thierry Pech on aspects of the Rabelaisian political perspective recalling More's *Utopia* (1998, 12).

¹⁹¹ The publication date of III is chronologically closer to that of I, first published in 1535 (R 1994, 1037), than II, first published in 1532 (R 1994, 1210).

rigid hierarchy of conventional abbeys appears in the rejection of “maschefains praticiens,” “officiaulx,” and “juges” in favor of “compaignons gentilz” included in this inscription (R 1994, 141, 143). In this ideal setting, inhabitants participate willingly in communal activity, a disposition indicated by the etymological reference to the Greek term for “will” – *thelema* (θέλημα) – and the single precept to which they adhere: “Fay ce que voudras” (R 1994, 149). While lending its name to the abbey, the term *thelema* is also designated by St. Paul as one of the characteristics, qualities, and faculties attributed to the human condition.¹⁹² The voluntary action implicit in the movements of individuals who live at this abbey suggests that their actions are motivated by the affection, love and attraction that distinguish friendship. In this way, friendship builds the structures of their communal setting.

The narrator of I juxtaposes this motivating *voluntas* with coercion by strict laws and customs, much as the narrator of III favors a nurturing approach to governance over tyrannical rule. The unanimous will shown by the residents of Thélème, who “Par ceste liberté entrent en louable emulation de faire tous ce que à un seul voyoient plaire” (R 1994, 149) also characterizes the subjects of Dipsodie, who are motivated toward common interests “par ne sçay quelle ferveur naturelle en tous humains au commencement de toutes œuvres qui leur viennent à gré” (R 1994, 354; 1995, 35). Both the residents of Thélème and the Dipsodians show a motivation to contribute to settings of an *oikos* – household, castleship¹⁹³ – that reflects precepts of friendship drawn from different traditions. These include the Pythagorean precept of commonality expressed in the Erasmus’ opening adage “Amicorum communia omnia” and extended in his second

¹⁹² ISBE, s.v. “Pauline Theology.”

¹⁹³ Duval associates castleship with the term *oikos* (1997, 39).

adage “*Amicitia æqualitas. Amicus alter ipse.*”¹⁹⁴ Such themes appear in Rabelais’s third chronicle, which makes use of classical sources that appear in tandem with evangelical references. The description of Pantagruel’s success in government suggests the significance of *caritas* as a principle governing law that spans political contexts, such as that of colony, and domestic contexts, such as that of the *oikos*.

Pantagruel’s nurturing, thoughtful, reflective disposition remains constant throughout the narrative and, in his interactions with Panurge, allows his friend to deviate and disrupt, following figures and forms that are promised by the prologue. While Pantagruel’s decision to grant Panurge rule of the castleship of Salmiguondin in chapter II illustrates the confidence entailed by perfect friendship, an idea expressed by classical authors, such as Seneca, and echoed in Renaissance works, such as Petrarch’s letters (Langer 1994, 138), Panurge’s dissipation of the resources of Salmiguondin within a fortnight reveals his unpredictability and his singular manner of reinterpreting authoritative texts. As Pantagruel reacts to the situation of mismanagement of an *oikos* according to precepts of *caritas*: “*Toutes choses prenoit en bonne partie, toute acte interpretoit à bien*” (R 1994, 357; 1995, 45), Panurge reinterprets writings on *caritas* in support of his myopic method of rule.¹⁹⁵ Interpreting precepts of charity in the opposite way as his friend, Panurge provides counterpoint in themes and forms of the narrative. While remaining mainly divergent, the conflicting discourse of the two friends reflects the manner in which the act of debating and discussing solidifies friendship (Langer 1994).

¹⁹⁴ The commonality expressed in these adages on friendship is illustrated through communal approaches to discourse and the sharing of a soul, as discussed in the previous section.

¹⁹⁵ Duval describes how he substitutes debts for love (1997, 45).

Panurge's role in the narrative is as disruptive as his rule of Salmiguondin. Even his name, which resembles the Greek term *panourgos* (πανουργος), evokes the idea of knavery.¹⁹⁶ As Duval points out, he “seems to wreak havoc not only in the fictional world he inhabits but in the narrative logic and overall economy of the book as well” (1991, 63). The chaotic turns of events that he seems to bring with him are accompanied by an “absence de pudeur” and other offending characteristics that bring about unexpected developments in the narrative (Marrache-Gouraud 2003, 9). Panurge's spontaneous words and actions reflect the alternation of tempi in the narrative, illustrated by its entry into various textual forms. These include the protagonists' speech and rebuttal, which recurs throughout the narrative, their “chanson de Ricochet,” the inscriptions prominent in the episode involving Homeric and Virgilian lots, the dialogue between Panurge and Trouillogan, and the encyclopedic forms that are apparent in Frère Jan's lists, the blazoning of Triboullet, and Bridoye's inventory of legal references.¹⁹⁷ These developments introduce various forms that contribute to developing themes in the narrative.

Panurge's praise of debts initiates uses of encomiastic speech that appear throughout the narrative. These uses draw from *encomia* in prior texts and writings that follow such *encomia*. The exchange that takes place in chapters III-V evokes uses of encomiastic speech in classical rhetorical manuals, which present eulogy and then its counterpart, invective, a rhetorical device that reverses the categories of eulogy by

¹⁹⁶ Hampton describes the affiliation of Panurge's name with this idea (1993, 58); for various ideas on the origins of Panurge's name, see Huchon's description, which includes its association with a fox through its expressions of “apte à tout” and “rusé,” as well as its uses in scripture, particularly the New Testament and especially the Pauline Epistles, which illustrate its associations with the foolish wisdom of the world (R 1994, 246, n. 1); also see Duval on positive and negative connotations of the Greek term and the Scriptural references to wisdom and folly in I Cor 3:19 (1991, 63).

¹⁹⁷ These appear in chapters IX, X, XII, XXVI, XXVIII, XXXVI, XXXVIII, and XXXIX-XLII.

“shifting from positive topics like loyalty and bravery, for example, to their negative counterparts: treachery and cowardice” (Marsh 1998, 149). While the subject of debt brings up serious monetary debates of the sixteenth century (Cave 2001),¹⁹⁸ it also shows the manner in which Panurge’s substitution of debt for the nobler subject of *caritas*¹⁹⁹ reflects the shift from eulogy to invective shown in classical rhetorical manuals.

Panurge’s negative examples of a world without debts show rewritings of prior texts, as he uses figures that reflect the disruption of order and harmony of the world. Panurge’s reuse of *encomia* in the spirit of *philautia* relies on the language of *caritas* yet reveals a “perverse delight in twisted reasoning,” a source of cavillation (Maclean 1992, 137). His substitution of debts for *caritas* paints a world in an unnatural state, populated with figures based on images from Scripture and mythology: “La terre rien ne produira que monstres, Titans, [Aloïdes,] Geans . . . Lucifer se desliera, et, sortant du profond d’enfer avecques les Furies, les Poines, et les Diables cornuz, vouldra deniger les cieulx tous les dieux tant des majeurs comme des mineurs peuples” (R 1994, 363; 1995, 59). The image he sets forth consists of a conglomeration of classical monsters and monstrous figures in the book of Revelation. These unnatural figures, resulting from the absence of debt, obstruct the circulation of natural resources, just as the absence of debt stagnates the circulation of monetary resources. Like the figures of Revelation, which emerge from a dislodging of earthly and celestial bodies, Panurge’s monsters appear in the wake of blockages in the flow of borrowing and lending. The dislodging of divine entities from their heavenly spheres by Lucifer likewise evokes phenomena considered *praeter*

¹⁹⁸ Citing II, XVII, III, II-V, and IV, V-VIII, Cave states: “Dans un épisode majeur de chacun des trois livres où il figure, Panurge est associé à l’argent” (2001, 141).

¹⁹⁹ Duval describes Panurge’s substitution of debts for love in his paraphrase of Ficino (Duval 1997, 45).

naturam, showing aberrations in nature through the inversion of the cosmos.²⁰⁰ This inversion causes the diabolic entities inhabiting the innermost spheres to emerge upon the surface of the earth. Such aberrations point to defects or excesses in nature that contradict the state of natural phenomena.²⁰¹ As Panurge illustrates the reversal of regularities occurring in nature from a lack of debt, he reverses forms of eulogy by focusing on base topics. In addition, his reuse of Scriptural forms suggests blasphemy, as adding or taking away from Scripture is specifically prohibited in Rev 22: 18-19.²⁰²

The vivid images that Panurge sets forth show his particular way of participating in the creation of “lieux communs.”²⁰³ Building upon figures and forms that are familiar to his audience, he presents an amalgamation of mythological and Biblical figures that build upon texts with which his literary audience is familiar. These figures not only appeal to a sense of familiarity, but, like Panurge himself, bring about a change in the way the narrative performs, creating a dynamic portrait that resembles the paintings of Renaissance theater (Marrache-Gouraud 2003, 47). This movement of the text suggests the interpretive spaces promised by the prologue, showing the role of the interlocutors in developing these spaces: “En effet, [les assemblages frappants] ne sont pas statiques comme le seraient des peintures, mais sont animés par le locuteur” (ibid). The use of such figures as mobile units, placed within a dynamic portrait, illustrates a manner of

²⁰⁰ Maclean describes monsters as the product of defect in nature in his discussion on “*praeter naturam*” (2002, 269); Céard discusses the generation of monsters and the issue of considering them a defect of nature (1996, 4).

²⁰¹ See Maclean on characteristics of non-naturals, which include *res praeter naturam* (2002, 269).

²⁰² “For I call as witness all listeners of the words of the prophecy of this book. If anyone will have added to these, God will add upon him the afflictions written in this book. And if anyone will have taken away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God will take away his portion from the Book of Life, and from the Holy City, and from these things which have been written in this book.”

²⁰³ See Chapter I for the way in which these “lieux communs” develop through shared characteristics of a literary community.

participating in the creation of a “lieu commun.” Such uses of figures and forms illustrate Panurge’s performance of friendship, initiated by his singular approach to discourse.

Panurge’s praise of debts expands from a visual, chorographic scene of monsters and mirabilia to a description of the cosmos. This allows his hyperbolic discourse to reach new heights, reaching beyond the visible, tangible portraits of monsters appearing on the earth’s surface to a discussion of the effects of debts on celestial bodies.²⁰⁴ His language also changes to reflect the philosophical registers of authoritative texts on social and natural order. He reworks passages from texts including Ficino’s *Commentary on Plato’s Symposium* and Seneca’s *De beneficiis* to illustrate debts rather than *caritas* as the basis of social and natural order.²⁰⁵ His mock encomium includes analogies to Ficino’s cosmological descriptions: “toute ma vie je n’aye estimé debtes estre comme une connexion et colligence des Cieulx et Terre, un entretenement unicque de l’humain lignaige ; je dis sans lequel bien tost tous humains periroient” (R 1994, 362; 1995, 57).²⁰⁶ Illustrating the parallel positions of earthly and celestial harmony, the description shows the effects of the proposed celestial harmony on earthly institutions, such as family line and household. Debts assume such an essential role on these various planes of existence that their absence would bring about disorder: “Là entre les astres ne sera cours regulier quiconque” (R 1994, 362; 1995, 57). This chaos would take on such heights that it would have repercussions on the celestial level, throwing spheres out of their orbit and causing irregular patterns in what is otherwise represented by harmonious, concentric structures.

²⁰⁴ See Marrache-Gouraud on Panurge’s use of hyperbolic speech to reach his audience (2003, 49).

²⁰⁵ Duval describes Panurge’s uses of these texts in his praise of debts (1997, 44-6).

²⁰⁶ Duval compares passages in R and Ficino’s works (1997, 45).

This alludes to the disruption of the structure of the narrative, whose concentric form also experiences ruptures.²⁰⁷

Panurge links this broad perspective of the universe to the minutiae of the human form, following the authoritative writings of texts that illustrate the links between human physiology and the cosmos. Not only does Panurge refer to the ill effects of a lack of debts on earthly and celestial spheres, but he speaks of parallel effects on individuals themselves, their bodily forms reflecting the form of the earth: “l’autre petit monde, qui est l’home” (R 1994, 364; 1995, 61). Panurge sets forth the human form as another “lieux commun,” a shared aspect of his literary audience and a recognizable topic of discourse. Comparing the circulation of debts to the circulation of blood, Panurge describes the vitality debts give to human existence: “La vie consiste en sang. Sang est le siege de l’ame. Pourtant un seul labeur poine ce monde, c’est forger sang continuellement. En ceste forge sont tous membres en office propre ; et est leur hierarchie telle que sans cesse l’un de l’autre emprunte, l’un à l’autre preste, l’un à l’aautre est debteur” (R 1994, 365; 1995, 65). The constant flow of debts allows the economy to reach equilibrium in the same way that the constant flow of blood allows the body to reach humoral equilibrium. Like the different celestial spheres in their orbits, different members of the body are joined through the borrowing and lending of blood. Comparing the generation of debts to the generation of blood, Panurge describes a perpetual state of debt as a phenomenon that unites all members of a functioning economy. This normally functioning state indicates the sanguine effects of debts on an economy.

²⁰⁷ Both Gargantua and Bridoye’s appearances illustrate such ruptures, as we will see further on in this chapter.

As he describes the bodily microcosm, he returns to a more eulogistic register of speech. His references to functioning anatomy stand in contrast to the aberrations in form that he gives when describing an altered cosmos. As he passes on to a more eulogistic register of speech, he describes the flow of bodily fluids in terms of the passage of debts, a continual deliverance of what is lacking: “... nostre microcosme, [*id est* petit monde, c’est l’homme,] en tous ses membres prestans, empruntans, doibvans, c’est à dire en son naturel” (R 1994, 365; 1995, 65). His analogy of human and earthly forms reflects Neoplatonic views of the body as a microcosm of the cosmos, as Panurge points out, and has origins in writings on natural philosophy, such as those of Gerolamo Cardano.²⁰⁸ Referring to classical texts, Cardano draws a parallel between the harmony achieved in the body and in the world, relating organs of the body to specific elements (Céard 1996, 231). Panurge likewise attributes the smooth functioning of bodily organs to debt, as he illustrates by relating the act of borrowing – “prester” – to sight: “La teste ne voudra *prester* la veue de ses œilz” as well as pulse: “Le cœur se faschera de tant se mouvoir pour les pouls des membres, et ne leurs *prester* plus” and also to breath: “Le poulmon ne luy fera *prest* de ses souffletz” (R 1994, 364; 1995, 61, emphasis mine). Revealing the relationship between borrowing and the basic functioning of the body, Panurge illustrates the manner in which debts connect bodily organs and allow them to function harmoniously. The idea of a system of “prêt” also suggests other uses of the term “prester,” evoking figures that supply what is necessary.²⁰⁹ These imply charitable functions of lending and borrowing, attributing a beneficent role to debts in social order

²⁰⁸ See Huchon’s description of such Neoplatonic views (R 360, n. 6); see Céard on Cardano, Chapter IX, “La Variété des choses et la pensée de Cardan” (1996); also Maclean’s description of Cardano as a mathematician and mechanist (2002, 81).

²⁰⁹ These meanings include “Fournir, donner” (*Dictionnaire du seizième siècle*, s.v. “Prester”).

and individual well-being. His analogy of various bodily organs contributing to the smooth functioning of the “petit monde” and the contribution of debts to society suggests a peculiar use of Pauline descriptions of the body politic that also draws analogies between members of the Church at Corinth and various parts of the body.²¹⁰

As he eulogizes the base topic of debts, Panurge’s speech suggests Greek sophists’ adaptation of techniques of encomium to blameworthy or trivial subjects. This exercise, known as *adoxography*, related to the Greek term *adoxos*, or “ignoble,” focuses on trivial topics – a practice that inverts traditional uses of *encomia*.²¹¹ The paradoxical quality of Panurge’s speech on debts points to the strong presence of economic arguments in the “arsenal of paradoxical encomia” that has sources in Lucian and extends through the Renaissance.²¹² As both speaker and subject of praise, he perverts traditional *encomia*, drawing upon encomiastic language and rhetorical techniques in order to promote his bankrupt situation.²¹³ His speech reveals the way in which his rhetoric follows his fraudulent behavior, following eulogistic models in order to uphold blameworthy topics and rearticulating passages from prior texts in order to further his narcissistic agenda. His integration of Scriptural themes into his arguments seems almost blasphemous and counters Pantagruel’s use of Pauline *caritas* in good faith. Sidestepping the spirit of these texts, he reveals his own misuse of manuals for personal gain.

Pantagruel’s rebuttal, in its turn, provides a counter example to Panurge’s *adoxography*. While Panurge has substituted debts for love in his reuse of prior texts, Pantagruel reinstates love as the unifying bond in the economic models set forth in the

²¹⁰ See I Cor 12: 12-27.

²¹¹ Such exercises produce paradoxical encomia praising topics such as fleas, baldness, and cowardice (Marsh 1998, 149).

²¹² Marsh mentions Lucian’s *De Parasito* in particular (1998, 177).

²¹³ Compare this use of *encomium* to Erasmus’ *Encomium moriæ* (see Chapter III).

text (Duval 1997, 47). In response to Panurge's "Doibvez tous jours à quelqu'un" (R 1994, 361; 1995, 53), he states: "Rien (dict le saint Envoyé) à personne ne doibvez, fors amour et dilection mutuelle" (R 1994, 367; 1995, 71). Pantagruel reverses Panurge's rhetoric, using *caritas* in a way that reflects Scripture and shows interpretation in good faith.²¹⁴ He expands on this use of Scripture by reaching into the repository of classical texts, as does Erasmus in the *Adages*.²¹⁵ His use of Plutarch's warning against debt recalls Erasmus' citation in the *Adages*: "Felix qui nihil debet."²¹⁶ Pointing out the good fortune of those who owe nothing, Pantagruel alludes to the state of the Dipsodians before being struck by excessive debt. While Pantagruel echoes Scripture's emphasis on *caritas*, he also brings up traditional references to finances, such as the Persian view of money as the primary vice, one that is closely related to counteracting the truth, or *veritas*: "Car debtes et mensonges sont ordinairement ralliez" (R 1994, 368; 1995, 71). In this way, he reveals Panurge's loquacious rhetoric as an obscuring of truth.

This initial exchange between the two protagonists of the tale enacts textual productivity as a topos that runs throughout the narrative. Their discussion illustrates the issue of rewriting a topos as a fragment of discourse (Cave 1979, xviii). The issue of debts shows the manner in which Panurge draws from prior texts, reusing language of these texts for his own ends, and contrasts this with the manner in which Pantagruel draws from prior texts, respecting the spirit in which they are written, their context and the circumstances under which they appear. The contrast between the ways in which these two characters approach positions of authority appears in their discourse as well as in their actions, as Panurge adopts the language of *caritas* in order to further his own

²¹⁴ Rom 13:8 (R 1995, 70 n. 2).

²¹⁵ See Eden (1998, 408) (see Chapter I).

²¹⁶ E and R quote Plutarch's *Qu'il ne faut pas emprunter à intérêts*, V (R 1995, 70 n. 6).

interests, and Pantagruel remains true to the spirit of *caritas* as he refutes Panurge's argument and pardons his debts. Their exchange sets into motion the contrapuntal arguments pro and contra that last for the duration of the narrative. Their speech and rebuttal indicate a performance of friendship that contributes to the creation of a "lieu commun."

The narrative gives a dialogic performance of two figures who demonstrate equity through example. As they approach the topic of marriage, they engage in exchanges with other characters who discuss the topic in different ways. Their variations on the theme of debts initiate the variations on the theme of marriage that form the body of the text. Panurge's reference to the physiological benefits of debt anticipates the physiological benefits of marriage. When he mentions creating offspring out of nothing, he refers to the "devoir de mariage," which introduces the main theme of the narrative. Of course, as Frame mentions, he plays upon the verbal and nominal forms of this term, "devoir," meaning "to owe" and "duty."²¹⁷ This also introduces some of the interpretive issues that come up in the narrative. Various approaches to the topic of marriage reflect different methods of gaining knowledge, such as divination, reading signs, or having various experts discuss the topic in the manner of a symposium. In a narrative carried out mainly by dialogue, they illustrate the role of dialogue in developing friendship and the role of friendship as an interpretive paradigm.

²¹⁷ See Frame's description of the term (R 1991, 273, n. 5).

III.ii The Question of Marriage

“Ung bon mariage ... est une douce
société de vie, pleine de constance, de
fiance et d’un nombre infiny d’utiles et
solides offices et obligations mutuelles.” –
Montaigne, *Essais*, III v.

The issue of debts gives way to the question of marriage in chapter VI, when the discussion suddenly turns to Mosaic law that exempts vine-planters, new builders, and newlyweds from going to war. Focusing on the position of newlyweds, Panurge relates it to his own interest in marrying, which he brings up in chapter VII. These conjugal preoccupations eventually lead to discourse on the question of marriage, including descriptions of individuals united by nature and law as well as spirit. These descriptions show the relevance to marriage of characteristics traditionally attributed to friends. Erasmus expresses this view in the *Institutio christiani matrimonii* and the *Encomium matrimonii*, works that expand on legal descriptions of marriage while also developing evangelical conceptions of marriage.²¹⁸ The inclusion of anecdotes into these illustrations of marriage points to similar approaches to the question of marriage in the *Tiers Livre*.

As Panurge announces his interest in marriage, he pierces his right ear and, placing in it a golden earring containing a flea, states: “J’ay ... la pousse en l’aureille. Je me veulx marier” (R 1994, 372; 1995, 85). His act of ear-piercing recalls Exodus XXI, in which ear-piercing is prescribed for a man who prefers to remain enslaved rather than to

²¹⁸ Erasmus cites the *Digest* and the *Sententiae* in the *Institutio christiani matrimonii* as legal references for the institution of marriage (CWE 69, 219 n. 11) and refers to the laws of the Hebrews in Deut 20:7 as a Scriptural reference explaining the way in which conjugal unions replenish the state (E 1996, 61).

be freed and separated from his wife and children.²¹⁹ At the same time, the scene presents a literal representation of a verbal expression: “avoir la puce à l’oreille,” which signifies: “brûler de concupiscence,”²²⁰ the source of Panurge’s interest in marriage. Characteristic of a figure who draws literal interpretation into the narrative by his unanticipated actions and dialogue, this ear-piercing initiates his foray into the interpretive dilemmas posed by the question of marriage.²²¹ While interested in marriage, he hesitates over the possibility of cuckoldry, a reservation that he expresses in chapter IX. Wishing to escape from the responsibility of making a conjugal decision, he poses the question of marriage to Pantagruel, who leads him to a series of consultants who give both divinatory and advisory counsel.²²² The encounters with the theologian, Hippothadée, and Pantagruel’s father, Gargantua, place marriage within the contexts of canon and Roman law, while the encounter with the jurist, Bridoye reveals the difficulties of legal aporia to which conflict between such paradigms leads.

The reference to Mosaic law in chapter VI points to the significance of authoritative writings on marriage while also indicating sixteenth-century polemics related to marriage. As in the *Heptaméron*, the text sets forth critical views of clandestine marriage, made all the more poignant in Rabelais’s text by the form of a tirade in which these views are expressed and by the extreme consequences that the parents of children

²¹⁹ See Screech (1958, 124) for a description of this citation of Exodus 21:5-6: “And if the servant will say, ‘I love my lord, and my wife and children, I will not depart freely,’ then his lord shall make an offering for him to the heavens, and it shall be applied to the door and the posts, and he will pierce his ear with an awl. And he shall be his servant in perpetuity.”

²²⁰ Screech describes the sexual connotation of Panurge’s phrase in his edition of the *Tiers Livre* (Genève: Droz, 1964, 63, n. 7).

²²¹ Marrache-Gouraud indicates Panurge’s foray into literal meaning as one of his Protean forms (2003, 9); Duval describes Panurge’s tendency toward literal interpretation as characteristic of his adherence to Mosaic law (1997, 155-6).

²²² Duval describes the way in which Panurge attempts to evade the moral responsibility of making a conjugal decision after evading fiscal responsibility through debts and feudal responsibility through marriage (1997, 81-2).

suffer when their children marry in secret, including death. In addition to potentially interfering with family alliances and social structure, clandestine marriage poses interpretive issues for individuals who value both canon and Roman law.²²³ The absence of parental control in cases of clandestine marriage causes controversy that is addressed by Gargantua in chapter XLVIII and is linked though this figure to education and child rearing. Its appearance in the *Tiers Livre* is concurrent with discussions of the issue at the Council of Trent, an ecumenical council specifying Church doctrine held between 1545 and 1563.²²⁴ The parental figure of Gargantua takes up themes of progeny traditionally used to justify marriage while the religious figure of Hippothadée alludes to the spiritual union between spouses that distinguishes its status as a sacrament.

The narrative approaches marriage through dialogues that take place between characters trained in different fields of study, thereby alluding to its composite state as subject to canon, Roman, and natural law. Erasmus' *Institutio christiani matrimonii* incorporates each of these paradigms into his description of marriage. His citations of the *Digest* and the *Sententiae* in his introductory passages indicate their usefulness in the portrait he develops of marriage as hybrid institution: "Technically speaking, 'marriage is a lawful and perpetual union between a man and a woman, entered into for the purpose of begetting offspring, and involving an indivisible partnership of life and property.'"²²⁵ Erasmus' inclusion of everyday examples of marriage in his treatise addresses practical aspects of marriage, such as the issue of progeny and the holding of property, while his

²²³ See Leushuis on the difficulty of defining marriage (2003, 6-7); see Screech on the larger controversies to which marriage relates, such as the *querelle des femmes* and the status of celibacy vs. marriage (1958, 126-7).

²²⁴ See Leushuis on the development of "la 'pensée matrimoniale' humaniste" in M and R's works that developed prior to the decrees on marriage made at the Council of Trent (2003, 3).

²²⁵ Erasmus cites classic statements of Roman and canon law, such as *Digesta* 23.2.1 and Lombard's *Sententiae* book 4 dist 27 c 2 (CWE 69, 219, n. 11).

allusions to the indissolubility of marriage indicate its spiritual characteristics, reflecting its status as a sacrament. While referring to marriage as a union resulting from the *voluntas* of two individuals, much like friendship, Erasmus also emphasizes the important role that the conjugal union plays in the wider scope of Christian life, including the continuation of family line. These aspects of marriage appear in passages of the *Tiers Livre* that introduce the theological viewpoint of Hippothadée and the parental viewpoint of Gargantua. The encounter with the legal figure, Bridoye, introduces the possible aporia that results from being under numerous sets of laws.

The encounters with Hippothadée, Gargantua, and Bridoye in the third chronicle address themes expressed by the episode of Thélème in the second, in their examination of self-knowledge, their remarks upon the role of marriage within an *oikos*, and their foray into interpretive issues that arise with marriage. These encounters suggest the manner in which the single law of Thélème is a template for unanimous will. Mirroring the significance of the unique law of *caritas* when approaching colony and castleship, the manner in which the single law of *thelema* is carried out distinguishes an *oikos* in which personal will coincides with communal will. The practice of doing one's own will is dependent on knowing one's own will, which indicates the prerequisite position of the law of Thélème for Panurge's first conjugal question: "Doibz je me marier ou non?"²²⁶ The question of unanimity of will comes up in Hippothadée's discourse, when he focuses on the personality of Panurge's hypothetical spouse, one who ideally reflects the characteristics of a Thélémite, and is continued in Gargantua's speech, which describes the importance of unanimity between parent and child on the question of marriage. The reliance on one unique law, such as that of Thélème, or of the "pantagruélisme" shown

²²⁶ Duval designates this question as the deliberative component of Panurge's binary question (1997, 57).

by the hero in the opening chapters, presents a contrast to the overabundance of laws signaled by the piles of legal papers to which Bridoye refers. Such excess stretches themes of *copia* to their extremities while also suggesting the significance of equitable uses of law.

From his first appearance in the third chronicle, we see that Panurge's *philautia* intervenes in his quest, an occurrence reflected by disruptions in the narrative. Panurge's *philautia* comes up as a counterexample to the "pantagruélisme" that the narrator designates as a guiding principle in the current chronicle and that appears in the inscription of the first chronicle: "Livre plein de Pantagruélisme,"²²⁷ a disposition that is equivalent to the rule of Thélème.²²⁸ This suggests difficulties in fulfilling the unique law of *caritas* while approaching issues such as matrimony. Motivated by an interest in pleasure (as we see in chapter II), Panurge reveals a myopic *philautia* that guides him along circuitous paths. Pantagruel points this out to him in chapter XXIX, "Philautie et amour de soy vous deçoit" (R 1994, 444; 1995, 281). At certain moments, Panurge's quest seems to stagnate, leaving him at an impasse in his decision to marry, unable to do what he wishes, since he is incapable of determining what he does wish (Kaiser 1963, 181). The quest itself proves to be based on logically deficient criteria. As Panurge poses the deliberative question: "Me doibz je marier ou non" along with the divinatory question: "Seray je point cocu," he sets forth a binary question to which he searches for a single answer (Duval 1997, 57). This being impossible, Panurge takes up a quest without an end, one that subverts the teleological forms of the previous chronicles. As his methods deviate from those that are presented to him by his consultants, he causes

²²⁷ See Chapter I for the way in which the inscription signals "pantagruélisme" as a theme in R's chronicles.

²²⁸ "The rule of Pantagruelism is that of the Abbaye de Thélème" (Kaiser 1963, 181).

inversions of paradigms set forth in the text as a way in which to approach contexts of economy. Panurge's conjugal question causes the text to fold back on itself, painting cornucopian themes and then inverting these, offering signs of productivity and alluding to the idea that a plethora of signs might mask the absence of an *altior sensus*.²²⁹ His inquiry leads to a series of examples that the text sets forth which develop images of domestic economy through the question of marriage.

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“The three sexes were like this: the male was descended, in the beginning, from the sun, and the female from the earth, and the one that partook of both of them came from the moon, because the moon itself partakes of the natures of those two” Plato, *Symposium*, 190b.

The consultation with Hippothadée in chapter XXX illustrates a response to Panurge's conjugal inquiry that focuses on the companionship between spouses. The encounter with the theologian refers to Pauline descriptions of marriage in I Cor 7, which incorporate marriage under the rubric of *caritas*. The “amitié conjugale” that Hippothadée recommends brings with it a reciprocity that implies the fulfillment of spousal duty. Such conjugal obligations recall verses 3-4 of I Cor 7: “A husband should fulfill his obligation to his wife, and a wife should also act similarly toward her husband. It is not the wife, but the husband, who has power over her body. But, similarly also, it is not the husband, but the wife, who has power over his body.” These obligations appear in

²²⁹ *Rabelais Encyclopedia*, s.v. “Cornucopia.”

the discourse of the theologian, who first addresses Panurge's carnal nature and then places it within the context of conjugal union, thereby designating Panurge's role in the *oikos*. The reciprocal obligations between spouses reflect the reciprocity between friends. Such reciprocity is emphasized by the similar phrasing used to describe the similar duties of each spouse. This mirroring of language also suggests Panurge's ability to see himself through the actions and personality of his spouse. The inward gaze that Hippothadée suggests for elucidating Panurge's conundrum mirrors the movement of the text, suggesting the growth and development that are possible through this concentric structure.

Hippothadée's description of the resemblance between spouses in disposition and spirit emphasizes marriage as an example of charity. Hippothadée's counsel reveals humanist and Reform thought and is, according to Screech, associated with figures such as the apostle St. Jude and the theologian Philip Melanchthon.²³⁰ Duval describes him as a "mild-mannered Biblical humanist and evangelical agnostic" in the style of Erasmus, Alcofribas, and Pantagruel himself (1997, 94). His views depart from traditional justifications on marriage in a manner similar to that which Rummel attributes to Erasmus.²³¹ He presents a further departure from such tradition by avoiding discussion of progeny, one of the main arguments in favor of marriage. Screech describes Hippothadée's description as discourse in praise of marriage: "Rabelais praises marriage

²³⁰ Screech readily associates Hippothadée with the apostle St. Jude, whose given name is Thadeus, and to whom the fourteenth century writer, Nicephorus Callistus, attributes the role of bridegroom of the wedding at Cana. Philip Melanchthon, with whom Screech also associates Hippothadée, was an influential leader of the Lutheran Reformation and prominent humanist figure whose influences include Virgil, Terence, Cicero, and Livy. Historic origins of character include Lefèvre d'Étaples, a view with which Screech disagrees (1958, 67).

²³¹ Rummel describes the value Erasmus places on the matrimonial state and his rejection of the medieval / Catholic hierarchy that placed celibacy over matrimony as a sign of his departure from traditional ideas on women (E 1996, 8).

and underplays the merits of celibacy, not in order to reverse the hierarchy of virtue but in order to make both states potentially good or evil according to their use” (1958, 120). Hippothadée’s emphasis on self-knowledge in the context of marriage shows the spiritual path available to individuals who enter matrimony. In this way, Hippothadée’s discussion of marriage contributes to discourse on charity by describing the mystical union of two souls and by contributing to the uses of encomia in the narrative that develop figures of abundance.

The inward gaze illustrated by the message of Socratic self knowledge that punctuates the narrative appears in Hippothadée’s first response to Panurge: “premier fault que vous mesmes vous conseillez” (R 1994, 446; 1995, 287). This advice echoes Pantagruel’s response to Panurge in chapter XXIX: “chascun doibt ... de soy mesme conseil prendre” (R 1994, 444; 1995, 281, 286 n. 2), and restates the theme of the *Chanson de Ricochet* in chapter IX (Duval 1997, 97, 8). This message occupies a central position in the text, which occurs in chapter XXV, during Panurge’s encounter with Her Trippa. During this encounter, Panurge himself stumbles upon the Socratic idea of *conosce te ipsum* as he rages against the myopia of Her Trippa, ironically uttering the advice to which he is blind: “Il ne sçait le premier traict de la philosophie, qui est, COGNOIS TOY” (R 1994, 428; 1995, 243).²³² But instead of seeing a reflection of himself at this moment of revelation, Panurge remains blinded by *philautia* and again turns outward, continuing his quest through consultations and divinatory techniques. Hippothadée takes up Panurge’s myopic view as an aspect of his character that can redirect him inward, toward the elucidation of his own conjugal desires.

²³² Duval describes the significance of this Socratic moment within the centripetal structure of the text (1997, 128).

Hippothadée's first question focuses on the source of Panurge's interest in marriage, his carnal state. His question of whether or not he possesses "le don et grace speciale de continence" (R 1994, 446; 1995, 289) evokes evangelical debates on the extent to which continence should be held up as an ideal state. When Hippothadée sidesteps a *dissuasio nubendi* on the merits of celibacy in favor of remarks on containing his desires in marriage, he reveals sympathy for Panurge and respect for normal conjugal relations as part of everyday life.²³³ Hippothadée's sympathies recall Erasmus' desire to describe normal, everyday matrimony, which he distinguishes from the marriage of the Virgin (CWE 69, 219). This distinction of everyday matrimony reveals the practical uses of marriage and contradicts the opinion of medieval monastics, who grant the state of celibacy a higher rank than that of marriage and view celibacy as an ideal for all Christians.²³⁴ Showing a departure from these views, Hippothadée reveals a respect for the conjugal state as one that is the most appropriate for certain individuals.

The idea of containing concupiscence through marriage brings up further sixteenth-century evangelical debates on whether all Christians should aspire toward a celibate state or whether celibacy is a special grace bestowed upon a select group. Hippothadée's advice to Panurge suggests a tolerant attitude toward individuals' carnal states, when contained within the conjugal union: "Mariez vous donc mon amy ... Car trop meilleur est soy marier que ardre en feu de concupiscence (R 1994, 446; 1995, 289)." This gloss of I Cor. 7:9, "It is better to marry than to burn," suggests the

²³³ Screech describes this avoidance of a *dissuasio nubendi* in reaction to Panurge's question of whether he should marry as an indication of a "reformist" outlook that attributes equal importance to married and celibate states (1958, 68).

²³⁴ Pauline verses can be interpreted to favor celibacy, based on the description of the celibate as those who focus on spiritual matters, as opposed to married individuals, who focus on earthly matters: "Whoever is without a wife is worried about the things of the Lord, as to how he may please God. But whoever is with a wife is worried about the things of the world, as to how he may please his wife. And so, he is divided." (I Cor; 7:32-3).

interpretation of burning as a result of fleshly desires rather than as a result of landing in hellfire for sins related to the flesh, a view expressed in Erasmian commentary.²³⁵

Hippothadée’s explanation for the benefits of marriage suggests a prevention of the overwhelming effects of conditions that remain unaddressed, the fire that results from too many prickings of the flesh. Ways of tempering such fire come up in allusions to the varying temperaments of individuals, as shown in Hippothadée’s counsel and in the counsel of Rondibilis, which Screech describes as the complimentary medical advice to the evangelical advice of the theologian (1958, 103). In contrast to the images of individuals in the *Heptaméron* who are consumed by the fires of their carnal desires,²³⁶ Panurge’s hesitant behavior stalls the explosion of these fires, as he examines various methods of approaching the conjugal state.

The use of companionship to temper extreme emotions extends the use of discourse among friends as a remedy for the ill effects of misfortune or malady. As with the *devisants* in the *Heptaméron*, who follow the model of the *Decameron*, companionship between spouses in Hippothadée’s illustration of an “amitié conjugale” assuage the perturbing effects of overwhelming desire. Such desires are physical, as shown by Panurge’s preoccupation with his conjugal questions, but they are also emotional, as Hippothadée illustrates in his description of spousal relations. Rather than

²³⁵ Erasmus includes secular descriptions in his writings on matrimony: “Alongside fundamental passages on wedlock from book 7 of Aristotle’s *Politics*, Erasmus culls from his beloved Plutarch’s essays on education and marriage” (CWE 69, 206); Hippothadée’s discourse reflects an Erasmian interpretation of the verse: “Melius est enim nubere quam uri,” the verb “uri” meaning a burning from physical desire rather than a burning in hellfire for sins related to the flesh. Screech discusses interpretation of “uri” in I Cor. 7:9: “Melius est enim nubere quam uri,” citing Erasmus’ *Annotaciones in N.T.* (Basle 1522, 365): “There were two current interpretations, one much more common than the other. The less common made it refer to burning in Hell; the more common, to burning with desire. Rabelais’s gloss shows that he follows the majority here, as did Erasmus who wrote that he was astonished that some should render $\pi\upsilon\rho\upsilon\delta\theta\alpha\iota$ [?] (*uri*) ‘against all Ancient opinion as the fire of Hell, when it clearly alludes to the fire of lust’ and the vexations of those who cannot contain” (1958, 81).

²³⁶ An example is the *dame saige* in N26, which we will discuss in Chapter III.

following the views of certain moralists that dissociate friendship from marriage, even describing it as immoral,²³⁷ Hippothadée describes marriage as a companionship between spouses. His Pauline inclusion of marriage within discourse on *caritas* is corroborated by interpretations of earlier writings in Scripture, such as the creation of woman in Genesis from man's rib, rather than from his foot or his head, which would indicate her role as a servant or mistress (Maclean 1980, 19). Following this interpretation of the creation myth, man takes on the role of "steward (*curator*) of woman in this life," it being "incumbent upon him to love and respect her as much as she is enjoined to love and respect him".²³⁸ Hippothadée promotes spousal relations that endure through their reciprocal nature, a characteristic that occurs through love. This love, rather than being passionate and fleeting, is "something akin to an amalgam of Christian charity and the virtues of chastity and endurance (*tolerantia*)" (Maclean 1980, 59).

Sources of compatibility between spouses evoke individuals who adhere to the unique law of *caritas* to guide them in all of their activities. This recalls the Abbaye de Thélème, in which individuals show a "vouloir et franc arbitre" that coincides with the other inhabitants of the abbey. Possessing "par nature un instinct et aiguillon, qui tousjours les pousse à faictz vertueux" (R 1994, 149), Thélémites marry well and of their own accord. Like these Thélémites, an ideal spouse for Panurge, as Hippothadée points out, is one that is "instruicte en vertus et honesteté" (R 1994, 447; 1995, 291). These qualities make Panurge's spouse into an individual that contributes constructively to a "mesnaige" and who is able to recognize virtue in her husband. It also indicates *thelema*

²³⁷ Screech describes the way in which certain moralists believe that the notion of equality between partners of a marriage is immoral and goes against the wisdom of tradition and the Bible (1958, 8).

²³⁸ Maclean cites Col 3:18-19 (1980, 19).

as a human quality, according to St. Paul.²³⁹ In this manner, the law of *thelema* takes on a position as not only a law that distinguishes that particular abbey, but also one that emphasizes its humanist bent. Thus this “mesnaige” extends to ideas that encompass the human condition while the charity characteristic of this “mesnaige” takes on a fundamental role in the domestic relationship of marriage.

Discourse on woman is prominent in Hippothadée’s counsel as it is in the encounter with the physician Rondibilis, a similarity that corroborates the complimentary positions of these two figures (see above). This focus on Panurge’s future spouse points out the inseparability of marriage and the notion of woman.²⁴⁰ Hippothadée’s description of practical uses of matrimony contradicts the condemnation of women in medieval monastic tradition (Bauschatz 2003, 401). Indeed, it points to the incorporation of female friendship into everyday life rather than cultivating a suspicious attitude toward woman. Hippothadée’s particular his focus on woman leaves out discussion of progeny, a traditional justification for the significance of marriage and the importance of female company. The absence of discussion of progeny points to progressive views on marriage and suggests the inclusion of women in spiritual life.

In addition to referring to the law of *caritas* illustrated in the Pauline Epistles, Hippothadée speaks of “amitié conjugale” in the context of natural law. His use of a cosmological portrait to illustrate spousal reciprocity recalls Panurge’s cosmological references in his praise of debts. The cosmological model also recalls the concentric design of the text, thereby suggesting the relevance of classical Virgilian figures to this portrait of spousal friendship, which includes various forms of human life and

²³⁹ ISBE, s.v. “Pauline Theology”; descriptions appear in I Cor 7:34 and Eph 2:3.

²⁴⁰ Maclean describes the way in which the issue of marriage is intertwined with the notion of woman (1980, 76).

expression.²⁴¹ Hippothadée’s analogy of a wife reflecting the behavior of her husband as the moon receives light from the sun indicates the reciprocal duties of spouses while showing Panurge the way in which his own actions will be reflected in those of his future wife:

Voyez comment la Lune ne prend lumiere ne de Mercure ne de Juppiter ne de Mars ne d’aulture planette ou estoille qui soyt on ciel ; elle n’en reçoit que du Soleil, son mary, et de luy n’en reçoit point plus qu’il luy en donne par son infusion et aspectz. Ainsi serez vous à vostre femme en patron et exemplaire de vertus et honesteté, et continuellement implorerez la grace de Dieu à vostre protection (R 1994, 448; 1995, 293).

This parallel between the nature of the moon and of woman shows an assimilation of natural and moral philosophy²⁴² and echoes the inclusive portrait of marriage in Erasmus’ *Institutio christiani matrimonii* that addresses each of these traditions. Hippothadée’s idealized vision of matrimony rests upon this view of the role natural law plays within the conjugal union and thereby contradicts schools of thought that juxtapose natural law with divine law.²⁴³ The image of Panurge as a source of light for his future spouse suggests that Panurge can attain self-knowledge through knowledge of his companion and, by extension, of woman. In addition, the personified cosmological entities to which he refers paint a vivid portrait, acting in a manner similar to that of the portrait Panurge paints in his praise of debts, but based on a harmonious image of the cosmos. The figure of Panurge finding his own traits in a spouse extends the movement in the text toward the creation of a “lieu commun.”

²⁴¹ The *Rota Virgilio* reflects the stages of Virgil’s writing, its epic, didactic, and pastoral registers expressing the different forms of human existence (see Chapter I).

²⁴² Malenfant discusses the assimilation of natural and moral philosophy in the parallel Hippothadée draws between the conjugal relationship and the relationship between sun and moon. She also points out the use of this image in the episode of Rondibilis, who focuses on anatomy and the physiological attributes that are particular to woman (2003, 295-6).

²⁴³ See Maclean on the position of marriage being linked to nature rather than divine law (1980, 57).

As Panurge's inward gaze becomes a guide toward self-knowledge, it brings up the issue of Panurge's chameleon personality. The effort to attain self-knowledge remains an interesting question when applied to a figure in the text who often escapes the reader's grasp. Like Diogenes in the prologue, he remains an enigma, never ceasing to surprise the reader.²⁴⁴ This chameleon figure, on the other hand, continually adapts to various circumstances, reflecting the narrator's appeal to the readers in the prologue to approach the various, at times incongruous, figures of the text *in bonam partem*. This inward gaze offered by the theologian to a figure who is difficult to know, and who finds it difficult to know himself, poses the question of self-knowledge during transformative moments, during change, and during the assumption of different roles. This reflects knowledge of various topics through changes in registers of discourse and in scenarios that change from encounter to encounter and from chronicle to chronicle.

Whereas Hippothadée's focus is internal, encouraging an examination of spirit, Gargantua turns the focus on marriage outward, bringing up its social consequences. Gargantua's references to family emphasize secular views on marriage and bring up the consequences of individuals' behavior on their social contexts. Appearing abruptly in chapter XLVIII, Gargantua sharply criticizes those who marry without parental consent and condemns members of the clergy who allow the completion of clandestine marriage. As he speaks of the ills that clandestine marriage brings to family line, Gargantua reinstates themes of progeny that are left off at the beginning of Panurge's quest in chapter VII (see above). Gargantua places the formation of individuals within the continuum of family line, pointing to the role of each member of the *oikos* in elevating the spirit. This view evokes themes from previous chronicles linked to childrearing and

²⁴⁴ According to Marrache-Gouraud, Panurge remains an enigma for R's literary audience (2003, 9).

education, which lead to sources of commonality. Gargantua's speech reflects the father-son metaphor that St. Paul uses for a teacher-student relationship and his designation of the Corinthians as children that he has begotten through the word of the Gospel.²⁴⁵

The reinsertion of the subject of lineage into the narrative seems as sudden as Gargantua's oratory. It seems to depart from the narrative in theme and style, emphasizing filial duty rather than self-knowledge and expressing views in an accusatory rather than a eulogistic style. Whereas Gargantua has been absent from most of the third chronicle, save for a brief appearance signaled by his dog in chapter XXXV, he suddenly encounters Pantagruel at the entrance to the great hall of his palace and gives an extemporaneous speech criticizing laws that allow "enfants liberté de soy marier donnast, sans le sceu, l'adveu et consentement de leurs peres" (R 1994, 498; 1995, 439). His condemnation of clandestine marriage, while raising familiar sixteenth-century polemics, poses certain difficulties in a narrative that holds forth the Socratic theme of self-knowledge and refers periodically to the unique law of Thélème.²⁴⁶ Its appearance in the form of a tirade further shows a departure from the praise of marriage that arises at other points in the narrative, as with Hippothadée's eulogistic speech. Rather than speaking in praise of conjugal unions made with parental consent, Gargantua condemns clandestine marriage, likening it to the losses suffered by Ceres, Isis, Venus, Hercules, and Hecuba (R 1994, 498; 1995, 441). These figures of parental suffering show the splintering of social bonds that are as harmful as those of Boccaccio's plague-ridden Florence and as praeternatural as the disease and premature death that characterize this scene (see Chapter I). Gargantua's accusatory tone stands in contrast to Hippothadée's optimistic language

²⁴⁵ ISBE, s.v. "Pauline Theology"; see I Cor 4:14-15.

²⁴⁶ See Duval on Pantagruel's liberating design (1997, 179).

while his criticism of “Taulpetiers,” or mole-catching priests,²⁴⁷ challenges canon interpretations of matrimonial law.

While diverging from canon perspective, Gargantua’s speech complements other moments in the narrative, such as the discussion of Mosaic law in chapter VI.²⁴⁸ His departure from eulogy in favor of invective further recalls Pantagruel’s condemnation of debts in chapter V and follows the structure of Greek rhetorical manuals that appears in the opening chapters.²⁴⁹ Gargantua’s rebuttal to the hint that marriage, as a spiritual union between two individuals, could be subsumed under canon law relies on generative themes with which he is associated in the previous chronicles. Such themes are particularly prominent in the eighth chapters of I and II, which express parallel themes that “complement one another in their thematization of the generative movement at a sexual level” (Cave 1979, 188). Gargantua’s speech brings up productivity through progeny, a theme that recalls the cornucopian emblem of his codpiece in I, VIII while also extending ideas of cultivating such progeny that he expresses in his letter to Pantagruel in II, VIII. The letter can be broken into two parts, as Screech notes, one being the divine gift of paternity that corrects for loss of bodily immortality, and the other being the education of children. Developing ideas of liberal education, secular studies, and formation of character that he sets forth in this letter, Gargantua complements this discussion of paternal duty in II with a description of filial duty in III. This extends the reciprocal models set forth by descriptions of “amitié” in descriptions of cultivating the soul through the fulfillment of lineage.

²⁴⁷ Frame translates the phrase in this manner (R 1991, 398, 399).

²⁴⁸ See Duval’s diagrams that show the way in which these episodes mirror each other (1997, 113, 233).

²⁴⁹ Pantagruel and Panurge’s speeches praising and condemning debts illustrate the contrast between *encomium* and *adoxography*.

Gargantua's oral addendum in the current chronicle to his written advice in II satisfies uses of equity as part of the *ius non scriptum* (see above). His speech reveals the relevance of the principles he sets forth in his letter to Pantagruel's current position as prince of a colony and potential progenitor of his own offspring. The values that he expresses in II are thus transposed from an academic context into the context of building an *oikos*. The letter alludes to the application of the educational model he sets forth for Pantagruel, pointing out the importance of training in the arts of chivalry and warfare that are subsequent to tranquil study and that allow the defense of a home and the succoring of friends. The development of the *oikos* occurs through the joining of children who have been educated in a similar manner. The description of children who are molded for one another shows the significance of custom, another aspect of the *ius non scriptum*.

Gargantua's emphasis on lineage places marriage in the context of natural law. Gargantua illustrates the way in which individuals contribute to the laws of nature through their participation in the *oikos*. His views reflect Erasmus' description of the manner in which marriage replenishes the ties of nature through the production of progeny: "But then affinity, relationship by marriage, comes into play, to refresh the pool of good will, reinforcing, as it were, the bonds of natural kinship" (CWE 69, 218). Indeed, perpetuating the species through procreation fulfills a duty toward nature (Screech 1958, 17), allowing the individual to be fruitful and multiply, in the manner described in Gen 1:28. For Gargantua, It also illustrates an effort to recapture the prelapsarian state described in the second chapter of Genesis, as Gargantua indicates in his letter: "ce que nous feut tollu par le peché de nos premiers parens" (R 1994, 242). At the same time, it corresponds to Aristotelian views on the confluence of ephemeral

aspects of nature to nature's eternal states, the effort to share in the eternal and the divine (Dudley 2012, 342). Incorporating these views of natural law into his speech, Gargantua continues the humanist program of education that he delineates in his letter to Pantagruel in the second chronicle. His condemnatory speech eventually creates a "lieu commun" that draws from these various sources of knowledge.

Gargantua's reference to lineage emphasizes the perpetuation of the species that prevents the termination of family and, by extension, the soul. Cultivation of family line allows a collective effort toward immortality where individual effort falls short. Individuals' mortal, physiological state contributes to the eternal presence of spirit in the care and attention that parents give to their offspring. From this perspective, progeny takes on a greater role than the individual with his own bodily form, a concern that preoccupies Panurge. Gargantua's discussion goes beyond a resolution to the prickings of the flesh, and even the simple reproduction of individuals. His emphasis on respect for lineage reveals a concern with the passing on of education and values that generate development of spirit.

Whereas the continuation of family line contributes effectively to approaching the eternal in nature, the mole-catching monks who complete clandestine marriages detract from the broader, more eternal practice of cultivating the soul. Rather than showing respect for self-knowledge, they show a disposition of self-interest, perpetuated by a myopic view of marriage that disregards other members of the *oikos*. Gargantua's presentation of these "Taulpetiers" reveals unnatural figures who encourage a praeternatural state that stunts the development of what parents have meticulously nurtured. Emerging from behind the walls of the cloister, "dedans les treillis de leurs

mysterieux temples” (R 1994, 497; 1995, 437), for the purpose of allowing such inconsiderate acts, they interfere in situations that remain alien to them: “se entremettent des negoces contraires par Diametre entier à leurs estats” (ibid). Unlike Thélème, which has no walls, their enclosed environment causes them to remain ignorant of the implications of matrimony and to follow “tant malignes et barbaricques loigs” (R 1994, 497; 1995, 437). Such malign and barbaric laws cause ruptures in civil society, illustrated by acts of suicide of parents who suffer from these clandestine marriages: “Aultres tant ont esté ecstatiques et comme maniacques que eulx mesmes de deuil et regret se sont noyez, penduz, tuez, impatiens de telle indignité” (R 1995, 441).²⁵⁰ Such suicidal acts reverse the evolution of the soul toward perfection that is made possible by the continuation of family line. This shows the unnatural state into which individuals fall as a result of the practices of the “taulpetiers” who interfere with the generative activity of an *oikos*.

The commonality in spirit among parents and children suggests the moral training cultivated in an *oikos* characterized by unanimous will. This recalls descriptions of the Abbaye de Thélème, where “chacun vit selon son ‘vouloir et franc arbitre,’ mais sans jamais entraver la volonté d’autrui.”²⁵¹ The shared life and activities of the abbey reveal this unanimity of spirit: “Si quelq’un ou quelcune d’entre eux disoit ‘beuvons,’ tous buvoient. Si disoit ‘jouons,’ tous jouoient” (R 1994, 149). Such moral training distinguishes the behavior of Pantagruel, who illustrates a successfully educated, well-mannered, and exemplary prince. His behavior throughout the chronicles indicates that he does, in fact, possess characteristics of the Thélémites and that follows the law of

²⁵⁰ Céard explains the logic of calling husbands participating in clandestine marriage murderers (R 1995, 442, n. 21).

²⁵¹ Pech cites from I, LVII (R 1994, 149) (1998, 11).

Thélème, which Screech describes as a “free subordination of the will of each person to that of his fellows” (1958, 27). This attitude, in the context of matrimony, reveals an *ataraxia*, a type of apathy characterized by Stoic detachment (Screech 1958, 106-7). As a measure for abstaining from action, for acting prudently, this disposition recalls Hippothadée’s emphasis on leaving things to the will of God, but places it in the context of Panurge’s prior marriage question rather than in his post marriage question. The coincidence of filial will with paternal will, the will of the earthly father, comes about as the result of cultivation of spirit, of the moral training engendered by a solid curriculum. Pantagruel shows the success of such a curriculum in his rule of Dipsodie, in the unanimous love he inspires in its citizens, and in his participation in the conjugal quest of his friend.

The values that Gargantua imparts to his son include the cultivation of offspring, which is distinct from the mere production of heirs by its attention to children’s intellectual and spiritual development, as he expresses in his letter to Pantagruel in the second chronicle:

Parquoy ainsi comme en toy demeure l’image de mon corps, si pareillement ne reluysoient les meurs de l’ame, l’on ne te jugeroit estre garde et tresor de l’immortalité de nostre nom, et le plaisir que prendroys ce voyant, seroit petit, considerant que la moindre partie de moy, qui est le corps, demouroit, et la meilleure qui est l’ame : et par laquelle demeure nostre nom en benediction entre les hommes, seroit degenerante et abastardie (R 1994, 242).

Stressing the relevance of cultivating the soul over replicating the body, Gargantua speaks of the immortal state that can be reached through extending the values that constitute the soul. While bodily form desists, cultivation of the soul allows individuals to contribute constructively to the development of an entity that is constant and eternal.

Gargantua's reasoning shows the manner in which the replacement of the individual permits a movement toward ethical fulfillment (Cave 1979, 188-9). Reparations for the damage done by original sin occurs through "propagation séminale" that allows the family line to continue (Cave 1979, 188), while cultivation of character allows individuals to receive knowledge and science without bringing ruin to the soul: "Sapience n'entre point en ame malivole, et science sans conscience n'est que ruine de l'ame" (R 1994, 245). Gargantua's emphasis on teaching values recalls Hippothadée's focus on spiritual union, as well as his references to natural law. Erasmus elaborates upon the role of natural law in the lives of individuals who have the responsibility of raising children in his *De pueris instituendis*: "... but to man alone [Nature] has given the faculty of reason, and so she has thrown the burden of human growth upon education" (E 1990, 68). The formation of children through education carries out what nature has left to individuals in their care of the young and is a particularly human trait. Gargantua upholds a civilized approach to progeny, which he contrasts with the barbaric laws supported by the "Taulpetiers." His request that Pantagruel serve the goal of immortality through cultivation of the soul illustrates a way for Pantagruel to satisfy his filial duty. Cultivated progeny corrects for flaws in individuals just as discourse corrects for the stagnant nature of the written word. In this manner, development of character implies moral uses of equity suggested by applications of law as the *ars æqui et boni*.

Successful conjugal unions are completed not only by individuals of similar birth, but by those who have been similarly educated. Thus, the cultivation of daughters plays a significant role in matrimony, as Gargantua points out in his description of the values that thoughtful parents instill in women: "... filles, les quelles tant cherement avoient

disciplinées en toute honnesteté : esperans en temps oportun les colloquer par mariage avecques les enfans de leurs voisins et antiques amis, nourriz et instituez de mesmes soing, pour parvenir à ceste felicité de mariage ...” (R 1994, 498; 1995, 439). Destined as companions to sons like Pantagruel, these daughters possess qualities of “honesteté” that suggest the moral training that Hippothadée emphasizes in his description of reciprocal relations between spouses. Gargantua points out the way in which such virtues contribute to the *oikos*. Whereas Hippothadée has placed these in a religious context of those who hold similar virtues, Gargantua places them in the secular context of similar instruction. As at Thélème, children educated according to the same precepts are motivated by *voluntas* to follow in the path of their progenitors.

Gargantua’s oral variation on the themes of productivity linked to education and childrearing reveals the contribution of *voluntas* to the *oikos*. Individuals construct the *oikos* by building upon familial links occurring in nature. The intent of correcting for mortality by developing the soul becomes collective within the *oikos*. Gargantua’s speech, in its anomalous appearance, also recalls the anomalous form of his letter, whose epistolary language distinguishes it from the frivolity of the surrounding episodes: “It is all the more important because its learned tone and literary dignity make it unusually prominent in its frivolous setting” (Screech 1958, 15). Its Ciceronian structure and Petrarchan language make it incongruous within the chronicle.²⁵² Yet its epistolary form alludes to the *familiaritas* characteristic of friendship, indicating the relevance of the

²⁵² We can see this literary tradition, founded on *familiaritas*, in the form of Gargantua’s letter, which follows the Ciceronian epistolary form, and which Duval notes is incongruous in the context of the *Pantagruel*, a work that generally assumes less of an Asiatic style (Duval 1991, 45). The letter also borrows language that dates back to Petrarch (*Rabelais Encyclopedia* 2004, 63).

friendship paradigm to the relationship between father and son.²⁵³ It further contributes to the generative cornucopian movement of the chronicles, showing the convergence of that which builds an economy. This image of cornucopian movement, and the incongruous way in which it arises within the text, mirrors the way in which the mysterious episode of Bridoye also uses and rewrites forms of *copia*.

III.iii Friendship and Equity

“Nostre contestation est verbale. Je demande que c’est que nature, volupté, cercle et substitution. La question est de parolles, et se paye de mesme” Montaigne, *Essais*, III xiii.

Whereas chapters XXX and XLVIII refer to Roman and canon perspectives on law, chapters XXXIX – XLIII focus on the law itself through the legal figure of the jurist, Bridoye. This focus on the law brings up uses of equitable methods in deciding cases, particularly those that are obscure. The law’s affiliation with equity recalls Pauline descriptions of charity that point to its fairness and generosity.²⁵⁴ The impartial stance taken by the law appears in figures that point to equity, including Pantagruel, who has already set a precedent for equitable judgment. Allusions to equity in the law are rendered more complex by figures of aporia, brought up by the logical conundra associated with Bridoye’s trial. Bridoye’s copious legal references, appearing in his citations of written law, point to the obscurities into which the law can fall, while his

²⁵³ In fact, Langer also includes Gargantua’s letter in a description of how epistolary tradition exists between friends in the Proto-republic of humanist letters, even though it is from a father to a son (1994, 25).

²⁵⁴ This appears in I Cor 13:5 (see above).

method of rolling dice to decide the outcome of cases signals approaches to such obscurities in the law.

Pantagruel's act of clemency at the end of the trial emphasizes *caritas* as the unique law given to the world by Christ.²⁵⁵ Pantagruel's equitable measures in the current chronicle echo an episode in the second chronicle, at which he shows equitable judgment of the Messieurs Baysecul and Humevesne in chapters X-XIII. In the current chronicle, however, he himself is not the judge and simply takes on the role of recommending the final decision on Bridoye's case. His position in the third chronicle illustrates a suspension of judgment that reflects Pauline ideas on the limitations of human judgment described in I Cor 4:3: "But as for me, it is such a small thing to be judged by you, or by the age of mankind. And neither do I judge myself." This suspension of judgment brings into context applications of the law, which respond to certain circumstances and occur during specific chronological moments. Divine perspective, by contrast, encompasses a broader, more eternal view: "He will illuminate the hidden things of the darkness, and he will make manifest the decisions of hearts" (I Cor 4:5). This replacement of human perspective with divine perspective suggests uses for the replacement of many laws with the unique law of *caritas*. This charitable approach to information leads individuals toward such broader views that characterize divine perspective. Pantagruel's suspension of judgment echoes his position regarding the question of marriage, a position that also defers to higher parental power and the greater perspective of family and community.

The narrative offers a series of replacements in the episode that respond to the topos of *caritas* assuming the position formerly occupied by many laws. These

²⁵⁵ Erasmus describes the single precept, the rule of charity, that guides the Law and the Prophets in the introduction to the *Adages* (CWE 33, 15).

replacements include the substitution of the Panurge's conjugal dilemma as central to the narrative with the situation of Bridoye's trial. Not only does Bridoye shift the focus of the narrative from Panurge and his conjugal dilemma to his own trial, but he also displaces the "lieu d'action" from Gargantua's palace to the court of Myrelingues. In addition, Bridoye's die rolling replaces his piles of legal references as his method of deciding cases. Even the dots on the dice replace the letters of the words that he reads on his legal documents. This series of substitutions suggests the deferral of approaches to certain situations in favor of others that might be more relevant or more accessible to the parties involved. Such replacements are not necessarily equivalent to one another, as illustrated by the incongruity of the objects and actions that appear in the encounter with Bridoye, and point to an imperfect fulfillment of the law. This reflects St. Paul's description of the manner in which justified Christians who are for the first time fulfilling the law do not do so perfectly.²⁵⁶ This imperfect fulfillment of the law appears in the actions of Bridoye as well as in the actions of Pantagruel, whom the audience knows to act equitably.

Chapters XXXIX – XLIII relate the arraignment of Bridoye at the court of Myrelingues for misjudging a case. It is at the tribunal that Bridoye reveals his method of throwing dice to decide cases, a method upon which he has relied for the length of his career. Disregarding the peculiarity of this method, he attributes his misjudgment to bad vision: "et pour toutes raisons et excuses rien plus ne respondent, si non qu'il estoit vieulx devenu, et qu'il n'avoit la veue tant bonne de coustume" (R 1994, 474; 1995, 367). This obstruction of vision introduces polemics related to excessive myopia, literal interpretation, divinatory techniques, and the profusion of laws that are used to approach

²⁵⁶ "Although justified Christians are for the first time fulfilling the law (Rom. 8:3f), they are not doing so perfectly" (ISBE, s.v. "Pauline Theology").

interpretive situations, as in cases of law. At the same time, it alludes to the impartial view of justice, its blindness leading to a fair and just judgment of the case at hand. Bridoye's use of dice to decide cases after meticulously reviewing legal documents recalls the folly of Panurge's methods of approaching his conjugal dilemma. His self-representation at court recalls the manner in which to Erasmus' folly speaks on her own behalf in the *Encomium moriæ*. Speaking in his own defense, Bridoye cites copious amounts of legal references, bringing up both images of *varietas* and counterparts to such images of *copia*, those of *loquacitas*.

Bridoye's appearance in the narrative, like Gargantua's, seems sudden and incongruous, yet occupies a central position within a series of episodes framed by examples of judicial aporia in chapters XXXVII and XLIV.²⁵⁷ This position echoes the centripetal movement of the text. The position of the Bridoye episode, at the center of a second symmetrical design, illustrates a *mise en abyme* within the text.²⁵⁸ Like the epistolary *mise en abyme* in N19 of the *Heptaméron*, the trial alludes to themes that lead to its appearance in the narrative while also projecting themes that arise afterward. In assuming this role, the episode draws upon the opening themes of abundance in the narrative and anticipates the closing images based on mimetic description. The series of titles in the episode reflects the series of agitations of Diogenes' barrel in the prologue, while at the same time projecting the detailed inventory of characteristics and uses of the pantagruéliion plant in chapters XLIX-LII.

²⁵⁷ In this way, it occupies a position analogous to the Socratic message of self-knowledge in chapter XXV, as Duval states (1997, 140-2).

²⁵⁸ Duval describes the way in which Rabelais disrupts the symmetrical design of his text with a "second symmetrical design that frames the trial of Bridoye with corresponding exempla of the judging of guilt and innocence in unjudgeable cases" (1997, 145); he illustrates this *mise en abyme* with a chart that places the encounter with Trouillogan (chapters XXXV-XXXVI) and the encounter with Triboulet (chapters XLV-XLVI) at its extremities (1997, 142).

Figures of aporia in the episodes that frame the encounter with Bridoye point to the significance of context in determining the outcome of cases. The framing chapters of the *mise en abyme* relate such instances in the tales of Seigny Joan in chapter XXXVII and Dolabella in chapter XLIV. Duval describes the emphasis on aporia that this series of consultations illustrates, with Bridoye at its center: “The focus of the entire, concentrically constructed episode is the impossibility of judging human guilt and innocence in perfectly ambiguous cases” (1997, 144).²⁵⁹ The first recounts the equitable approach by the fool Seigny Joan to a case of payment for a roaster’s steam flavoring the bread of a porter. The second relates the suspension of judgment by the Areopagites in a case in which a mother kills her second husband and son for murdering her son from her first marriage. These episodes suggest particular functions of Bridoye’s die rolling methods in the text, as they point to a recognition of cases for which laws are inadequate and an ensuing reliance on dice for divine guidance (Kaiser 1963, 173). Such limitations of the law appear in Montaigne’s “De l’expérience,” writing that Kaiser designates as a gloss upon the story of Bridoye “with its rejection of the law as a mode of comprehending human experience” (1963, 171). The anecdotes of aporia in the *Tiers Livre* illustrate the limits of legal methods, even in everyday cases that do not result from an intentional obscuring of logic.

As the focal point of this *mise en abyme* sequence, Bridoye is himself a type of *abyme* character. Echoing figures such as Diogenes, Panurge, and the fool, Triboullet,²⁶⁰ he offers images that are equally perplexing. Like Diogenes’ barrel rolling during siege,

²⁵⁹ Duval describes suspensions of judgment that arise in the Seigny Joan and Dolabella passages (chapters XXXVII and XLIV), pointing out that “[t]he first ingeniously settles the dispute without resolving the aporia behind it” while the second episode shows that “Dolabella and the Areopagites . . . do not transcend the simple alternatives of judgment and are therefore prevented from judging altogether” (1997, 144, 145).

²⁶⁰ We will discuss Triboullet’s appearance in the narrative in Chapter III.

Bridoye's die rolling seems gratuitous and even redundant. In addition, the action of rolling dice recalls the repetitive motion of rolling a barrel. Both actions take on equally enigmatic positions in the text, distinguishing characters whose actions seem incongruous with circumstances of trial and siege. Bridoye's methods of approaching legal cases also recall the superfluous methods of Panurge, who continues to pursue an answer to his logically deficient conjugal question. In fact, Duval sees the two characters as doubles (1997, 150). Like Panurge, Bridoye expounds upon a procedure that has little to do with his legal preparation for a case. Finally, Bridoye is intertwined with the figure of Tribouillet, the fool that is blazoned directly before the legal episode and who appears in the subsequent chapters, XLV-XLVII.²⁶¹ Like Tribouillet's actions, Bridoye's actions suggest both wisdom and folly, philosophical detachment from legal cases and deference to divine power, as well as negligence and a lax attitude toward his cases. Suggesting all of these things simultaneously, Bridoye himself reflects the *abyme* character of the events he brings about in the text.

Even Bridoye's name indicates a double-sided approach to the role he plays within the text. His proximity to the figure of Tribouillet suggests that he also assumes a role of "morosophe" in the text.²⁶² As a fool or sage he can either take on the role of "oison bridé," defined by Cotgrove as "sot, asse, gull, ninnie, noddie" or represent a "brideur d'oisons," a confounder of the wise of the world (Duval 1997, 134). Like Tribouillet, he suggests themes of wisdom and folly that appear in Scripture, taking on the

²⁶¹ Céard describes the Tribouillet and Bridoye episodes as interlocking: "c'est que sans doute le sens général de ces chapitres dépend des deux épisodes à la fois" (1996, 153); Masters includes each sequence in the chapters that illustrate dialectic through folly, XXXVII-LII (1969, 47); Duval also mentions the reference to the wise-fool topos in the Bridoye episode (1997, 147).

²⁶² The term designates a "wise fool," and is used by Pantagruel to describe Tribouillet (R 1994, 493; 1995, 423) (see Chapter III).

role of “Stultitia’s fool in Christ” (Kaiser 1963, 174) and alluding to *caritas* as a figure of equity in the text. This echo of Erasmus’ Folly signals the insolence of self-indulgence while at the same time indicating the humility of human knowledge before the divine.

Bridoye brings up themes of *copia* in his abundant references to law. As the figure in the text whose oral *copia* consists largely of written references (Bowen 1998, 184), his citations of written law constitute to bulk of chapters XXXIX-XLII, bringing the focus of the narrative to the role of texts in situations involving equity. Appearing in copious citations of *brocards* (primers),²⁶³ laws accumulate in the text and point to perplexities related to the law’s written form. This illustrates the use of terms to describe other terms that are just as obscure, as Montaigne describes in “De l’expérience”²⁶⁴ while also showing the myopia of those who are so preoccupied with the minutiae of printed words that they lose a broader perspective of applications of the law.

Certain aspects of Bridoye’s lists suggest uses of *copia* as a figure of charity. Not only do multiple written legal terms provide for possible unanticipated occurrences, but they also suggest a use of the law that seeks to include variable circumstances. This method of *varietas* may work in favor of presenting a given topic, as Erasmus indicates in the *De copia*, when describing techniques used to enrich discourse: “Win favor, add narration, present what we wish to persuade or dissuade, using amplification” (CWE 46, 128). Such uses of *copia* expand discourse by incorporating different literary figures and forms into the text, as with the cornucopian emblems in Rabelais’s chronicles. Visual references – such as cornucopias, codpieces, horns – and linguistic references – such as lists of objects, actions, qualities – contribute to expressions of abundance in the

²⁶³ Screech cites *Brocardia Juris, Flores Legum, Lexicon* of Albericus as important sources (among others) (1992, 132).

²⁶⁴ Montaigne criticizes the overabundance of laws in this essay (III, xiii).

narrative.²⁶⁵ Bridoye’s method of examining cases responds to these aspects of the text in his description of the series of actions he undertakes in order to approach a case: “Ayant bien veu, reveu, leu, releu, paperassé, et feueilleté,” that introduce the lengthy list of documents that he consults: “les complainctes, adjournemens, comparitions . . . confessions, exploictz et aultres telles dragées et espisseries d’une part et d’aulture,” a method that he supports with another reference to the *brocards* (R 1994, 475; 1995, 369, 371). Bridoye’s description of his procedure for dealing with cases suggests the importance of addressing all aspects of a case, thereby allowing for its peculiarities and deviations from textual exempla. His procedures set forth techniques of amplification as a means of clarifying cases. The episode reveals the manner in which the text attempts this form of *copia* as a mitigating factor to the examples of *aporia* that arise.

The ambiguity related to Bridoye’s uses of these *brocards* introduces the proximity of enriching uses of *copia* to those that are empty and repetitive. Recalling Erasmus’ warning in the *De copia*,²⁶⁶ copious examples might encumber rather than enlighten discourse. Certain uses of abundant forms may result in ambiguity rather than clarity, a possible effect of the resemblance between *varietas* and redundancy, an aspect of cavillation, as Maclean describes: “Yet there is one feature of legal drafting which somewhat resembles redundancy: namely, the tendency to make compendious lists of all possible applications of the law, or all possible persons or objects affected by it. It arises from the need felt by legislators and legal draftsmen to legislate for the future as comprehensively as possible . . .” (1992, 135-6). Bridoye’s puzzling presence in the

²⁶⁵ Such figures of abundance include the cornucopias of the three Graces above fountain of Thélème in I, LV, descriptions of Gargantua’s codpiece in I, VIII, the benefits of debts in III, III-IV, the actions of Diogenes in the prologue to III, and the blazoning of Tribouillet in III, XXXVIII.

²⁶⁶ Erasmus gives the example of the way in which mortal men try and achieve godlike power through their loquaciousness in I i 9-13 (see Chapter I).

narrative is matched by the ambiguity of whether his techniques show redundancy or whether they point to the use of compendious lists in order to thoroughly investigate his cases. The cumbersome effect of his lists of procedures and documents on his speech signals the difficulties linked to the use of compendious lists in attempts to achieve equity. Set forth as a means of substantiating his methods, Bridoye's citations distract from his presentation of the case at hand with their heaviness and their volume.²⁶⁷ In addition to his ambiguous methods, Bridoye's disposition as jurist remains obscure, as the spirit in which he practices the law remains nebulous. Bridoye remains an ambiguous figure in the text, his applications of the law bringing up the difficulties of distinguishing between detailed and confounding methods of interpreting specific cases.

Reservations over the role of written documents in legal decisions are signaled in Pantagruel's inaugurating display of equitable judgment in the second chronicle. In chapters X-XIII, he distinguishes fallacious methods from those that are valid. The first fallacy he points out is the preference for written documents over consultation with the parties concerned in the case: "N'est ce le mieulx ouyr par leur vive voix leur debat, que lire ces babouyneries icy, qui ne sont que tromperies, cautelles diabolicques de Cepola, et subversions de droict?" (R 1994, 252). As he stresses the importance of hearing statements made by "vive voix," he points out the way in which reiteration of written law amounts to little more than mimicking the gestures of research, "babouyneries" that do not involve interpretive efforts on the part of the jurists. Such actions within a legal context have the nefarious effect of subverting the law rather than upholding it. Advising a reversal of the methods shown by the officials in charge of the case, Pantagruel advises

²⁶⁷ Compare these citations to the heaviness of lists of munitions that Rigolot notes in the prologue (1996, 100) (see Chapter I).

bringing the plaintiff and defendant into the courtroom rather than judging their case by poring over copies of legal briefs.

This measure suggests a preference for the spoken word, a mitigating aspect of the *ius non scriptum*. Speaking of the importance of consulting directly with the parties involved, Pantagruel warns against the dissociation of words from their frame of reference that can occur when litigation relies too much on documents. Like the citations of *brocards* that detract from Bridoye's speech, piles of documents confound rather than clarify the case of Messieurs Baysecul and Humevesne. Brought to Pantagruel in massive quantity, they make up "presque le fais de quatre gros asnes couillars" (R 1994, 252), resembling the mountainous stacks of papers that Bridoye places to either side of the table in his study. The "baboyneries" in which the legislators engage cause one of them to remark that "tant plus y estudions, tant moins y entendons" (R 1994, 251). Pantagruel warns against the dissociation of legal decisions from the parties involved in a case that comes from dissociation of terms from the circumstances under which they appear. This can especially occur in written statements extracted from a document, without regard to their context. Such misuse of language is underscored by the fact that the legislators in the Baysecul vs. Humevesne case make decisions that refer to laws based on Greek and Latin and yet are unable to read these languages. Not only do the officials involved in Pantagruel's case lack knowledge of the language in which crucial laws are written, but they lack training in moral and natural philosophy, causing Pantagruel to comment that they have less learning than his mule. Lacking the knowledge required for interpreting these laws, they are unable to read equitably, failing to interpret *in bonam partem*. Pulling the case from the obscurity into which it has fallen, Pantagruel emphasizes direct

consultations with the parties involved, thereby showing the importance of integrating empirical methods into equitable approaches to legal disputes.

Bridoye's use of dice brings up interpretive polemics, as they are initially presented as a symbol of overly literal interpretation. From this perspective, dice signal the absurdities that result from a rigid adherence to the letter of the law. Bridoye himself describes his use of dice as: "Les dez ... des jugemens, *alea iudiciorum*" (R 1994, 475; 1995, 369). He bases his entire career on the literal sense of this law school cliché, taking the hazards of litigation to mean the dice by means of which all judges are required to decide the cases brought before them (Duval 1997, 134). His citations of legal references point to a selective use of texts such as the *Decretum* and *Digest* (R 1995, 369 n. 7). Literal interpretations of these texts, applied to desultory steps taken in legal proceedings, recall the Scholastic hairsplitting characteristic of unevangelical adherence to the letter of law (see above). As Duval points out, Bridoye is a comic myopic literalist: "Far from respecting the spirit of the law or even suspecting there is one, he dutifully follows the letter of the law with comical rigor to the most absurd conclusions." His literalism recalls the interpretive methods of Panurge, whose extreme myopia prevents him from knowing himself and leads him along a circuitous path as he seeks to clarify his conjugal dilemma. Bridoye's interpretation of "*alea iudiciorum*" signals the absurdity of following the letter in its most literal sense and the manner in which such interpretation can even lead to fallacious reasoning when attempting to resolve texts.²⁶⁸ Bridoye's method of interpreting law with a throw of dice illustrates the absurdities that literal interpretations can reach.

²⁶⁸ See Maclean on fallacies of reading according to extremely strict interpretations of the letter of the law (1992, 172).

Dice also indicate the role of intervening powers in deciding the outcome of cases. Dice signal the topic of divination, which the narrative addresses in its foray into obscure forms of knowledge, illustrating polemics related to divinatory techniques. Skeptical attitudes toward divination include Pantagruel's criticism of such methods as "la recherche paresseuse de la science" to which too many take recourse (Céard 1996, 152). Considered the most dangerous form of demonic wisdom (Céard 1996, 134), divination is even criticized in Pantagruel's diatribe as blasphemous (Duval 1997, 108). Bridoye's die throwing not only contradicts Pantagruel's speech, but recalls Panurge's initial reliance on divination in order to decide whether to marry. At the same time, it brings up more positive associations with dice, such as Epistémon's praise for recourse to dice, a practice that does, in fact, follow the device of certain great authors (Duval 1997, 108). In addition to this positive precedent for uses of dice, there exists evidence of legal authority for cases that cannot be judged with reason being decided by a throw of dice.²⁶⁹ Echoing these images, Bridoye's dice occupy a double stance in the text as does the jurist himself.

In addition to these issues, dice indicate humility, showing both a suspension of judgment and a reverence toward higher power. Bridoye's deference to dice alludes to the prudent attitude taken on by those who are wise enough to realize their limits. Conforming to classical values of *prud'homie*, such prudence reflects wisdom in the classical sense and nobility in the tradition of chivalric behavior (Blum 2005). As a reflection of wisdom – "sagesse," or "noblesse" – his deference to dice illustrates such

²⁶⁹ Duval cites occasional use of dice in deciding legal cases: "Augustine and the Canonists, the Digest and the Bartolists, Luther and Calvin, all allow the occasional use of dice in deciding legal cases" (1997, 136).

notions of *prud'homie*.²⁷⁰ As Céard observes, Bridoye's action of throwing dice shows an abstention from judgment: "[il] a renoncé à juger lui-même et s'en remet au sort des dés! ... C'est par humilité qu'il s'interdit de juger" (1996, 153).²⁷¹ Suspending rather than passing judgment, Bridoye abstains from deciding cases that are too obscure for established legal methods. This suspension of judgment, a mark of a learned sage, indicates a broader view of human knowledge that shows more affinity to an omniscient perspective than the myopia initially introduced by Bridoye's explanation for his misreading of dice. This prudence keeps Bridoye from being Panurge's counselor in the narrative, and even from participating in the symposium on marriage: "Cette vertu est si grande en Bridoye qu'il ne peut même pas, à la différence de tous les autres, apparaître dans la situation d'un conseiller, et qu'il n'entendra jamais parler du projet de mariage de Panurge" (Céard 1996, 155). Bridoye's die rolling thus evokes the inaction that characterizes the text's preeminent figure of equity. Showing the principle of precaution, Bridoye illustrates an abstention from approaching topics that surpass human logic.²⁷²

The association of Bridoye with inaction through die rolling designates him as a reflection of equity. Bridoye's association with equity occurs despite the ambiguity of his motives for his uses of lists and dice. In this way, he draws attention to the concerns of legal practice by assuming the position of an equitable figure, one that becomes synonymous with the law: "[Equity] is finally identified with the jurist or judge himself, who by his office becomes a *lex loquens*, the embodiment of the flexible measuring rule of Lesbos" (Maclean 1992, 177). As a mouthpiece for the law, Bridoye reveals its uses as

²⁷⁰ *Dictionnaire du seizième siècle*, s.v. "Preudhommie"; Blum also discusses characteristics of *prud'homie* that are linked to a suspension of judgment (2005).

²⁷¹ Céard indicates Augustinian sources that describe divine intervention in die rolling (1995, 368 n. 7).

²⁷² Blum describes the sense of prudence coming from "agir c'est s'abstenir" in Montaigne's writing (2005).

well as its inadequacies, the forms it takes on as it is applied to various cases. Revealing the importance of flexible approaches to law in its rigid written form, he assumes the image of the measuring rule of Lesbos, a carpenter's measure flexible enough to adapt to uneven surfaces (Blank 2006, 156-7). This measuring rule, appearing as an emblem for the law in Aristotle's description of equity, shows the importance of adapting the law to context: "For what is itself indefinite can only be measured by an indefinite standard, like the leaden rule used by Lesbian builders; just as that rule is not rigid but can be bent to the shape of the stone, so a special ordinance is made to fit the circumstances of the case."²⁷³ As an indefinite figure, Bridoye embodies the idea of indefinite standards that are used to approach extenuating circumstances. His methods suggest deficiencies in laws that are too general and therefore insufficient for use in a specific case, an aspect of the law for which Aristotle recommends equity (ibid). Bridoye's speech, consisting of written references, poses the question of whether his words are able to mitigate legal texts. His literal interpretation of dice negates this possibility while his act of die rolling links him to equitable approaches to unprecedented circumstances. What distinguishes Bridoye is his embodiment of the law, as it is written and as it becomes mitigated through speech.

Issues of a text's expression of oral discourse become accentuated in a text whose narrative advances through dialogue. This aspect of Rabelais's third chronicle points to the central role of speech in economic settings that the text addresses, a characteristic that reaches a self-reflexive turning point in the Bridoye episode. Bridoye's oral presentation of legal writing points to the role of the spoken word as a corrective measure to the law. This aspect of the *ius non scriptum* develops the text's portrait of equity by illustrating

²⁷³ Aristotle's image of the flexible Lesbian rule illustrates an equitable approach to the law (NE V, x).

interpreters' approaches to text, a role that reflects that of the literary community addressed in the prologue. While simply reiterating writing makes the jurist's function superfluous, as suggested by the deposition of legal documents in sacks, references to *brocards* in the context of the episode bring up the mitigating role of the jurist. As Bridoye explains his methods, supporting these with frequent references to legal documents, he reinstates the paradoxical position of equitable approaches to law expressed in written form.

The role of the jurist mitigates the rigidity of the law's written form, yet the jurist's role is itself limited by the position of writing as a transgressive form of equitable measures taken under specific circumstances. This leads to certain ambiguities that Maclean points out: "Unwritten legal norms – custom and equity – can only be adduced, it seems, in a transgressive written form. No clear demarcation can be drawn between legitimate extension of the law to *casus omissi* and illegitimate correction and emmendment of the law by judge or interpreter." (Maclean 1992, 178). The rigid forms that custom and equity take on through writing are compounded by the ambiguity of the jurists' motives, whether or not they show the *voluntas* that would lend itself to an equitable interpretation of law. Differences between jurists' motives might not initially be clear, meaning that the effect of the hands through which the laws pass might obscure judgment to an even greater extent. Pantagruel brings this up when criticizing the legislators in the Baysecul vs. Humevesne case who obscure meaning, pointing out the manner in which they render events even more difficult to approach through their confounding language. This shows the close links between jurists and the expression of

written laws. The limitations of laws and of jurists are conflated, another aspect of the law revealed by the figure of Bridoye.

Writing what would ideally take on oral form is analogous to the written word becoming a shadow of things expressed. This peculiar position of the law extends to the role of language in general as an imperfect means of expression. The figure of Bridoye brings up the difficulties posed by words as vehicles for information, in both oral and written forms. While the written expression of law remains rigid, often appearing in response to particular events, oral expression is also subject to interpreters' limitations, whether intellectual or rhetorical. Such difficulties posed by language recall Pauline descriptions of the limitations of knowledge, as stated in I Cor 13:12: "Now we see through a glass darkly. But then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part, but then I shall know, even as I am known." Contrasting the limitations of human knowledge with the perspective of divine knowledge, this Pauline observation reflects upon the capacity of language to convey meaning. The divine perspective, while remaining distant, is acknowledged by interpreters with an affinity for *caritas*, a perspective that recognizes interpreters' limitations, while continuing to seek out *veritas*.

The Pauline description of language brings up the contrast between restricted worldly views and the breadth of divine perspective. Limitations on language and discourse in the Bridoye episode bring up similar themes. Expressing an awareness of worldly knowledge, which occurs through a glass, darkly, "per speculum in ænigmate," the Pauline passage conveys the idea of a scope of knowledge that surpasses divination, spiritual counsel, medical advice, the legal corpus, and the exuberant figures and forms introduced by a text. The *mise en abyme* sequence in the *Tiers Livre* reflects these

difficulties, beginning and ending with cases of judicial aporia and centering around a figure who remains an enigma, whom onlookers cannot distinguish as either a sage or a fool. The self-reflexive nature of such an episode introduces an effort to see beyond such boundaries, by bringing into question intellectual and rhetorical characteristics presented in the text as a manner of providing perspective on the issues that are introduced.

The acknowledgement of such boundaries to discourse paradoxically allows discourse to open up, granting further perspective on the points of view that are expressed. Such recognition of the limitations of human perspective, along with the acknowledgment of a larger divine perspective, leads interpreters to approach obscure discourse *in bonam partem*. This in turn encourages individuals to seek out the *voluntas* of their interlocutors. The discussants in Rabelais's narrative create a composite view of questions of economy in their exchange and even in their contradictory statements. This recalls conversation in the *Heptaméron's locus amœnus*, an idealized *mise en scène* for the *devisants'* own attempts at equitable approaches to discourse. As the *devisants* attempt to preserve sincerity through vernacular discourse, a decision that suggests the mitigating function of speech in the *ius non scriptum*, their exchange also occurs through stages of communion and dissent. Paths of oral discourse incorporate medieval narrative models, even as the *devisants* attempt to circumvent the embellishment of stylized speech. Yet their arrangement of conversing on various topics seems to successfully generate conversation, their main vehicle for building community. As with the law which, for all its difficulties, "operates more or less to the satisfaction of those involved in it" (Maclean 1992, 178), oral exchange on topics creates bonds between discussants, as they contribute opinions on the underpinnings of the *oikoi* that constitute their society.

The legal episode in the *Tiers Livre* brings attention to the manner in which representations of *oikoi* function within the text and how these relate to writing.

Recurring uses of *copia* address issues such as marriage and become indicators of the role of *copia* in equitable approaches to discourse. Equitable uses of *copia* point to the role of *caritas* within the narrative.

As Bridoye's trial draws to a close, Pantagruel recommends pardoning him, an act that Duval describes as pure *caritas* (1997, 149). As in the case of Baysecul vs. Humevesne, the counselors look to Pantagruel as the best judge of the case of Bridoye. Pantagruel suspends judgment by abstaining from taking on the role of judge and instead assumes that of petitioner. He thereby enacts the suspension of judgment that Bridoye suggests through his die rolling. He further mentions Bridoye's strengths and speaks of the manner in which his one flawed judgment can be mitigated within a sea of cases that he has judged well. This show of clemency reveals the manner in which Pantagruel's use of equity is informed by the law of *caritas*. Following his reference to Scripture during the debt sequence, he fulfills the precept of love alone fulfilling the law.²⁷⁴ In this way, Pantagruel acts by both the letter and spirit of the law of *caritas* (Duval 1997, 149).

In addition to recommending pardon for Bridoye's misuses of text, Pantagruel also settles the debts he recommends at the conclusion of his trial. This act emphasizes a preference for fulfilling the law of *caritas* over proving the wrongdoings of another individual. In this way, Pantagruel shows the grace that is characteristic of *caritas*, expressed in I Cor 13:6: "Charity does not rejoice over iniquity, but rejoices in truth."

Pantagruel's act of settling debts further provides for the affected third party in Bridoye's

²⁷⁴ See *Rabelais Encyclopedia*, s.v. "Charity," on love fulfilling law in the Bridoye episode; Duval mentions the beneficence and forgiveness that we see in the opening chapters of the *Tiers Livre* (1997, 148).

misjudged case. Pantagruel's act of suspending judgment and exercising pardon demonstrates the Aristotelian view of effective lawgivers caring more for friendship than for justice, (see above). He also indicates the Aristotelian idea of prudence being the basis for actions in each branch of practical philosophy, as delineated by Renaissance views.²⁷⁵ Being related to virtue, prudence is also related to practical wisdom, as we will see in Chapter III.²⁷⁶ Pantagruel shows characteristics of *prud'homie* in his act of judging by discernment (Blum 2005).

Allusions to equity counterbalance the obscurity into which discourse can fall, when confounded, for example, by cumbersome laws and piles of paper. While individuals can be led into obscurity by methods that falsely resemble equity, they can resume paradigms set out as guidelines, such as the law, retaining the necessary prudence toward the law gained by proper training in disciplines such as moral and natural philosophy. These aspects of preparation for approaching discourse illustrate the perspective gained through equity and assist in resolving the absurdity of interpreting in part with the partial view that individuals possess. Awareness of various uses of the law suggests a certain amount of flexibility, which is illustrated by jurists' adaptability to circumstance. As Bridoye, the narrative's *lex loquens*, embodies the flexible rule of Lesbos, he illustrates the capacity to mitigate the law's written form. Able to set aside laws that are too confounding, and to suspend his own judgment in his use of dice, he evokes the image of Thélème, which abandons laws and jurists altogether (Pech 1998, 11). Bridoye's appearance in the narrative shows the law's use of *copia* and its

²⁷⁵ Maclean describes Renaissance views of these branches of practical philosophy (1980, 49) (see Chapter III).

²⁷⁶ Blum describes the correlation between prudence and virtue (2005).

inversions, a reflection of the stance of writing in relation to the themes that the narrative sets forth.

IV. CONCLUSION

As the narratives explore various contexts of friendship, they illustrate the manner in which it forms the basis of the “art de vivre ensemble” that is characteristic of an *oikos*. Following the Aristotelian description of friendship as a more significant social bond than justice (see above), these relationships reveal the significance of distinctive characteristics of friendship – familiarity, constancy, commonality – in efforts toward unanimity. This unanimity cultivates the fraternal bonds of charity, which develop through reciprocal efforts to approach discourse in good part. Within the context of feudal alliances, spousal relations, and spiritual affinities, characters in the texts seek out such reciprocity. The “amityé” between Poline and her *serviteur* leads them from the court to the cloister and eventually to spiritual union, while Panurge and Pantagruel’s arguments for and against debts contribute to a performance of friendship in the text. As the narratives pass from one context to another, they reveal the significance of discourse in the notions of friendship that are presented. Rolandine’s marriage is built upon discourse with her husband, completed by an exchange of vows and carried out through conversation and writing alone. Pantagruel and Panurge’s discussion of marriage allows the narrative to develop and eventually to expand notions of friendship that the text introduces. As delineated in the prologues, discourse appears as a unifying vehicle for the various notions of friendship that arise in exchanges between the characters on topics related to the *oikos*.

Discourse as a unifying characteristic of “amityé” comes up against obstacles, which the texts address by illustrating moments of dissent. Anticipated in the prologues

by unfamiliar or even destructive phenomena, such moments recur in the bodies of the narratives, through opposing interpretations of events such as assassination as well as through diverse views on marriage. The texts reveal the inevitability of dissent within scenarios of friendship, particularly within a framework that refers to various paradigms for notions of friendship. These notions are informed by personal experience, as becomes evident in the disagreement between the *devisantes* and their male counterparts on questions of honor linked to feudal tradition. This also becomes evident through Panurge's *philautia*, which allows him to be guided by his concupiscence. Such counterexamples to *caritas* explore the limits of charity as a principle tenet for social bonds.

Like the dissent that occurs between characters, incongruous figures in the narratives potentially confound rather than clarify notions introduced in the texts. Such figures potentially lead to interpretive difficulties that impede charitable approaches to discourse. Examples of “parfaicte amityé” in the *Heptaméron* involve practices that most of the *devisants* seem to condemn, such as clandestine marriage, while anomalous figures in the *Tiers Livre*, such as Bridoye, appear to detract from both the topic that drives the narrative and the pattern that the narrative follows. As the texts express composite views of topics such as marriage and “parfaicte amityé,” they introduce phenomena that seem to reverse the progression of the narratives. Such effects are related to the inclusive nature of figures of *copia*, abundant variations on topics of discourse that allow the texts to expand. Uses of *copia* may slip into *loquacitas*, as Erasmus warns in the *De copia* (see above). This phenomenon, parallel to uses of equity that resemble cavillation, indicates difficulties in friendship models that seek to be inclusive.

Similar difficulties arise in the language that structures the narratives. While including different figures and rhetorical forms, the narratives face problems posed by deviations within the texts, whether by accident or design. Terence Cave points out the manner in which “[e]rror is a property of all discursive language; the problems of writing (and of reading) can never be solved” (1979, xxii). Prolix discourse may introduce conundra into diverse forms of narrative intended to reach as large an audience as possible. Citations of authoritative writing, such as Alain Chartier’s *Belle Dame Sans Mercy*, serve as reference points for the *devisants*, yet allow stylized literary language to infiltrate their vernacular exchange. The particular citation of Chartier after the Lorenzaccio tale further evokes the manner in which references to a textual fragment, based on the words of an “acteur” in the narrative, might contradict statements made by the “narrateur.”²⁷⁷ Error in the text cannot always be distinguished from accuracy, a phenomenon that appears in the figure of Bridoye. His method of die rolling to decide cases bears the marks of both a fool and a sage, reflecting the rash action of the text’s comic figure and the suspension of judgment displayed by the Erasmian prince. The legal references, while interrupting the progression of the narrative through dialogue, mirror the presentation of crucial figures in the text who are also identified through their actions and attributes (Diogenes, Triboulet). Such lack of resolution in the cases of these figures suggests cases of aporia, which the encounter with Bridoye also accentuates. Echoing instances of judicial aporia, the *devisants* and the consultants at Panurge’s *symposium* do not always succeed in resolving their differing opinions on the topics that they address.

The resemblance between contradictory rhetorical devices indicates the degree of proximity between two contrasting phenomena in cases of exemplarity. Like a clearing in

²⁷⁷ See Frelick on the *devisants* inscribing Chartier’s text into their discussion (2010, 3).

the woods from which the medieval term *exemplum* is derived, figures in the texts emerge when introduced alongside opposing figures. Exemplary spouses are illustrated through examples of clandestine marriage. Figures of equity emerge from descriptions of overly literal interpretation of the law. As Pantagruel reinstates *caritas* into the model of borrowing and lending that Panurge promotes, he reveals the importance of referring to citations in context. The *devisants* show an equitable use of overly literal interpretation as they place into context the actions of the deceased merchant and his wife. Developing through example, these contrapuntal figures allow the narratives to advance and to reveal the underpinnings of various *oikoi* that appear.

The concentric structures introduced by the texts, through the framing of novellas and through the anti-teleological progression of narrative, indicate their cornucopian themes. Their foray into current Renaissance polemics integrates classical and medieval discourse into exchange on contemporary issues, the *captatio benevolentiae* of the interpretive communities addressed in the texts. The insertion of prior narrative into current discourse leads to an appropriation of different rhetorical registers, a reflection of the *Rota Virgilioi*. The ability to build upon themes of “amityé” that arise in various *oikoi* shows uses of *copia* for arriving at equitable stances. Reflecting a search for *veritas*, these uses of *copia* reveal a pursuit of intellectual wisdom, wisdom that complements moral wisdom in the Aristotelian tradition, and that suggests efforts toward achieving an ideal mean state, which we will examine further in the next chapter. As Cave describes: “The generative cornucopia, while admitting of the operation of a negative principle (corruption and death) thus appears here primarily as a principle of positive, *telos*-directed repetition” (Cave 1979, 188-9). The plethora of figures and forms, reinforced by

generative cornucopian themes, shows a movement toward ideal notions, such as that of friendship, through uses of example. This use of contrasting figures and contradictory rhetorical tactics illustrates the use of various friendship figures in creating and maintaining an *oikos*. These figures rely on characteristics that distinguish charity.

CHAPTER III

CHARITY AND HUMAN NATURE

I. INTRODUCTION

Descriptions of human nature in the *Heptaméron* and the *Tiers Livre* illustrate the influence of individuals' dispositions on affective relationships, indicating origins of the fraternal bond. Such descriptions are often characterized by spontaneous and impulsive behaviors, which introduce obscurities into the examples of love and marriage set forth in the narratives. Human nature suggests the character and conduct of individuals, defined as "l'homme, le genre humain" and consequently denoting that which is "relatif à la nature humaine et, par suite, commun à l'humanité toute entière."²⁷⁸ Dispositions of individuals are affected by circumstance, particular situations in which they find themselves, and by internal workings of nature, often appearing in descriptions of individuals' physiological states. Certain inclinations of individuals seem to have bodily sources, which appear in impulsive behaviors that reveal their "true" character. The revelatory position of physiology surfaces, for example, in the symptoms experienced by the *dame saige* in N26 of the *Heptaméron* and of the in the cures for concupiscence that the physician, Rondibilis, gives in chapter XXXI *Tiers Livre*. Such symptomatic behavior indicates the shared attributes of individuals that they possess by virtue of their human

²⁷⁸ *Le Grand Robert de la langue française*, S.v.v. "Nature" (and particularly the definition of "*La nature humaine*"), "Naturel."

form. Exchanges between characters as they experience the effects of their own physiology form a portrait of the “genre humain.”

Illustrations of human nature in Marguerite and Rabelais’s narratives often appear in attempts to describe human folly. N26 even ascribes the wanton behavior of a woman who abandons reason to a *dame folle*. Such descriptions contribute to the wise-fool topos in Renaissance writings that draws from Pauline descriptions of wisdom and folly.²⁷⁹ Wisdom, a subject systematically treated in I Cor 1:10-4:21,²⁸⁰ appears with the contrasting attribute of folly, as Paul points to the relative folly of human wisdom in relation to the wisdom of God: “If anyone among you seems to be wise in this age, let him become foolish, so that he may be truly wise. For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God.” (I Cor 3:18-19). Describing human approaches to knowledge that occur at a particular moment and under specific circumstances, Paul admonishes members of the Church at Corinth to become foolish in their reception of the Gospel, which is folly to those who do not receive the word of Christ (I Cor 1:23-4). The appropriateness of folly appears in Marguerite and Rabelais’s narratives with uses of foolish behavior to reveal obscure forms of knowledge, a notion embodied by the fool, Triboulet in chapter XLV, who shows an abandonment of the rhetorical constraints that impede human knowledge.

As the narratives focus on motives and sources for individuals’ actions, they reveal the significance of the domain of ethics, the will and appetites of individuals, as denoted by traditional Renaissance descriptions of the branches of practical

²⁷⁹ Erasmus’ *Encomium moriae* is a principal reference for Renaissance discourse on the wise-fool topos.

²⁸⁰ ISBE s.v. “Wisdom.”

philosophy.²⁸¹ These motives and sources of action may be affected by the degree to which individuals possess the virtue of prudence. We will refer to prudence as an equivalent term to the Greek *phronesis*, a term that denotes practical wisdom in the *Nicomachean Ethics*.²⁸² Such practical wisdom is characterized by intellectual virtue, virtue that guides individuals in responding appropriately to specific circumstances. Intellectual virtue complements moral virtue, designated as virtue of character, which corresponds to excellent states of desires in individuals and guides them in finding states that are appropriate to them, being neither excessive nor deficient.²⁸³ The ethical contexts that appear in Marguerite and Rabelais's texts suggest degrees of prudence as a factor in characters' reactions to various situations.

Prudence (*prudentia*) appears as the base of practical philosophy in Renaissance writings, governing individuals in all three of its domains: the ethical, economic, and political.²⁸⁴ Renaissance commentary, consistent with Plato and Aristotle, links prudence to individuals' physical constitution (humors) as well as to their experience. This link points to the effects of nature on individuals as they participate in relationships delineated by politics and economics. Characters' physiological reactions to certain situations indicate the function of prudence as a way of tempering extreme desires. Representations of concupiscence, for example, prompt discussion of temperance among the *devisants*

²⁸¹ Ian Maclean describes the three branches of practical philosophy as treating the political, domestic and ethical domains of the good of the individual (1980, 48).

²⁸² Lesley Brown designates *phronesis* as the intellectual virtue that is necessary as a complement to a given moral virtue in determining appropriate mean states in individuals. Brown refers to the doctrine of the mean in *Blackwell* (2003, 613).

²⁸³ Intellectual virtue and moral virtue correspond to "an important division of the rational part of the soul into two: the part which is fully rational, the intellect, and the part which can 'obey reason', which Aristotle labels the desiderative part" (*Blackwell* 2003, 611); for regulating between excess and deficiency by making appropriate choices, see *Blackwell's* description of the doctrine of the mean (2003, 613).

²⁸⁴ Maclean describes the virtue of prudence, referring to Keckermann and Guillaume Du Vair: "At the base of practical philosophy, according to most sects, is the virtue of prudence (*prudentia*), which rules the will and appetites of the individual (ethics), or the individual in relation to a greater number ('economics', politics)" (1980, 49).

and among Panurge's consultants, including Rondibilis when he advises Panurge on his physiological condition.²⁸⁵ While indicating the role of temperance in preserving that which is considered favorable to the good of individuals,²⁸⁶ such discourse points out perceived excesses or deficiencies in individuals' constitution. These physiological imbalances at times appear as recognizable signs and at times appear as puzzling occurrences that make little sense to interpreters who face them. Physiological signs indicate degrees of pleasure and physical appetites,²⁸⁷ which must then be resolved with conventions that facilitate common ground for exchange. Interpreters have a certain interest in making sense of these signs, which allows them to resolve their perceived significance with action deemed appropriate for specific contexts.

The idea of attaining a physiological balance is linked to the regulation of humors. Renaissance descriptions designate "humeur" as a general term for liquid and also, more specifically, as "[l]iquides contenus dans les corps organisés."²⁸⁸ This description draws from medical theory, which describes bodily fluids as consisting of melancholic, choleric, sanguine, and phlegmatic humors related to substances in the body: black bile, yellow bile, blood, and phlegm (Paster 2004, 135). These internal constituents of individuals are described by Galenic medical theory, which builds upon the writings of Hippocrates and Plato.²⁸⁹ Excesses or deficiencies of humors appear in the narratives in descriptions of illness, particularly of melancholia, and in the corresponding physical characteristics that indicate this state, such as a yellowed complexion and listless demeanor. In the *Tiers*

²⁸⁵ Temperance is described as "preserving prudence" (NE VI. v. 5-6).

²⁸⁶ Aristotle describes these attributes of temperance (NE VI. v. 6).

²⁸⁷ *Blackwell* gives examples of desire for fame, honor, and revenge (2003, 611).

²⁸⁸ *Dictionnaire su seizième siècle*, s.v. "Humeur."

²⁸⁹ Galen refers to the influence of Hippocrates in his description of the synonymous position of doctor and philosopher and to the influence of Plato in his description of the effects of bodily humors on the soul (1854, 1-7; 47-91).

Livre, the regulation of humors appears in medical references to methods of quelling concupiscence by tempering bodily fluids. By extension, the term “humeur” is defined as: “Caractère, considéré comme résultant de la proportion des humeurs,” suggesting the correlation between individuals’ dispositions and their humoral states.²⁹⁰ The texts incorporate these Galenic descriptions into passages that also give other explanations for human action, such as those that are Neoplatonic or evangelical. In addition, human nature appears in allegorical representations of love and nature, personified characters whose entry into the texts causes unexpected turns of narrative.

Such uses of allegory illustrate the manner in which human nature is linked to the external world, a notion that each text reinforces in descriptions of community and friendship. The chorography of the prologue to the *Heptaméron* points to this correlation, with its references to the *Decameron* and its corresponding illustration of a *locus terribilis* that reflects social upset.²⁹¹ Panurge’s praise of debts in the *Tiers Livre* includes a description of the correlation between a well-ordered cosmos and economic prosperity. Such descriptions reflect definitions of “nature” as the common origin of existence, including the idea of being physically in nature: “*estre en nature*: exister.” Nature as a common original state extends to ideas that associate nature with creation: “créer, élever,” definitions that correspond to the idea of being placed within nature: “*mettre en nature*.” The idea of being placed within nature also suggests states of equilibrium and harmony expressed by the concept of being placed in an ideal state: “mettre en bon état, dans l’état qu’on désire.” In addition, ideas associated with “nature” extend to

²⁹⁰ *Dictionnaire du seizième siècle*, s.v. “Humeur.”

²⁹¹ Alexandre Tarette describes these attributes of landscape described in texts (2005) (see Chapter I).

physiological attributes, as with the use of the term to designate “parties sexuelles.”²⁹²

This definition contributes to ideas on the generative function of nature. Descriptions of nature thus express ideas of birth, growth, creation, and development.

Reflecting aspects of these attributes of nature, human nature appears as a subset of the wider category of “nature.” From this perspective, human nature denotes internalized phenomena of the natural world and assumes roles and functions parallel to such phenomena:

Nature also denotes human nature; or, more generally the internal principle of life in individual human beings. Human nature is determined by the sanguine, phlegmatic, melancholic and choleric humours, related to the four qualities (wet, dry, cold, and hot), which are in turn related to the four elements (water, earth, air, and fire) and the four constituents of the human body (humours, homogeneous parts, spiritus, and innate heat respectively) (Maclean 2002, 241).

Human nature illustrates the appearance of qualities found in nature within individuals’ actions and behavior. Nature in individuals appears in the form of physiological constitution, largely determined by humors that correspond to elements found in the natural world. Examples of human nature in N26, N50, and N70 and chapters XXXI-XXXIII, XIX-XX, and XLV-XLVII reveal the manner in which nature may affect individuals and, in turn, their behavior within social units. Each of the above passages illustrates nature as a precursor for human action. The *Heptaméron*’s novellas illustrate individuals who seem to be guided by desires that have physiological sources, revealing effects of physical constitution and disposition on their actions. The *Tiers Livre*’s passages on medicine, gesture, and folly focus on the origins of human behavior, including their

²⁹² *Dictionnaire du seizième siècle*, s.v. “Nature.”

actions as well as their speech. These passages illustrate ideas of nature as the provenance of human action.

Representations of human nature as internal manifestations of the natural world emphasize natural law as a determining factor in individuals' actions. This idea has sources in classical texts such as Pliny's *Historia naturalis*, as Jean Céard indicates: "la Nature étant conçue par Pline comme source et règle de notre existence, il lui est impossible de concevoir un ordre humain totalement distinct ou séparé de l'ordre naturel" (1996, 17). This point of view expresses the correlation between nature and existence that appears in Renaissance definitions of nature. Such proximity of natural order to human order offers physiological explanations for individuals' behavior. It further suggests the idea, expressed in various Renaissance domains, of the body as a microcosm of the cosmos. We find such descriptions in works such as Marsilio Ficino's Neoplatonic texts and Gerolamo Cardano's treatises on medicine and natural phenomena.²⁹³

Representations of passionate love, illness, desire, and other symptomatic behavior in Marguerite and Rabelais's works draw from this correlation between the natural world and human nature.

The link between the natural world and human nature also extends to the idea of nature as a force that interacts with individuals. From this perspective, we refer to Céard's distinction between "Nature" and "Terre," the latter being the source and cradle of human life: "Dans la cosmologie de Pline, tout se passe comme si la Nature, immense et multiforme, jouait avec l'homme, l'aidant et l'accablant tour à tour, tandis que la terre, plus proche et l'inserrant dans son sein, veillait en son infinie bonté à lui épargner les

²⁹³ These include Ficino's *Commentary on Plato's Symposium* and his *De triplici vita*, as well as Cardano's *Contradicentium medicorum*, *De subtilitate rerum*, and *De varietate rerum* (see Chapter II).

conséquences de ces cruels amusements” (1996, 13). This definition of “terre” recalls the positive associations of “nature” as assuming one’s original form. The external stance of “nature” in Céard’s description indicates the limited control individuals may have over their own actions. Nature may take on unpredictable forms and affect individuals in equally unpredictable ways. It follows that individuals experience varying degrees of the effects of nature and that their responses to nature vary accordingly. Representations of spontaneous behavior in Marguerite and Rabelais’s texts reflect the capricious manner in which nature intervenes in their characters’ lives. The characters’ approach to the caprices of nature recalls their encounters with alterity in political and economic contexts. The idea of nature being an internalized form of external natural phenomena is emphasized by actions that seem to contradict the decisions that individuals make.

The correlation between humoral states and human behavior shows the way in which nature can shape ethics, influencing individuals to a great degree and even determining their behavior. Nature may thus affect the harmony of virtue and reason that, from the Aristotelian perspective, is the ideal ethical disposition in individuals. Nature seems to be the origin of counter-pressures to virtue, such as appetite for pleasure, anger, and other emotions (Maclean 1980,49), in the passages we will study. Yet “la loy de nature”²⁹⁴ is also held up as an authoritative model for human behavior. Nature in individuals thus includes both ideal and deviant behaviors, reflecting representations of the natural world that illustrate nature both as an external threat and as a place of pleasure and harmony.²⁹⁵

²⁹⁴ Hircan makes this observation in N26.

²⁹⁵ The prologue to the *Heptaméron* illustrates these attributes of nature, as we see in Chapter I.

As individuals encounter human nature in its varied forms, they are faced with interpreting its varied appearances. This can be difficult when the sources of these effects of nature on individuals are not obvious, or when the significance of nature's effects remains unclear. Individuals' prudent approach to unexplained phenomena in nature takes on an analogous position to a charitable reading of obscure text. Maclean describes the role of moral and intellectual virtue when interpreting signs in medicine:

Like the author, the reader has to be endowed with intelligence and moral goodness; those who misread are, according to Altomare and Cardano, either stupid or malicious; they are referring here to a topos in Aristotle's *Rhetoric* (ii. I, 1378 a). The moral quality of reader and author is therefore a mode of successfully conveying the sense of a text through the principle of charity ('scribere / legere in bonam partem') (2002, 221).

Like those who interpret signs in a medical context, or more generally in the context of nature,²⁹⁶ readers' ability to interpret texts relies on their capacity for accommodation. In the case of prudence, this indicates a grasp of intellectual virtue that coincides with moral virtue.²⁹⁷ Such practical wisdom reflects an ability to engage in appropriate action based on knowledge of particular circumstances and the ability to interpret these *in bonam partem*.²⁹⁸ A similar approach to texts would indicate equitable reading, as Kathy Eden has described.²⁹⁹ This manner of reading takes into consideration the context in which reading occurs and acknowledges the ability of words to signify in more than one way.³⁰⁰

Individuals' responses to signs – in text or in nature – reflect their knowledge of the

²⁹⁶ These can occur in topographical descriptions, as in the *Historia naturalis*, or as physiological signs described in medical treatises, such as those of Galen, Vesalius, and Rabelais (who translated from Galen).

²⁹⁷ Lesley Brown describes this aspect of accommodation in *Blackwell* (2003, 613).

²⁹⁸ See the definition of "Pantagruelisme" given in the prologue to the *Tiers Livre*: "propriété individuelle ... moienant laquelle jamais en mauvaise partie ne prendront choses quelconques, ilz congnoistront sourdre de bon, franc, et loyal courage" and the description of Pantagruel in chapter II when he responds to Panurge's rule of Salmiguondin: "Toutes choses prenoit en bonne partie, tout acte interpretoit à bien," (R 1994, 351; 1995, 45) (see Chapters I and II).

²⁹⁹ Eden describes equity in her discussion of Erasmus' letter to Dorp concerning objections to the *Praise of Folly* (1997, 1).

³⁰⁰ Eden refers to Aristotle's *Rhetoric* (1997, 11).

particular circumstances under which these signs occur. As with the virtue of prudence, which deals with the ultimate particular thing, apprehended only by perception (NE VI, viii), the ability to read *in bonam partem* relies on individuals' perceptions of phenomena that occur under particular circumstances. Interpreters' ability to distinguish outstanding interpretive circumstances follows Aristotle's assertion that practical wisdom, rather than solely concerning itself with universals, also recognizes particulars (NE VI, vii).

The obscurity of certain phenomena brings up difficulties of recognizing particular signs, as illustrated by the misdiagnosis of jaundice for melancholy in N50 of or the difficulty of distinguishing between codified and innate gestures, as illustrated in chapter XX. In addition to such difficulties, behavior that seems foolish under certain circumstances becomes suitable and even advisable in the particular cases set forth in the narratives. The appropriateness of certain instances of folly corresponds to representations of the wise-fool topos in the Renaissance corpus, which are largely informed by Erasmus' *Encomium moriæ*, his *Praise of Folly*.³⁰¹ This text draws upon the medieval origins of the term (1175–1225), which indicate qualities of being foolish or mad, while taking its place within a literary corpus that extends to classical tradition. As a satirical encomium in the manner of Lucian,³⁰² the *Encomium moriæ* is orated by a personified Folly, who places herself among the Greek gods of classical tradition, describing her origins as analogous to the divine birth described in the *Eclogues* of Virgil (E 1979, 16, n. 2). Placing herself within the wise-fool topos of Christian tradition, she speaks of the insights folly can bring, following Pauline appeals to achieve wisdom

³⁰¹ Miller describes classical influences on the *Praise of Folly*, in its descriptions of different types of madness and evangelical influences, illustrated in its descriptions of the paradox of Christian fools (E 1979, xv-xvii, xxiii-xxv).

³⁰² Lucian wrote *Muscae Encomium* (*In Praise of Flies*) and *De Parasito* (*The Parasite*).

through folly and indicating the obscurity of things that can only eventually be known through *caritas*: “This, indeed, is what the Prophet promises: ‘Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor has the heart of man conceived what things God has prepared for those who love Him.’”³⁰³ Folly describes her resemblance to Christian ecstasy that brings individuals closer to divine knowledge, noting the way in which signs of ecstasy diverge from characteristics attributed to a sage disposition. Such illustrations of the uses of folly indicate the significance of determining appropriate approaches to signs and to text.

While giving herself a privileged place in classical and evangelical traditions, Folly appeals to her audience by her sincerity, which she links to her manner of speaking: “From me, therefore, you will hear an extemporaneous speech, unpremeditated but all the truer for that” (E 1979, 12). Her spontaneous discourse, unembellished by rhetoric, recalls the *devisants*’ emphasis on conversational language as the truest way of relating events, a rhetorical choice that they support by speaking from personal experience. Folly’s discourse suggests similar issues in the *Tiers Livre* concerning the significance of gesture and the role gesture plays in the polemic of natural language. Folly’s extemporaneous speech suggests themes that arise with the use of gesture as an organic expression of signs in the protagonists’ interaction with the deaf-mute, Nazdecabre. Discourse on folly in Marguerite and Rabelais’s works illustrates moments at which nature has a strong impact on individuals, influencing their behavior and revealing their manner of participating in the structures set forth by notions of charity.

³⁰³ Folly quotes I Cor 2:9, where Paul cites Is 64:4 (E 1979, 137).

II. NATURE AND NARRATIVE

Representations of nature in the *Heptaméron* punctuate the *devisants*' narratives, as they recount tales of illness and madness. These examples of the human condition point to levels of prudence in individuals as factors that affect their physical and mental states. The impulsive behaviors of characters in N26, N50, and N70 appear as manifestations of imbalanced physiological states as they deviate from normal patterns of behavior. N26 sets forth various bodily conditions through its protagonist, a young man who experiences both wise and foolish love. N50 shows this deviation as a temporary condition, but linked to the hero's general constitution, an observation corroborated by remarks in the commentary. N70, following medieval epic tradition, illustrates its protagonist as a prototype of incontinence and malice, and then uses this figure to suggest diagnostic approaches to extreme examples of human temperament. The *devisants*' discussion shows an effort to mediate these internal experiences with their own values and ways of understanding human nature.

The *devisants* attribute the behaviors of these characters to the overpowering force of passionate love. Such notions of passionate love reflect Pauline descriptions of the manner in which passion transforms the normal condition of the body.³⁰⁴ The *devisants* examine the extent to which individuals are guided by various passions, which include: joy or delight, sadness, desire, aversion or abhorrence, love and hatred, hope and despair, courage and fear, as well as anger.³⁰⁵ Passion is set forth as a distinct human trait, but is also experienced by Christ when he weeps, as described in John 11:35. In his

³⁰⁴ ISBE, s.v. "Passion."

³⁰⁵ Ibid.

Epistle to the Romans, Paul bids individuals to identify with others through their passions: “Rejoice with those who are rejoicing. Weep with those who are weeping” (12:15). This appeal to empathy shows the uses of passion and designates it as characteristic of the “genre humain.”

In the novellas we will examine, passionate love appears through physiological impulses of characters that the *devisants* describe. This specific type of love reflects moments at which bodily love determines the characters’ actions. Saffredent, Longarine, and Oisille describe impulsive behavior driven by such love, which they distinguish from an elevated, spiritual love. Their representations of passionate love draw upon descriptions of *eros* (ερος), a term referring to “sexual love – sensual, impulsive, spontaneous – caused in mythology by the love-god Eros.”³⁰⁶ Their characters indeed seem to be guided toward love-objects by sudden urges or inclinations, regardless of cerebral protestations. Sources for these actions are represented by terms such as “feu” or by allegorical appearances of “Amour” and “Nature.”

The *devisants*’ references to different types of love in their commentary has sources in classical works such as Plato’s *Symposium*,³⁰⁷ a text comprised of speeches that discuss the nature of love. The second and third speeches of the *Symposium* focus on the distinction between common love, love of the body, and celestial love, which possesses a cerebral character. In the second speech, Pausanias, the legal expert, points out two different origins of these types of love, one that inspires love of the soul and one

³⁰⁶ The ISBE contrasts *eros* with other forms of love that are more guided toward community, such as *agape* and *caritas*, (1979-88, 174).

³⁰⁷ This work is dated from 385-380 BCE.

that inspires love of the body.³⁰⁸ In the third speech, Eryximachus, the medical expert, links love to anatomical study, stating that its principle regulates the hot, cold, wet, and dry qualities of the body and that this results in health (188a). His speech points to the relationship between love and humors, revealing the origins of medical thought in classical philosophy. The novellas similarly point to bodily origins of love, discourse that distances characters from their own behavior while also suggesting the regulation of humors as a way to adjust these behaviors. Pausanias and Eryximachus's speeches link love to a powerful exterior source, as in a love-god, which suggests that the force of love is greater than the force of a single individual. The idea of a love-god appears in the *devisants'* allegorical descriptions of love and, as a manifestation of human nature, reflects Céard's description of nature as an entity that interacts and even intervenes in the lives of individuals.

N26, N50, and N70 each include descriptions of the influence of melancholy on individuals as they experience love. The association of melancholy with love can be found in medieval Arabic and European texts, which describe lovesickness as either a subtype of melancholy or a precursor to melancholy (Wack 1990, 6). The term "melancholy" in the Renaissance refers to a medical condition, "melancholia," that results from imbalances in the body's regulation of humors.³⁰⁹ Melancholia, a state of depression or pensiveness, was thought to be provoked by an excess of black bile and was seen as an effect of lovesickness. The term "melancolie" is synonymous with "Bile

³⁰⁸ Pausanias states that these two types of love are born of two different love-goddesses, specified as two different Aphrodites. One, the more cerebral, he refers to as "Uranian," which turns toward the intellect, while the other he refers to as "Pandemus," which works at random and is directed toward the body (180 d).

³⁰⁹ See Ferguson for perceived humoral imbalances for lovesickness seen in an "excess of adust or burnt humors" (1993, 123); see Maclean on the theory of combinations of humors being able to result in a perfect balance in temperament (2002, 241).

noire”³¹⁰ and is part of a system of four temperaments, described by Galen, who draws from writings of Plato and Hippocrates (see above). Galen describes the condition of melancholy as an “excès de bile noire” and contrasts this condition with other conditions, including an excess of yellow bile in the head that causes delirium and an excess of phlegm that causes *lethargus*, a condition leading to memory loss (1854, 56). Linked to the qualities of heat, cold, humidity, and dryness (Galien 1854, 53), these physiological aspects of individuals emphasize the internalized phenomena in nature that contribute to the heightened states of love illustrated in the novellas.

II.i Wisdom and Folly

“The more pity, that fools may not speak wisely what wise men do foolishly.” Shakespeare, *As You Like It*, I.ii.83-4.

In the frame-narrative, the *devisants* find that their discourse has expanded beyond the borders of their community in the *locus amœnus* when they discover that the monks of Nostre Dame de Serrance are listening in on their tales from behind a thick hedge. This occurs at the end of the second day, soon after Ennasuite’s tale of sublime love³¹¹ and directly after the short tale that Saffredent offers in response. The monks’ enjoyment of the *devisants*’ tales is so great that it distracts them from their own activities: “comme ceulx qui aymoient mieulx leurs plaisirs que les oraisons, s’estoient

³¹⁰ *Dictionnaire du seizième siècle*, s.v. “Melancolie”; we find this definition in Panurge’s praise of debts in chapter IV when he draws a parallel between an indebted society and humoral equilibrium.

³¹¹ Ennasuite recounts a tale of two lovers who sublimate their romantic love in N19 (see Chapter II).

allez cacher dedans une fosse, le ventre contre terre, derrière une haye fort espesse” (M 1943, 156; 1999, 297). Their dismissal of prayer in favor of storytelling suggests a preference for everyday discourse, which extends from the lay community (the *devisants*) to the ecclesiastic community (the monks). The *devisants*’ discourse thus affects a greater audience than the audience for whom the tales have been intended. As their discourse extends beyond the borders of the *locus amœnus*, it becomes subject to another community of interpreters, one that is passive, resembling the role of the readers whom the narrator addresses in the frame-narrative. Though the monks remain behind the physical boundary of the hedge, they are able to react to the discourse that takes place in the *devisants*’ immediate circle. The manner in which the *devisants*’ discourse expands beyond their immediate circle suggests its capacity to reach beyond physical borders and beyond the borders of one group of interpreters. This suggests Pauline themes of edification that occurs through language that succeeds in reaching an expansive audience.³¹²

The monks’ covert manner of listening to the *devisants* proves to be unnecessary in light of the *devisants*’ charitable response to them and their prone position – “le ventre contre terre” – sets off a series of events that counteract their dignified position at the abbey. They take such a great interest in the *devisants*’ storytelling that it cuts into vespers, for which they are late: “Et là avoient si bien escouté les beaulx comptes, qu’ilz n’avoient point oy sonner la cloche de leur monastere” (M 1943, 156; 1999, 297-8). After a rushed evening mass, “quant ilz arriverent en telle haste,” which the monks sing

³¹² See I Cor 14:4-5 on the Pauline preference for “prophesying” over “speaking in tongues”: “Celui qui parle en langue s’édifie lui-même; celui qui prophétise édifie l’Église. Je veux (bien) que vous parliez tous en langues, mais je veux encore plus, que vous prophétisiez. Celui qui prophétise est plus grand que celui qui parle en langues, à moins que ce dernier n’interprète, pour que l’Église ne reçoive édification.”

breathlessly, “que quasi l’alaine leur falloit à commencer vespres,” and off-key, “leur chant tardif et mal entonné” (ibid), they reveal the cause of their late arrival, making clear their interest in the *devisants*’ activity. The *devisants*, seeing their interest above all as a sign of their “bonne volonté” (M 1943, 156; 1999, 298), invite them to return to their position behind the hedge the following day in order to listen to their tales. Their charitable reaction to the monks’ furtive behavior reveals the goodwill that their context for storytelling generates. Thus situated, the monks, who have foolishly hidden themselves in order to listen to the *devisants*, thereby adversely affecting their prayers, are able to listen to the wisdom of the *devisants*’ discourse. As the monks remain behind the physical boundary of the hedge, they take on the role of observers who are able to learn from the tales and commentary that the *devisants* set forth. Assuming the role of condisciple rather than their usual magisterial role, the monks’ position with regard to the *devisants* illustrates a reversal of wise and foolish roles that is mirrored in Saffredent’s tale. This tale sets forth the topos of wisdom and folly that the *devisants* seek to inscribe in their own literary community.

In N26, Saffredent describes the liaisons of a young gentleman, the seigneur d’Avannes, with a *dame saige* and a *dame folle*, illustrating the different types of love he experiences with these characters. The contrasting wise and foolish figures reflect a topos in the broader literary corpus of the Renaissance, as Britt-Marie Karlsson notes, referring to Marcel Tetel’s observation that the wise-fool oxymoron is a dominant antithesis in the *Heptaméron*, epitomized by Erasmus’ *Praise of Folly*, extending through Montaigne’s *Essais*, and taking its place within Platonic and Pauline tradition (2001, 167). The *dame saige* and *dame folle* of N26 initially appear as two distinct personalities, one virtuous

and prudent and the other wanton and impulsive. Their status as wise and foolish characters prefigures the manner in which they approach their desires and appetites, either succumbing to these, as does the *dame folle*, or curbing such physiological impulses, in the manner of the *dame saige*. In the end, however, these roles become confused, thereby bringing into question “wise” and “foolish” approaches to love.

Each woman seems to inspire extreme physiological reactions in the seigneur, causing him to abandon propriety and to overreach his own physical capacities. While his behavior with the *dame saige* might be part of a preconceived agenda of seduction, as Cholakian describes (1991, 132-3), descriptions of the seigneur’s constitution at different moments of the narrative reveal his susceptibility to physiological effects of the human condition, effects that are also apparent in each of his love interests. The contrasting behavior of the *dame saige* and *dame folle* further suggests constitutional differences that vary from individual to individual. The seigneur, as the focus of the narrative, shows behavior that corresponds to different types in the medical corpus, suggesting a fluctuation of his physiological state over the course of the narrative.

In addition to the three principal characters of the narrative, Saffredent describes a fourth character, the foolish woman’s husband, who displays characteristics that complete the portrait of physiological types. The *dame folle*’s husband’s appearance in the narrative is even briefer than her own, and his character just as one-dimensional. In contrast to the *dame folle*’s love of intimate physical pleasure, he takes pleasure in outdoor activities, suggesting an exterior focus of his energies. The seigneur and *dame saige* show more developed characters, changing over the course of the narrative and experiencing various physiological manifestations of love. The seigneur’s initial sociable

nature and love of pleasure show traits that initially draw him toward the *dame folle*, but his subsequent fatigue and illness after their liaison reveals a melancholic disposition, initiated by physical exhaustion, that appears later on in the *dame saige*. The change also recalls the changes in temperament associated with life changes, in ideas that attribute more prudence to older men than younger, for example, resulting from the coldness and dryness associated with older men's humors and experience.³¹³ The *dame saige* initially shows a calm, measured approach to love, a sign of her perceived wise character, but then succumbs to the incapacitating effects of her passionate love. While contrasting the different dispositions of these characters, the tale shows how both temperament and circumstance are determining factors in the types of love that are experienced.

The beginning of Saffredent's tale casts the seigneur as an attractive youthful person in good spirits, one who is socially appealing to everyone, including the *dame saige* as well as her husband, who takes him into his home when his own resources are lacking. The seigneur initially does not experience feelings of desire at all, which Saffredent attributes to his youth: "il prenoit plus de plaisir à saulter et dancier, que à regarder la beaulté des dames" (M 1943, 209; 1999 374). His initial disposition, before experiencing his transformative years, is set forth as lighthearted, cheerful, and energetic. When, within two years, he grows more interested in women, he turns his affections to the *dame saige*, although her prudent behavior keeps romantic involvement at bay.

When the seigneur turns his affections to the *dame folle*, the narrative sets forth a character who is uncontrolled in her passion and has boundless libidinous energy, a

³¹³ Maclean describes these attributes, which he also points to for perceptions of the male in general being more prudent than the female (1980, 49).

characteristic not uncommonly attributed to the female constitution.³¹⁴ Her behavior, though discreet, is carried out “en telle volupté que raison, conscience, ordre ne mesure n’avoient plus de lieu en elle” (ibid). She, like the *dame saige*, is married, but seems to be incompatible with her husband, who remains preoccupied by sports: “qui surtout aymoît les chevaux, chiens et oiseaulx ” (M 1943, 210; 1999, 375). The husband’s demeanor not only shows a choleric disposition, but suggests that his primary focus is on the outer world. His rigorous activity takes place outside the home, whereas the *dame folle* shows energy and stamina in an interior setting. This portrait corresponds to views of men as naturally more robust and rational, and less subject to fluctuating emotions (Maclean 1980, 50). This division of energies recalls Boccaccio’s description of the constricting effects of love on men and women that result from their delegated roles as public and private figures. The *dame folle*’s realization of carnal energy, within the confines of her chamber (or in the stable where the seigneur has taken a position as a groom), reflects Boccaccio’s observation of women’s particular susceptibility to the effects of passionate love.³¹⁵ While the absence of the *dame folle*’s husband contributes to a context that allows the *dame folle* to engage in her impulsive behavior, it also reveals physiological sources of discrepancies in behavior.

Carried away by passion, the *dame folle* and the seigneur engage in a liaison

³¹⁴ Screech describes perceptions of heightened sexual desire that women were seen to possess in the sixteenth century: “It is hardly necessary to recall that, in the sixteenth century, it was normal to believe that woman’s sexual desire was potentially boundless.” (1958, 95).

³¹⁵ “And if Love’s craving leaves their thoughts tinged with sadness, they are condemned to remain gloomy unless such thoughts are driven out by some fresh distraction. Besides which women have anyway far less endurance than men. Now we have only to look to see that men in love meet with nothing of this kind. If a man is down in the dumps or out of sorts, he has any number of ways to banish his cares or make them tolerable: he can go out and about at will, he can hear and see all sorts of things, he can go hawking and hunting, he can fish or ride, gamble or pursue his business interests. The effect of such activities will be to improve his spirits to a greater or lesser degree and stave off depression for a while at any rate, after which somehow or other he obtains comfort or else the problem recedes” (1993, 4-5).

whose excess ends up in dissipation. It leaves the seigneur exhausted and unrecognizable, even without the groom costume he must wear in order to escape suspicion at the *dame folle*'s estate: "Ce que ne peut porter longuement la jeunesse et delicate complexion du seigneur d'Avannes mais commença à devenir tant pasle et meigre, que, sans porter masque, on le pouvoit bien descongnoistre" (M 1943, 213; 1999, 379). His "jeunesse" and "delicate complexion," along with his changed features and body, suggest constitutional sources of his fatigue, his exceeding paleness and thinness leaving him a mere shadow of the sanguine figure with which the tale opens. Not only is he physically changed, but his senses are so altered that he disregards his physical limitations, pushing himself beyond his capacities: "mais le fol amour qu'il avoit à ceste femme luy rendit tellement les sens hebetez, qu'il presumoit de sa force ce qui eust defailly en celle d'Hercules" (ibid). In his folly, his love takes him out of his body, causing him to miscalculate his physical strength. His overestimation of his physical capacities shows an incongruity between his perceptions and his actual capabilities.

This seigneur's overwhelming physiological impulses suggest the intervening forces of nature in the human condition. His loss of stamina brings about the *dame folle*'s loss of interest in him: "[elle] ne l'aymoit tant malade que sain" (ibid). His temporary burst of energy within this liaison reflects the ephemeral nature of a "fol amour," which recalls Pausanias's description of base love in the *Symposium*. The *dame folle*'s lack of constancy indeed reflects this common love, a love that fades along with the love object (183e). The seigneur's own bodily love, which bears nefarious physiological consequences, indicates a constitution that, as in the case of the *dame folle*'s husband, differs from that of his paramour. The seigneur's weakened constitution extends to a

weakened mental state, suggested by his own uncertainty in discerning a state of love that is appropriate for him.

The seigneur's bout of melancholia causes him to describe his liaison with the *dame folle* as "follye," and to express a desire to follow the virtuous example of the *dame saige*. His enervated state while bedridden brings about the contemplative attitude characteristic of melancholy, but his expressions of virtue in this state end in revelations of the "feu" that remains within him, a metaphoric reference to his passionate love. This love is rekindled at the end of his illness by a kiss that the *dame saige* grants him: "... le feu que la parolle avoyt commencé d'allumer au cueur du pauvre seigneur, commença à se augmenter par le baiser" (M 1943, 215; 1999 382). When he fears a long separation from *dame saige* as the result of an impending voyage with his brother, the seigneur experiences another bout of melancholia: "entra en une grande tristesse" (M 1943, 216, 1999, 382). But instead of falling back into an enervated state, he reveals an aggressive streak characteristic of a choleric disposition, literally setting fire to an inn where he is lodging, which is near the home of the *dame saige*.³¹⁶ When he is found in the street in his nightshirt and is brought to her bedside to be cared for, he jumps into bed beside her, hoping that she, too, will abandon virtue, but she resists his advances by quickly jumping out.

As the *dame saige* reprimands the seigneur, she anticipates the trajectory of her own illness resulting from melancholia. She adheres to the virtue that has kept her from succumbing to physical desire, comparing the resistance of a chaste heart to the purification of gold in fire: "...ainsy que l'or s'esprouve en la fournaise, aussy ung cueur

³¹⁶ The *Dictionnaire du seizième siècle* associates the attribute of "violence" with the humor "chole" (s.v. "Chole.")

chaste au milieu des tentations s’y trouve plus fort et vertueux, et se refroidit, tant plus il est assailli de son contraire” (M 1943, 216: 1999, 383). The coldness of this “cœur chaste” in the midst of fiery passion illustrates the extent of her virtue while also anticipating her own symptoms as she succumbs to the “flamme cachée” (M 1943, 217; 1999, 384) that she has suppressed throughout the narrative. When the seigneur departs on his journey, she finds her containment of passionate love too difficult to bear, resulting in an internal struggle between love and honor: “la guerre que l’amour et l’honneur faisoient en son cœur” (ibid). The distinction between love and honor suggests bodily love. The appearance of this love in a character that is presented as virtuous suggests the intervening effects of nature.

The *dame saige*’s illness, a “fièvre continue, causée d’une humeur melencolicque” (ibid), appears in symptoms that reflect her comparison of a chaste heart to fiery passion: “les extremittez du corps luy vindrent toutes froides, et au dedans brusloit incessamment” (ibid). Reflecting her own description of virtue, the contrasting heat and cold render her incapacitated and bedridden, bringing her to the state in which the seigneur finds himself after his liaison with the *dame folle*. Yet the *dame saige* falls deeper and deeper into her melancholic state and is unable to recover. Her illness, misinterpreted by medical practitioners as an intestinal obstruction,³¹⁷ overpowers her and brings about her death. This overpowering love suggests that her passion is greater than that of any of the other characters, outlasting that of the *dame folle* and causing physical changes in her that prove even more overwhelming than the changes that occur in the seigneur. Rather than having a heart of gold that only cools within great fires, the *dame saige* admits on her deathbed that the fire in her heart has powers that are

³¹⁷ This is described as “une opilation (occlusion intestinale)” (M 1999, 385, n.1).

insurmountable: “car de moindre feu que le mien ont esté ruynez plus grandz et plus fortz edifices” (M 1943, 218; 1999, 386). The destructive power of such fire reveals the folly of passionate love. Such love appears as an entity that possesses its own life force, appearing and intervening in the lives of characters at random.

The effects of passionate love on Saffredent’s various characters contribute to a portrait of the “genre humain.” His narrative reveals a conflation of wise and foolish figures, caused by the intervention of a passionate love akin to *eros*:

Voilà, mes dames, la difference d’une folle et saige dame, auxquelles se monstrent les differentz effectz d’amour, dont l’une en receut mort glorieuse et louable, et l’autre, renommée honteuse et infame, qui fait sa vie trop longue, car autant que la mort du saint est precieuse devant Dieu, la mort du pecheur est très mauvaise” (M 1943, 219-20; 1999, 388).

As he contrasts the *dame saige*’s behavior with that of the *dame folle*, he attributes “mort glorieuse et louable” to the former and “renommée honteuse et infame” to the latter.

While this could be simply a syntactical issue,³¹⁸ it alludes to the reversal of wise and foolish roles that appears in the wise-fool topos in which the narrative is inscribed.

Saffredent’s conflation of saint and sinner recalls Pauline descriptions of the folly of those who believe too much in their own wisdom: “For, while proclaiming themselves to be wise, they became foolish” (Rom 1: 22), a description to which Oisille and Parlamente refer regularly.³¹⁹ It also reveals the changing appearances of wisdom and folly as these traits are presented within different contexts. Furthermore, Saffredent’s description of the shameful, infamous life of a woman who lived too long suggests the lingering death of the *dame saige*, whereas the *dame folle* only appears in the tale for a brief interval. In

³¹⁸ Mathieu-Castellani points to the discrepancy in Saffredent’s phrase that may be a syntactical issue or may indicate the conflation of the *dames saige* and *folle* (M 1999, 388 n. 1).

³¹⁹ Ibid.

fact, the *dame folle* disappears completely after carrying out her tryst with the seigneur, her abrupt entrance and exit corresponding to the dramatic fashion in which she realizes her love.

This conflation of wise and foolish characters affects the moral conclusion that Saffredent attempts to draw from the tale, as illustrated in his second comment on the incongruity between the *dame saige*'s exterior and her "true" character that is revealed at the end of the tale:

... voilà une saige femme, qui, pour se monstrier plus vertueuse par dehors qu'elle n'estoit au cueur, et pour dissimuler ung amour que la raison de nature vouloit qu'elle portast à ung si honneste seigneur, s'alla laisser morir, par faulte de se donner le plaisir qu'elle desiroit couvertement! (M 1943, 220; 1999, 388)

Saffredent's inability to draw a moral from his own tale suggests the difficulty of reducing wisdom to a theory.³²⁰ Instead, Saffredent introduces specific characters who contribute to a portrait of the "genre humain" through their varying reactions to passionate love. Their contrasting temperaments represent different human conditions which, as illustrated by the seigneur, are susceptible to change. The effects of constitution, of circumstance, and of recognition of one's own folly each contribute to the effects of the "loy de Nature," as Hircan describes it (M 1943, 220; 1999, 389), on individuals as they experience passionate love.

³²⁰ Jeanneret describes the way in which Marguerite, Rabelais, and Erasmus, among others, show oppositions in their texts that sketch out an ethic and give an outline of wisdom, but one that is irreducible to theory (1993, 96).

II. II Folly and Madness

“For health and disease in a body are admittedly different and distinct, and different things desire and love different things. Thus, while desire is one thing in a healthy body, it is another in one diseased” Plato, *Symposium* 186b.

N50 and N70 describe states of madness linked to passionate love. Stages of madness that appear in these novellas come from desire and lead to physical conditions, such as melancholy. Each tale occurs in the context of the court, presenting characters that take on the traditional roles of *dame* and *serviteur*, but whose actions deviate from these roles as a result of extreme passions. The force of these passions causes certain *devisants* to adopt skeptical attitudes toward passionate love while others find examples of perfect love within these tales. In the conclusion to her own tale at the end of the seventh day, Oisille reminds the party of St. Paul’s advice to temper earthly love: “Et vous voiez que saint Pol, encores aux gens mariez ne veult qu’ilz aient ceste grande amour ensemble” (M 1943 418; 1999 681).³²¹ Longarine shows similar hesitations over “ceste grande amour,” concluding her own tale at the end of the fifth day with a warning against extreme passions that “une extremité d’amour ameine ung autre malheur” (M 1943, 325; 1999, 545). Yet for other *devisants*, such as Symontault and Dagoucin, these tales confirm ideals of reciprocity in love and the role of “ceste grand amour” in perpetuating human existence.

The characters in N50 and N70 show folly in their love, but their displays of foolish behavior reflect different temperaments. The folly of Jehan Pietre and his lady in

³²¹ Oisille refers to descriptions of marriage in I Cor, Rom 8:5-8, and Heb 13:4 (M 1999, 681, n. 2).

N50 comes from a love that reaches great heights and transcends death. The folly of the Duchesse de Bourgogne comes from a love turned to jealousy and hatred, which reveals her malicious character. These types of folly reflect the distinction Folly makes between two types of madness in the *Encomium moriæ*. Drawing a parallel between these two types of madness and the two types of love described in the *Symposium*, Folly reminds her audience of importance of recognizing these divergent sources of madness: “... just as Plato’s Socrates taught when he divided Venus into two and split one Cupid into two, so these dialecticians should have distinguished one kind of madness from the other if they ever intended to pass for sane themselves” (E 1979, 57-8). Her own madness, she states, is “a pleasant mental distraction,” while the other type comes from an avenging madness sent up from the Furies, who “... inspire in the breasts of mortals a burning desire for war, or unquenchable thirst for gold, or disgraceful and wicked lust, or parricide, incest, sacrilege, or some other such plague ...”³²² The folly of these characters as they experience the effects of extreme forms of love reveals their different characters and contributes to an illustration of the human condition. It also inspires the *devisants*’ discovery of ideal forms of love within the tragic circumstances that Longarine and Oisille relate.

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Longarine gives a short, humorous account of a young man, Jehan Pietre, who falls in love with a lady from a neighboring home. While the neighbor reciprocates Jehan

³²² Folly refers to Æschylus’s *Eumenides*, and particularly to the madness inspired by Allecto in Virgil, *Æneid* 7 (E 1979, 58).

Pietre's feelings, she hesitates at physical fulfillment. Their restraint brings about the melancholic disposition of the *serviteur* traditionally associated with *fin'amors*. Yet the hero of the tale, instead of showing his valor on the battlefield or eloquently stating his love in a monologue,³²³ lands in a sickbed, where his lovesickness is misdiagnosed as jaundice. Though the symptoms for melancholy and jaundice are not dissimilar, each involving a yellowing of the complexion (Ferguson 1993, 123; Wack 1990, 40), the misdiagnosis of Jehan Pietre's condition complicates a scenario that is already made difficult by an overpowering love that leads the characters toward foolish action. In the manner of illness, love invades the body, overwhelming the individual's senses and causing physiological changes. Longarine gives an anatomy of melancholy in her tale of figures who are consumed by passionate love.

Jehan Pietre's initial response to his lady's prudent attitude toward carnal love reveals a passive disposition that points to a melancholic constitution. The ennui and frustration that he experiences are followed by a self-imposed isolation, in an effort to "divertir sa fantaisie" (M 1943, 324; 1999 543). Jehan Pietre's decision to distance himself from his beloved is indeed consistent with accepted cures for lovesickness, yet in his case only exacerbates his condition: "... dont il tumba en telle tristesse, que l'on mescongnoissoit son visaige" (M 1943, 324; 1999, 543).³²⁴ As the somatic effects of lovesickness become more dramatic, medical experts arrive to attend to Jehan Pietre and, misinterpreting his his yellowed complexion as a sign of liver malfunction rather than as a sign of lovesickness, decide to bleed him: "... les medecins, qui, voyans que le visaige

³²³ We can contrast Jehan Pietre's taciturn disposition with the lengthy speeches made by the *serviteurs* in N19 and N70.

³²⁴ Ferguson mentions that this distancing of lovers lacked other (curative) activities that were meant to accompany the removal of the beloved from the lover's sight (1993, 123); also see Wack on the adverse effects of the image of the beloved on the brain, thereby damaging cogitative power (1990, 90-2).

luy devenoit jaulne, estimerent que c'estoit une oppilation de foye, et luy ordonnerent la seignée” (ibid). Although a common treatment for illnesses during the Renaissance (Wack 1990, 65), its misapplication contributes to the tale’s tragic outcome. The puncture from bloodletting plays a pivotal role in the narrative, revealing the negative effects of misinformation and partial knowledge. Interpretation of illness in Renaissance medical practice focuses on three sites at which signs are read: the patient, his or her attendants, and the doctors (Maclean 2002, 284). Deficient information at all three of these sites creates a physical flaw in the hero of the tale that increases the ravages of lovesickness on his body.

The clinical manner in which Longarine describes her hero as he reacts to his love-object emphasizes the significance of the physiological aspects of his love.³²⁵ The detailed description of his illness and “cure” by medical attendants can be juxtaposed with descriptions of epic figures who show valor in love and war.³²⁶ Even when Jehan Pietre eventually seeks out his lady, who succumbs to her own desire and revives him “par une seulle parole” (M 1943, 324; 1999, 543), he continues to show a passive character, reverting to his inert state after his moment of passion.

The anticipation of the moment of passion reveals a vitality in Jehan Pietre that overextends the physical capacities with which the narrative characterizes him. Guided by “le feu qui le brusloit,” he arrives at his assignation, revived by his lady, who succeeds in accomplishing what the medical practitioners have failed to do: “elle avoit guery ung

³²⁵ Ferguson comments on the terseness of the description of Jehan Pietre’s condition, which provides just enough information for misdiagnosis (1993, 124); this can be contrasted with more prolix descriptions of illness in other novellas, such as N26.

³²⁶ Gary Ferguson also remarks that the name “Pietre” suggests someone who travels by foot rather than by horse, as is the case with the heroes of medieval narrative, thereby giving Jehan Pietre a more pedestrian character (1993, 130-1).

homme d'une malladye où tous les medecins ne pavoient trouver remede" (M 1943, 324; 1999, 543). Whereas he has spent a quarter of the narrative bedridden, he is now so exuberant in anticipation of the fulfillment of his love that he is able to "purchasser ce que à peyne pavoit-il croire avoir en sa puissance" (M 1943, 324; 1999, 544). The promise of physical union, which is recognized as a common cure for lovesickness,³²⁷ plays a crucial role in Jehan Pietre's recovery. The lady's recognition of an effective cure reveals an affinity that reaches its height during their assignation and extends to the end of the narrative.

At the height of their passion, the lovers' union shows the heights to which their love can reach and a superhuman strength. Driven to make efforts that resemble the Herculean efforts of the seigneur d'Avannes, Jehan Pietre's physical exertions surpass what his constitution would normally allow. This strength seems to originate in passionate love, indicated by the reviving words of the love-object and inspired by her presence. Jehan Pietre has, through his lovesickness, fulfilled the metaphorical assimilation of the lover's body and behavior to the unattained object – his female counterpart.³²⁸ The consummation of their passionate love illustrates a literal assimilation of his body and behavior to that of his beloved, as he forgets himself in his desire for his "amyé." His exuberance causes him to remain unaware of the bandages that fall from his wounds, allowing an excessive amount of blood to pour forth: "cuydant sercher par un ousté le remede de sa vie, se donnoit par ung aultre l'avancement de sa mort ; car, ayant pour s'amyé mys en obly soy mesmes, ne s'apperceut pas de son bras qui se desbanda, et la playe nouvelle, qui se vint à ouvrir, rendit tant de sang que le pauvre gentil homme en

³²⁷ Ferguson describes "therapeutic sexual intercourse" (1993, 123).

³²⁸ See Wack's description of the assimilation of lovers (1990, 65).

estoit tout baigné” (M 1943, 324-5; 1999, 544). Though he becomes thoroughly drenched by the time he is through, he fails to recognize his blood loss as the cause of the fatigue that overtakes him and attributes his condition to the exertions he has just made.

Consumed by the fire of his own passion, he is unable to approach his own physical condition rationally. His state of folly, “plus vyre d’amour et de plaisir qu’il ne luy estoit besoing” (M 1943, 324; 1999, 544), is akin to drunkenness and impedes his judgement.

While Jehan Pietre’s melancholic disposition contributes to his passivity and surfaces in his weakened state of exhaustion, it also places him among figures of medieval narrative who experience stages of melancholy in love. In fact, lovesickness is considered a heroic disease, one that resides at the top of three hierarchies: body, gender, and society (Wack 1990, 150-1). Jehan Pietre’s passive role in the narrative recalls the traditional relationship between *dame* and *serviteur*, which attributes at the very least a symbolically submissive role to the *serviteur* (Ferguson 1993, 123). Even the bleeding of his wound made during his bout of melancholy recalls works such as Chrétien de Troye’s *Chevalier de la Charrete* and Bérout’s *Roman de Tristan*. Like Jehan Pietre, Lancelot and Tristan each bleed at their moments of physical intimacy, from the reopening of wounds that have previously been made.³²⁹ Yet these wounds of these epic figures, occurring at moments of prowess – prizing open bars of a lady’s chamber, fighting off a wild boar – differ from those of Jehan Pietre who, rather than seeking out his beloved, has submitted to medical treatment as a cure for his condition. Furthermore, his bleeding occurs in a much more profuse manner than that of the medieval heroes, whose blood appears in

³²⁹ Ferguson describes the parallel between Jehan Pietre’s bleeding and the bleeding of heroes of epic narrative (1993, 125-7).

symbolic drops. Instead, his blood gushes forth from his wounds and engulfs him. His blood, like his love, overtakes him.

If, up to the moment of union, the narrative has not already elucidated the significance of exterior sources of the characters' actions, love arrives on the scene as a separate player that has influenced the characters all along: "Lors, Amour, qui les avoit trop unys ensemble, fait en quelque sorte que, en departant d'avecq s'amy, son ame departyt de son corps; et, pour la grande effusion de sang, tumba tout mort aux piedz de sa dame ..." (M 1943, 325; 1999, 544). Consistent with the medieval narrative models for the *devisants'* tales, "Amour" appears on the scene as a player in the farce that Longarine relates. Intervening in the lives of Jehan Pietre and his lady, this figure of passionate love evokes several traditions that explain bodily love. As an allegorical figure, such love evokes medieval romances such as the *Roman de la rose*, while its spontaneity and inscription on Jehan Pietre's body recall the bodily, earthly love denoted by *eros*. Its dominance in the narrative recalls Folly's explanation for its dominant role in the human condition, as she describes the way in which Jupiter "limited reason to the narrow confines of the head, leaving all the rest of the body to passion" (E 1979, 28). The hero of the tale succumbs in this fashion to his bodily love, both in his illness and in his revival. The way in which he inevitably acts upon impulse, behaving "foolishly" to the point of surpassing his physical capacities, shows the dominance of his bodily passion. As described in the *Symposium*, such love disregards intellect, reason, and even beauty in the sense of the sublime (181b). Jehan Pietre's love is equally foolish, haphazard, and physical, motivating him toward great physical exertions that exhaust him to the point of death.

Following his departure, “Amour” remains a catalyst for the subsequent actions of his beloved. Unable to remain hidden within the intimacy of the lovers’ assignation, “Amour” leaps into public view as Jehan Pietre’s lady, in a fit of impulsive behavior, drags his dead corpse into the street. She not only brings him out into the open but, stricken with grief at his death, takes his sword and strikes herself. Her passionate love, ending in grief, perpetuates her own demise while revealing their secret liaison in a spectacular public display. Continuing the illustration of lovers driven by folly, Jehan Pietre’s love interest loses her senses before losing her life to the love that has consumed the passionate pair. Falling dead on top of him, their bodies are discovered the next morning in the street by her family. The lovers’ attempts to remain discreet are reversed by the intervention of their love itself.

Although the tragic ending of the tale causes both Longarine and Oisille to express skepticism toward this “*extremité d’amour*” (M 1943, 325; 1999, 545) Symontault sees the love as an example of a true union of souls: “*quant l’amour est si egalle, que, luy morant, l’autre ne vouloit plus vivre*” (M 1943, 325; 1999, 545). The reciprocity revealed in the love between Jehan Pietre and his *dame* reflects the degree to which they are intertwined, their deaths only emphasizing the intermingling of their bodily forms. Their madness, though perpetuating the tale’s tragic end, evokes Folly’s description of the happiness attained by lovers: “First, therefore, consider that Plato had some glimmer of this notion when he wrote that the madness of lovers is the height of happiness. For a person who loves intensely no longer lives in himself but rather in that which he loves” (E 1979, 136). Folly’s description points out the connection between passionate love and happiness, indicating sources in Plato’s *Phædrus* that distinguish

passionate love as the ideal catalyst for noble acts. In their farcical situation, Longarine's lovers embody classical and medieval discourse on ideal love. Their unity extends to ideas on charity to which the *devisants* refer, showing a common bond that lasts through perils of separation, illness, and death, as the two are buried side by side.

Oisille, in a moment of spontaneity, reveals that death – at least in the case of the hero – was only one aspect of the love between Jehan Pietre and his lady. Following the descriptions of Jehan Pietre's passive state and melancholic disposition, she refers to Jehan Pietre's death as a natural result of his weak constitution: “mais Dieu mercy! ceste maladie ne tue que ceulx qui doyvent morir dans l'année” (M 1943, 325; 1999, 545). Oisille's remark attributes Jehan Pietre's death to a preexisting bodily condition, a view that links the events of the tale to possible humoral imbalances that may have affected the characters' actions to the greatest degree. These remarks come, notably, from the motherly figure of the group, whose nurturing position is reinforced by the daily readings from Scripture that she chooses for the party.

The *devisants'* conversation reaches new heights in the aftermath of the tale. Unlike Jehan Pietre, who seems to lose his voice while ill or exhausted,³³⁰ the *devisants* cannot stop themselves from talking – in fact, their discourse, like his love, is excessive. With only a brief pause for vespers, the conversation sparked by Longarine's tale lasts throughout supper, their conversation being as much a part of it as the meal itself: “s'en allerent soupper autant de parolles que de viandes” (M 1943, 326; 1999, 546), and continues until the moment they retire for the evening. In this way, the *devisants* illustrate an equivalence between words and sustenance that evokes the communal gatherings of

³³⁰ His lack of speech can be contrasted with the charming speech of the Seigneur d'Avannes and the musical talent of Pauline's *serviteur*.

the *agape* of the early Christian Church.³³¹ This moment points to the bonds that storytelling creates in the *locus amœnus* and that extends to their activities beyond its borders and into everyday life at the abbey.

Yet as they close the fifth day, the projected halfway mark of their stay at Nostre-Dame de Serrance,³³² Oisille expresses concern about the ability of the company to keep up the discourse in which they have been engaged so far: “que les cinq Journées estoient accomplies de si belles histoires, qu’elle avoit grand paour que la sixiesme ne fust pareille ; car il n’estoit possible, encores qu’on les voulut inventer, de dire de meilleurs comptes que veritablement ilz en avoient racomptez en leur compaignye” (M 1943, 326; 1999, 546-7). Her worries, coming in the wake of the example of Jehan Pietre, express concern that discourse may fall into empty repetition or *loquacitas* rather than developing the themes in new and unexpected ways. Such concern suggests the possibility that the narrative might follow the path of Jehan Pietre and his beloved, expiring after producing such fertile discourse. These hesitations show a preoccupation with the significance of the role of discourse among individuals.

Geburon reassures her by glossing Scripture: “Tant que malice et bonté regneront sur la terre, ilz la rempliront tousjours de nouveaulx actes” (M 1943, 326-7; 1999, 547).³³³ This reference, offered as reassurance, reinstates the faith that the *devisants* have shown in discourse and evokes the comfort that Oisille herself takes in the study of Scripture, as she states in the prologue: “Et, si vous me demandez quelle recepte me tient

³³¹ This *koinonia*, or love-feast appears as a topos in descriptions of building community, as in Erasmus’ *Convivium religiosum* (see Chapter I).

³³² Ferguson poses the question of whether the fifth day is the intended mid-point of the novella collection (1993, 121).

³³³ Geburon refers to Ecc 1:10: “Y a-t-il une chose dont on dise : Vois ceci, c’est nouveau! elle a déjà eu lieu dans les siècles qui nous ont précédés.”

si joyeuse en ma vieillesse, c'est que, incontinant que je suys levée, je prends la Sainte Escripiture et la lys ..." (M 1943, 7; 1999, 87). The joy that she finds in her contemplation of authoritative writing signals the rejuvenation that takes place with the telling of witnessed events. The "nouveaulx actes" to which Geburon refers, alluding to Scripture, appear in a continuum of topoi that extend from ancient writing to current events and, guided by nature in its infinite forms, will continue to provide the company with new topics of conversation. Even events that have already occurred may be so antiquated that they will cease to be recognizable, as with the Jehan Pietre in his illness who in turn resembles the seigneur d'Avannes in the madness of his "fol amour." Lack of recognition for these events may stem from an unfamiliarity with the language used to recount them or the uncharacteristic style with which they are related. Two days later, Oisille herself offers her companions a tale based on medieval romance that most of them do not recognize.

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Before recounting the final tale of the seventh day, Oisille excuses herself for deviating from the parameters that have been set forth for the *devisants'* storytelling. Signaling a departure from protocol, Oisille admits to breaking the agreement the *devisants* have made to recount events with which they are familiar and to keep the tales relatively short. She further breaks the oral code of their tales by recounting one that has already been written, *La Châtelaine de Vergi*. Thus her contribution at the end of the seventh day transgresses several of the guidelines that the *devisants* have agreed upon, as

it is based on an old tale, is not current, “pas de nostre temps” (M 1943, 400; 1999, 657), and is quite long. In addition, she breaks with the other *devisantes*' tendency to portray their own sex in a sympathetic light (Cholakian 1991, 187). Yet the others excuse her for going outside the parameters of this agreement and Parlemeute, the most vocal of the ladies' defenders, encourages her to continue with the tale. The *devisants*' immediate acceptance of the tale indicates the relevance of antiquated events to their current discourse.

The *devisants* seem to acknowledge the relationship between oral discourse and writing, signaling an awareness that they are developing both oral and written traditions. This acknowledgement reflects Cave's observation of the relationship between the act of writing and the corpus in which such writing may take its place: “Writing is acknowledged to be dependent on what has been written before (particularly in classical antiquity); according to Erasmus, the writer must assert his independence by both multiplying and fragmenting his models so that he is not trapped by the prestige of a single author” (Cave 1979, xi). Oral discourse functions in a similar manner to written discourse, as it draws upon established patterns of oratory and dialogue. Oisille's tale, while following its medieval source, alters aspects of the older text, thereby renewing the antiquated narrative. As she begins the tale, the narrative quickly takes on the point of view of the duchess rather than introducing the Châtelaine figure as a starting point.³³⁴ Significantly, this point of view allows Oisille to elaborate on the physiological observations she makes after Longarine's tale at the end of the fifth day. Her focus on a

³³⁴ The thirteenth century version begins with a moral passage on treachery and introduces the Châtelaine de Vergi early in the tale. Oisille introduces the duke, the duchess, and the gentleman as principal characters of her tale and brings in the dame du Vergier (the Châtelaine's counterpart) later on in the tale, at the moment when the gentleman reveals their love.

central character who acts “oultre raison,” whose disposition deflects a “furieux désespoir” and who, like the central characters in N26 and N50, reveals a “feu” as the driving force of her actions, suggests physiological imbalances that impede the ability to surmount excessive emotions of hatred and jealousy as well as love.

Oisille finds this example relevant enough to the *devisants*' discourse that she offers the tale despite its length, its time-frame, and its anonymous source. The original writing, Parmente says, is in “si vieil langage” that most of the company would not even recognize it. The antiquated language of the tale, she assures the others, will lend it the quality of being new: “parquoy sera tenu pour nouveau” (M 1943, 400; 1999, 657). This double stance, connected to language (Ferguson 1993, 119), gives the *devisants* grounds for including the tale in their repertoire. The tale thus takes on the role of a “nouvel acte” in the manner that Geburon has mentioned at the close of the fifth day.

The theme of breaking protocol, introduced by Oisille's decision to tell the tale, carries into the tale itself. While leaving the characters and the plot more or less intact (Virtue, 1997, 812), Oisille's focus on the duchess as the central figure of the tale develops negative characteristics of the “genre humain” (see above). Following the chosen theme of the day, to describe “ceulx qui ont fait tout le contraire de ce qu'ilz devoient ou vouloient” (M 1943, 370; 1999, 611), Oisille presents a type of madness that corresponds to *insania*, unsoundness of mind which drives the duchess to act in a way that contradicts her best interests. Embodying Folly's reference to the avenging madness sent up by the Furies (see above), the duchess's madness in love perpetuates not only her own demise but that of the courtly society to which she belongs. The tale is, then, a rendering of the destructive passions that are part of the “genre humain.”

While embodying the prototype of a fundamentally deviant character, the Duchesse de Bourgogne reveals characteristics that correspond to different temperaments at various points in the narrative. This allows the narrative to portray her madness as part of the human condition rather than as an embodiment of malice or wickedness. In fact, in the commentary following the tale, none of the *devisants* refers to the duchess as wicked and Parlemeute goes so far as to warn the party against the “malice des hommes” (M 1943, 418; 1999, 682). As the catalyst for her “tristesse mortelle” as well as her choleric fits of anger, the duchess’s madness appears to control her actions which, through her manipulations, influence the actions of the other characters in the narrative. She initially appears as lacking virtue: “(elle) n’avoit pas le cuer de femme et princesse vertueuse” (M 1943, 401; 1999, 658), a condition that causes her to abandon protocol of the court and to take on the aggressive role of approaching her love-object, a gentleman of her husband’s train. Rather than remaining in her role of “princesse qui debvoit estre adorée, desdaignant telz serviteurs,” she takes on a more masculine role: “print le cuer d’un homme transporté pour descharger le feu qui estoit importable” (ibid). Her abandonment of protocol emanates from a passionate, bodily source, a “feu” that guides her toward a love-object.

The duchess’s inability to contain her passion for the gentleman comes out in descriptions of her facial expressions. These expressions are initially used to seduce the gentleman, by “oeillades et mynes” and then become effects of uncontained desire for an unresponsive love-object, signs of the madness of “ceste pauvre folle” (ibid). As these desires erupt physically on her countenance, the gentleman, who “jamais n’avoit estudyé que à la vertu” (ibid), senses an altered state in the duchess. Indeed, the fire within her

seems to come out in her gaze: “ses contenance . . . estoient assez ardantes pour faire brusler une glace” (M 1943, 401; 1999, 659). Her easily agitated state suggests a choleric disposition that is heightened by her madness.

The duchess’s unrequited love seems to affect her mental state, which fluctuates between listlessness and fury, suggesting alternating melancholic and choleric characteristics. As she sinks into a “tristesse mortelle” (M 1943, 403; 1999, 662) following the gentleman’s rejection of her advances, she contemplates death. This state of despair exists alongside “une telle furie” (ibid) that pushes her toward vengeance. These oscillating emotions are part of a trajectory from desire to vengeance that occurs through madness. The exponential heights of madness that the duchess reaches recall traditional illustrations of insane behavior caused by excessive amounts of love: “When desire is doubled it becomes love; when love is doubled it turns into madness.”³³⁵ Yet in the case of the duchess, the madness turns her love into its opposite, a coercion of her initial passion that suggests descriptions of the praeternatural in nature.³³⁶ As with phenomena in nature that contradict its normal course, such as contagion and plague, the duchess’s deviant and devious behavior causes destruction.

This reflects the links between the constitution of individuals and phenomena in the natural world, seen in corresponding descriptions of the humors and the four elements in Renaissance medical texts (see above). Origins of this correlation are found in classical works, appearing in philosophical texts such as the *Symposium*. In his description of love,

³³⁵ Wack’s description is based on references to Sappho and Ovid (1990, 6).

³³⁶ Maclean designates appearances of the praeternatural in the form of disease and monstrosity, referring to Renaissance sources based on Aristotelian descriptions of the praeternatural as a phenomenon occurring in nature, but that contradicts generalities in the course of nature: “A monstrosity . . . belongs to the class of things contrary to nature although it is contrary not to Nature in her entirety, but only to nature in the generality of cases” (*De generatione animalium*, iv. 4 [770 b 10ff] in 2002, 269).

Eryximachus, the physician, speaks of the way in which coerced love resembles
coercions in nature:

And when . . . the elements of hot and cold, moist and dry, attain the harmonious love of one another and blend in temperance and harmony, they bring to men, animals, and plants health and plenty, and do them no harm. But when Love, in pride, becomes strong in the control of the seasons of the year, there is much destruction and injustice. Plagues love to develop out of just these sorts of things, and many other lawless maladies among flora and fauna, such as hoarfrosts, hailstorms and mildews, arise out of a grasping excessiveness and disorder of these love-forces toward one another (188a,b).

Whereas harmony in love comes from an equilibrium of elements in the world, imbalances cause destruction a praeternatural in nature. The duchess's madness evokes the illness that Eryximachus describes, signaled in nature by his description of plagues that results from love in pride rather than a unity in love. Such love, being misplaced, leads to aberrant forms of life, evoking the monstrous forms that are aberrations of nature. Rather than replenishing nature, this love is dissonant with nature, stalling its progression and actually reversing it. This image arises in the figure of the duchess's unborn child, a figure from a feigned pregnancy that the duchess uses in order to explain her listless state. The correlation between natural and human imbalances also recalls historical descriptions of plague, as in the prologue to the *Decameron*.³³⁷ The narrator's description of the effects of bubonic plague on individuals' bodies, on the landscape of Florence, and eventually on social bonds illustrates a continuity of the effects of love on the natural world, human nature, and human interaction. Disrespect of social codes, disregard for familial obligations, and the abandonment of propriety perpetuated by the bubonic plague of fourteenth century Florence reveal the effects of contagion on human

³³⁷ The narrator describes the breakdown of community that results from the plague in the introduction to the first day (see Chapter I).

bonds. Consistencies between the duchess's madness and the disintegration of the court to which she belongs reveal similar sources for the dissipation of social bonds.

The effects of the duchess's madness come out in her manipulations of the duke, her false accusations of imprudent behavior toward her on the part of the gentleman causing the breakdown of the relationship between lord and vassal. The lack of trust and loyalty that the duke shows toward the gentleman illustrates a reversal of the charitable feelings that he has held for the gentleman since childhood. Whereas before he "l'aymoit parfaitement et se confyoit en luy de toutes les affaires" (M 1943, 400-1; 1999 658), he now seeks proof of the absence of love for his wife. In order to preserve himself from self-imposed banishment or death, the gentleman is forced to reveal his with his niece, the dame du Vergier, a relationship that he has promised to keep secret. Thus the manipulations of the duke, following those of the duchess, result in the breakdown of another covenant of friendship as the result of madness.

The gentleman's revelation of the secret eventually travels to the ears of the duchess who, hearing from her husband that the gentleman has a love interest other than herself, becomes ill with jealousy. Evoking the fury of her earlier illness, she experiences an even greater state of agitation: "elle en print une malladye pire que la fiebvre" (M 1943, 410; 1999, 671). This jealousy continues into her interaction with the dame du Vergier at a large gathering at court, when her contribution to the ladies' conversation on love reveals that she is aware of the liaison. The dame du Vergier, realizing that her covenant of secrecy with the gentleman is broken, experiences her own illness, a "si grande foiblesse" (M 1943, 412; 1999, 674) that causes her to collapse in a chamber. Traveling from one character to the next, the contagion of jealousy leads to the dame du

Vergier's "extreme douleur" that she believes neither reason nor medicine can cure (M 1943, 413; 1999, 675). She eventually dies from grief, following what she believes to be the death of her love. Her changed features reveal a corpse-like state: "... et luy devint la couleur blesme, les levres bleues et les extremittez froides" (M 1943, 414; 1999, 676). Her symptoms of coldness and her blue color signal a disposition that is contrary to that of the duchess, whose features reveal a fiery passion. The encounter between these contrasting figures in the text results in an explosion in the narrative, illustrated by the series of deaths that ensue, from suicide on the part of the gentleman, who finds his "amye" dying from a betrayal of their covenant, to the murder of the duchess by the duke, informed of the details of their deaths by a chambermaid who has witnessed the events from her hiding space behind a curtain in the chamber. The series of deaths at the conclusion of the tale shows the path of madness, associated with the vengeful Furies, that destroys the lives of the players in Oisille's tale.

Oisille's concluding remarks to her tale warn against such extreme emotions, as she warns the ladies against placing too much affection in men. Her address to the ladies of the audience: "Voilà, mes dames" suggests that the presence of men in an "amitié" confounds love, while her comparison between love of men and an "amour ... tant enflammée en l'amour de Dieu" (M 1943, 418; 1999, 681, 682) suggests general fallacies in the human condition. Blame for the tragic events on the duchess is notably absent. This suspension of moral judgment indicates a preoccupation with examining love as an entity that is unpredictable, subject to contagion, and may be coerced to act in a manner contrary to the uplifting, edifying role that it has taken on in the *locus amœnus*. Both Parlamente and Longarine assent to Oisille's warning, Longarine stating: "c'est le

meilleur de n'aymer point" (M 1943, 418; 1999, 682). These suspicious attitudes toward love come from its mutability and its association the independent acts of phenomena in the natural world. The women who have reservations about these great passions inspired by love are women who have experienced the death of a husband, as in the cases of Oisille, "une dame vefve, de longue experience" (see Chapter I), and Longarine, a character who is widowed as the result of the great flooding of the prologue. Parlemente also has a certain amount of experience that contributes to her skeptical attitude toward the overwhelming passions love can inspire, being married to a man who is "[o]ne of the company's most forceful advocates for the pleasures of the flesh" (Davis 1978, 27). Oisille's rendering of *La Châtelaine de Vergi* reveals the way in which passionate love can amplify imperfections of the human condition.

Dagoucin reinstates love as the principle bond between individuals, even in its most passionate forms. Maintaining that love motivates individuals to honorable acts, a quality of passionate love that Phædrus emphasizes in the *Symposium*, he avers that even the hope of attaining such a strong love sustains individuals: "l'esperance les soustient et leur faict faire mille choses honorables jusques ad ce que la vieillesse change ces honnestes passions en autres paynes" (M 1943, 419; 1999, 682). His words recall his own valiant actions in the prologue, the moment at which he and Saffredent rescue Parlemente and Longarine from bandits and fight off Geburon's pursuers.³³⁸ Their passionate love in this way contributes to noble deeds, in the manner of Phædrus's description in the *Symposium*,³³⁹ appearing in the narrative as a constructive topos. Thus the youngest, most idealistic gentleman of the company gathered recalls classical notions of love to the older,

³³⁸ Dagoucin and Saffredent are these ladies' *serviteurs* (Davis 1978, 33-4).

³³⁹ Phædrus describes the manner in which passionate love inspires a lover to fight until death and states that an army of lovers is ideal (178e-179a,b).

wiser, and more experienced members. By articulating the faith he finds in passionate love, Dagoucin links earthly love to honor in the contexts of fealty, matrimony, and courtly love. He reveals himself to have benefited from edification in the *locus amœnus*, having grasped the wisdom of the significance of love within various manifestations of “amitié,” in its various appearances at different levels of narrative.

Saffredent and Hircan concede love’s powerful effects, approaching the topic within the context of matrimony. Countering Oisille’s remarks, they speak of the ill effects of excessive love for a woman, specifically one’s wife. Hircan even cites Scripture to show the way in which excessive love may overshadow civic duty: “... il n’est rien qui plus abbate le cueur d’un homme que de hanter ou trop aymer les femmes. Et, pour ceste occasion, defendoient les Hebrieux, que, l’année que l’homme estoit marié, il n’allast point à la guerre de paour que l’amour de sa femme ne le retirast des hazardz que l’on y doibt sercher” (M 1943, 419; 1999, 683). His skepticism toward an uxorious attitude causes him to interpret verse from Deuteronomy 24:5 as an indication of the obstacles such love poses to civic duty. The verse itself focuses on the first year of marriage as a period during which a husband should concentrate on domestic life, “When a man has recently taken a wife, he shall not go out to war, nor shall any public office be enjoined upon him. Instead, he shall be free at home without guilt, so that for one year he may rejoice with his wife.” Rather than seeing great love as a source for military prowess, as expressed in Phædrus’s speech, Hircan sees it as a hindrance for military performance.

Like Hircan, Saffredent focuses on the effects of conjugal relations on civic duty yet, in his satirical fashion, sees conjugal strife as a motivating factor in war: “il n’y a

rien qui face plutost sortir l'homme hors de sa maison, que d'estre marié, pource que la guerre de dehors n'est pas plus importable que celle de dedans, et croy que, pour donner envye aux hommes d'aller en pays estranges et ne se amuser en leurs fouyers, il les faudroit marier" (ibid). In this way, the folly of loving women contributes to the values set forth by fealty. From this perspective, matrimony contributes to the wellbeing of the state by driving men to war. Contradicting the encomiastic register of writings that praise love as a source for optimal military performance, as in Phædrus's speech in the *Symposium*, Saffredent upholds conjugal strife as a principal motivating force for performing the civic duty of war. In this way, the various effects of human love motivate individuals to sustain social structures.

III. THE NATURAL WORLD

The law of the Hebrews, to which Hircan and Saffredent refer in the frame-narrative of the *Heptaméron*, appears as a lead-in question to Panurge's conjugal dilemma in the *Tiers Livre*. When, in chapter VI, Panurge asks the reason for the law, Pantagruel links it to fecundity: "c'estoit affin que pour la premiere année ilz [les nouveaux mariés] jouissent de leurs amours à plaisir, vacassent à production de lignage et feissent provision de heritiers" (R 1994, 369; 1995, 77). This description incorporates spousal enjoyment of loves "à plaisir" into an explanation of the perpetuation of the species. Fulfillment of such love recalls nature as being the origin of appetite for pleasure. It also points to the role of human nature in contributing to family line. The "loy de Moses," as Pantagruel designates it,³⁴⁰ builds upon the "la loy de nature" for the purpose of abundance in procreation.

Panurge accepts Pantagruel's explanation, but inquires about the ability of newlywed husbands to participate in battle after a year of procreative efforts, having "tant esgoutté leurs vases spermaticques, qu'ilz en restoit tous effilez, tous evirez, et tous enervez et flatriz" (R 1994, 370; 1995, 79). These negative outcomes of the "loy de Moses" indicate contrary actions in nature that prevent the fulfillment of "la loy de nature" by those who enter into the matrimonial state. Panurge's focus on deficit rather than profit recalls his praise of debts and foreshadows a reversal of progress toward the goal of his quest.

The inconveniences of matrimony on which Panurge fixates would indeed stop men from entering into the conjugal union were it not for folly, as the orator of Erasmus'

³⁴⁰ Pantagruel refers to the same verses in Deut 20:5-7 as do Hircan and Saffredent.

Encomium moriæ indicates: “Come now, would any man ever submit to the halter of matrimony if he followed the usual method of these wisemen and first considered the drawbacks of that state of life?” (E 1979, 18-9). From this perspective, it is folly that motivates individuals to enter into the conjugal state and to continue the family line. Folly thus takes on a vital role in the perpetuation of the species, aligning herself with nature in its most functional, most orderly state. This signals the benefits of folly to Panurge, who seeks elucidation of the conjugal state.

The type of love that encourages Panurge in his conjugal pursuits is self-love, or *philautia*. The term *philautia*, derived from the Greek terms *philia* (love) and *autos* (self), appears in the text as both a hindrance to Panurge’s conjugal decision and as a companion to the folly that would encourage his entry into matrimony.³⁴¹ *Philautia* stands in contrast to the first principle of Christian ethics known as *agape*, a term that denotes “charitable love based on compassion and unselfish concern for the well-being of others.”³⁴² Indeed, *philautia* appears to contradict forms of *caritas* introduced by the narrative, such as the “pantagruélisme” that characterizes the harmonious atmosphere of Dipsodie under Pantagruel’s rule. At the same time, the inward projection of Panurge’s love follows the direction of self-knowledge to which he is pointed again and again in the text.

Whereas an Aristotelian perspective would attribute a reasoned amount of *philautia* to all relationships, it distinguishes two types, one commendatory and one

³⁴¹ *A Greek English Lexicon*, s.v.v. “φιλία” “αὐτός.”

³⁴² *Rabelais Encyclopedia*, s.v. “Agape.”; also see Leushuis’s description of *agape* in the Christian tradition as love that is directed toward community (2003, 27-30).

pejorative.³⁴³ The first type leads individuals to befriend themselves while the second leads to self-delusion. Pantagruel cautions Panurge against falling into the trap of deceptive self-love in chapter XXIX: “philautie et amour de soy vous deçoit” (R 1994, 444; 1995, 281).³⁴⁴ Panurge’s self-delusion, led by excessive self-love, encourages his anti-teleological quest in pursuit of a single answer to his binary question.³⁴⁵ At the same time, it leads him toward various forms of knowledge, ending with an enlightening encounter with a fool. The path along which *philautia* leads Panurge recalls the figure of Philautia in the *Encomium moriae*, who is described as a faithful companion to Folly being, as V. L. Saulnier notes, the first that is named and the one to whom she is particularly close (1957, 207). Panurge’s intimate relationship with *philautia* points to his participation in the wise-fool topos, a role that allows the narrative to participate in discourse on wisdom and folly in the larger literary corpus.

III.i Medical Discourse

“Yet markt I where the bolt of Cupid fell:
 It fell upon a little western flower,
 Before milk-white, now purple with love’s wound,
 And maidens call it love-in-idleness.”
 Shakespeare, *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*,
 II. I, 165-68

³⁴³ Aristotle describes these types of *philautia* (NE IX, viii); see Stern-Gillet on Aristotle’s description of these types of *philautia* (1995, 80).

³⁴⁴ Pantagruel points this out when he gathers together his experts (a theologian, doctor, lawyer, philosopher) in chapter XXIX.

³⁴⁵ Duval describes this dilemma (1997, 57) (see Chapter II).

Rondibilis advises Panurge after the latter has already been to see a poet, tutor, mantic, monk, and theologian. Building upon the discourse of the theologian, Hippothadée,³⁴⁶ Rondibilis uses his medical expertise to describe the ways that Panurge can temper “les poignans aiguillons de sensualité” (R 1994, 448; 1995, 295). Taking up Hippothadée’s references to natural law, Rondibilis develops Panurge’s query within a medical context. In this manner, the doctor applies systematized knowledge of the internal workings of nature to Panurge’s particular case. As Rondibilis describes cures for concupiscence, he places signs of Panurge’s condition in the context of anatomy. This medical examination illustrates an attempt to reveal Panurge’s constitution, which has been described as bearing classic traits of melancholia: “l’hydrophobie, la polyglossie, la tendance à la superstition et l’attirance pour le démoniaque.”³⁴⁷ These characteristics, along with psychological traits that are “anxieux, irrésolu, perplexe” and “prisonnier de ses angoisses,”³⁴⁸ reveal characteristics of literary figures in medieval epic narratives and philosophical texts of antiquity. At the same time, they point to the contemplative state of contemporary melancholic figures, such as Boccaccio’s narrator who relates the tales of the *brigata* in response to an unrequited love. Panurge’s love of pleasure, on the other hand, suggests a sanguine personality, while his aggressive behavior with Nazdecabre shows choleric tendencies. These various physical conditions, along with his anxieties over the phlegmatic conditions signaled by the enervated states of newlywed husbands, suggest an amalgamation of characteristics described in the medical corpus that constitute this chameleon figure.

³⁴⁶ Screech sees the consultations with Hippothadée and Rondibilis as complementary, (1958, 85).

³⁴⁷ Marrache-Gouraud describes the attributes that critics have given to Panurge, whom she describes as fundamentally enigmatic (2003, 11).

³⁴⁸ Ibid.

As Screech has remarked, the consultation with Rondibilis is farcical, with aspects that date back to Rabelais's days as a student in Montpellier.³⁴⁹ The treatment of marriage, a traditionally comic topic (Céard 1996, 132-3), also recalls debate among Rabelais's contemporaries over its ecclesiastic and legal status.³⁵⁰ With its focus on anatomy, the consultation with Rondibilis distances marriage from these domains. This physiological emphasis reflects the manner in which the absence of the paradigm of marriage liberates medical philosophy from the constraints of social convention, a theme that also comes up in the encounters with Nazdecabre and Triboullet, as the protagonists attempt to evade the constraints of language and rhetoric.³⁵¹ The encounter with Rondibilis imitates and satirizes authoritative texts while evoking serious medical disputes that were of considerable importance to Rabelais's contemporaries.³⁵² In this context, Rondibilis examines the wills and appetites of Panurge and alludes to those of his future wife. These are, in fact, similar, but while the motivating factor for Panurge seems to be self-love, for his future wife it seems to be instinct.

Describing the cures for Panurge's condition allows Rondibilis to illustrate the significance of recognizing causes in medicine. His manner of interpreting physical impulses from an anatomical perspective recalls Maclean's description of the role of semiology in medicine: "Semiology is the 'knowledge of all indications of a therapeutic method, discovered by rational doctors through their own mental resources (instrumenta),

³⁴⁹ Screech mentions Rabelais's participation in a performance of the *Farce of the Man Who Married a Dumb Wife* while he was a medical student (1958, 84-5).

³⁵⁰ This is indicated by the debates that resulted in decrees on marriage during the twenty-fourth session of the Council of Trent (1545-63).

³⁵¹ Maclean mentions the absence of the paradigm of marriage as a liberating force on medical philosophy (1980, 45). We will examine the encounters with Nazdecabre and Triboullet in the following two sections.

³⁵² Screech mentions the Council of Trent, for example (1958 92, n. 68).

for the sake of effecting a cure.”³⁵³ Signs may be self-evident or may point to sources that can be derived by methodological reasoning. In chapters XXXI – XXXIII, they show a manner of inquiring into various facets of Panurge’s physiological state for the purpose of explaining his behavior. Rondibilis gives therapeutic methods for treating concupiscence by speaking of its various sources. In describing the conditions and circumstances for continence, Rondibilis links Panurge’s conjugal dilemma to his humors and experience.

Rondibilis gives his exposé in two stages: the first is in his description of a cure for concupiscence (chapter XXXI), and the second is in his description of the nature of woman (chapters XXXII-XXXIII). While these descriptions inscribe medical discourse into the narrative, building upon prior texts and applying them to current circumstance, they also illustrate the role of anatomical discourse in textual representations of *phronesis*. In the first stage of his discourse, Rondibilis outlines five ways in which lust can be restrained, giving a “course” based on the authority of ancient Platonic writers (Screech 1958, 85). He offers five cures for concupiscence that can be placed under three rubrics: substances, activity, and the act itself. Rondibilis’s clinical approach to Panurge’s issue reveals his use of empirical knowledge in his treatment of patients. His use of classical figures to embody examples of medical treatments shows the way in which such figures create interpretive “lieux communs.”

Rondibilis’s description of the regulation of humors through substances suggests the contingency of human nature on individuals’ humoral composition. From this perspective, Panurge’s fixation on the baser forms of love can be counteracted by altering

³⁵³ Maclean refers to Emilio Campilongo’s writings on medicine (2002, 281); as late as Diderot’s *Encyclopédie*, Hippocrates is celebrated as the founding father of semiology (2002, 277).

the constituents of his bodily fluids. Such remedies for Panurge's bodily condition would temper his impulses, bringing him to a state of physiological equilibrium that would in turn cause his incessant futile questioning to desist. This could in turn lead to an elevation of Panurge's discourse from baser topics of cuckoldry to more elevated topics, such as the union of souls through marriage. Substances that contribute to the tempering of sensual impulses include wine, which, taken in great quantities, possesses anaphrodisiac qualities. As a substance that cools blood, large amounts of wine slackens the senses, dissipates semen, impairs movement, and leads to the enervated states of newlywed husbands that Panurge mentions, but omits the year of procreative efforts. These calming effects of wine are embodied by Bacchus, god of wine, in an emasculated form: "De fait vous voyez paint Bacchus, dieu des yvrognes, sans barbe, et en habit de femme, comme tout effœminé, comme eunuche et escouillé" (R 1994, 449; 1995, 295,7). Possessing characteristics of a eunuch, and appearing in the effeminate dress he wears in the tale of his flight from Juno,³⁵⁴ this representation of Bacchus embodies the cooling and numbing qualities of wine by illustrating a reversal of the virile tendencies with which Panurge seems to be stricken. This use of wine reponds to the uses of wine set forth in the prologue that attribute generative powers of wine to writing.

As Rondibilis progresses to the next stage of his discourse, he describes the ways in which physical activity can disperse sexual energy. As both a means of distraction and concentration of energy, physical activity can either replace or reduce sexual desire. The effects of these are both physiological, dispelling sexual energy, and psychological, causing individuals to be distracted from libidinous impulses. Rondibilis describes the

³⁵⁴ Céard's describes the source of this portrait of Bacchus (R 1995, 296 n. 5).

manner in which dispersal of sexual energy occurs by metabolizing sperm,³⁵⁵ through activities such as hunting, sports, and warfare. He thus attributes the virtue of continence to athletes, soldiers, and horsemen (an example given by Hippocrates). Recalling Pantagruel's description of "la loy de Moses" in chapter VI, which advises newlyweds against going to war, these activities appear as analogous to activities of warfare, possessing similar dampening effects on procreative efforts.

Such assiduous toil stands in contrast with idleness, a source of concupiscence and a trait with which Panurge is stricken, as illustrated in the opening chapters. His manner of eating his wheat in the blade rather than attending to his finances in an industrious manner carries over into his lethargic pursuit of self-knowledge through exterior words and signs. Rondibilis points out the manner in which such idleness could work to Panurge's advantage. The classical figures Rondibilis sets forth to illustrate idleness – Venus, Cupid – are traditionally associated with sensual love, *eros*. These figures are introduced in works such as Ovid's *Amores* as figures that flourish in indolent contexts and that draw individuals toward one another while causing them to abandon heroic pursuits, such as warfare. As described in the introductory verses of the *Amores*, when the narrator describes his thwarted efforts to write about the lofty subject of war (I i 1-4), individuals are subject to the vagaries of Cupid's bow at moments of diversion. When idle, the narrator asserts, they are reduced to "[dallying] in the slothful shade of Venus" while "tender Love is bringing to naught the lofty ventures I would make" (Ovid *Amores*, II xviii 3). Venus appears at various moments of Rondibilis's exposé, including the seated position in which she appears in a sculpture by Canachus, whose other figures appear in a standing position (R 1994, 450; 1995, 299). Panurge embodies such idleness,

³⁵⁵ The source for this idea is in Aristotle (R 1991 352 n. 3).

having shown no interest in going to war (as we see in chapter VI) and little interest in putting effort into a conjugal relationship past satisfying his own desires. In his idleness, he resembles the brooding women of Boccaccio's *Decameron* who, lacking the distractions of hunting and sports, remain stricken with the effects of love. In this light, Panurge's concupiscence seems to be a result of his lack of activity and idle nature.

Rondibilis's reference to activity expands to include mental activity, another means of tempering concupiscence. Like physical activity, rigorous study retards production of sperm, using up excess bodily spirits that would otherwise contribute to the propagation of the species. The physician describes the way in which reason interferes with physical productivity, in a manner analogous to the impediments of those who claim wisdom through encumbering knowledge, as well to those who congest the flow of information by the obscuring methods to which they revert (see above, as in III II I). Intellectual activity causes the blockage of semen which, according to Hippocrates, is generated from the brain and spinal column.³⁵⁶ Not only does fervent study obstruct the path of semen, but it also overtakes physiological impulses by creating out-of-body experiences: "De mode que en tel personnaige studieux vous voirez suspendues toutes les facultez naturelles : cesser tous sens exterieurs : brief, vous le jugerez n'estre en soy vivant, estre hors soy abstract par ecstase" (R 1994, 451; 1995, 301). This reference to Agrippa's *De occulta philosophia*³⁵⁷ gives excessive mental activity a role akin to the *mania* or *furor* that madness brings about,³⁵⁸ since it separates mind from body. Yet,

³⁵⁶ Céard describes classical sources for this medical view (R 1995, 302 n. 23).

³⁵⁷ Huchon describes sources in Agrippa (R 1994, 451 n. 2).

³⁵⁸ Duval describes the manner in which frenzy (*μανία*, *furor*) is necessary for communication with the divine in the *Phaedrus*, and the way in which Cicero's *De Divinatione* treats *furor* as one of two principal forms of natural divination (1997, 78); Screech describes Socratic *mania* in Plato via Erasmus (1980, 140); such madness arises in the encounter with Triboulet, which we will examine later.

rather than preparing the mind for inspiration by emptying it, thereby causing abandonment of the body to physical impulse, such mental activity saturates the brain, leaving the individual lethargic in body and unresponsive to external stimulus. The separation of mind from body resulting from prolific study suggests an escape from physiological form that would free an individual from bodily desires and, in the case of Panurge, quell his physiological impulses. Such an escape is signaled in the physician's exposé when he describes the manner in which Cupid himself is stalled by the Muses, his impulse to attack with his bow quelled as he is charmed by their contemplative presence. He is then driven to remove the bandage from his eyes and is subsequently lulled to sleep by their harmonies (R 1994, 451; 1995, 301). Fervent study thus reverses the libidinous effects propelled by Cupid's arrow.

Individuals who study excessively abandon their physiological forms in favor of becoming corpse-like entities that recall Socrates' description of the deathly state into which intellectual endeavors plunge individuals, as Rondibilis points out: "et direz que Socrates n'abusoit du terme, quand il disoit Philosophie n'estre aultre chose que meditation de mort" (ibid). Imitating the emptiness of the body at the moment of death, the abandonment of physical engagement in favor of mental activity eliminates impulsive behavior that leads to physical fulfillment of love. Panurge ironically puts this remedy into practice through his persistence of finding an answer to his conjugal questions, an effort that reveals the impotent effects of his rhetoric. His verbosity reflects the mental activity that interferes with the realization of his physical desires by causing him to deliberate extensively on the question of marriage.

Rondibilis's fifth solution to concupiscence is by engaging in the act itself. This cure, appearing in the context of medicine, sets forth the most self-explanatory solution to Panurge's problem. As a widely accepted cure for those who suffer from lovesickness (see above), "l'acte vénérien" is also an example of a cure that is identifiable with the disease.³⁵⁹ Panurge accepts this solution as the most viable, responding enthusiastically to Rondibilis's pronouncements of his fit constitution and physical readiness. The "maceration de la chair" that Rondibilis mentions consumes the flesh and keeps fleshly desires at bay by their periodic fulfillment. Coinciding with Hippothadée's Pauline recommendation of marrying in order to avoid burning with desire, Rondibilis's medical recommendation indicates the physical benefits of the procreative act.

Yet Rondibilis extends this image beyond moderate use, within the context of matrimony,³⁶⁰ to descriptions that emphasize the potency of this heightened physiological state. Speaking of vigorous uses of the flesh, Rondibilis gives examples of hermits of the Thebaïde who practice this method of quelling fleshly desires twenty-five to thirty times a day (R 1994, 452; 1995, 303). This allusion suggests applying remedies to concupiscence in proportion to the degree to which individuals are afflicted. The example of the hermits shows the dominating effects of impulses, one that Folly points out in the *Encomium moriæ*, "Moreover, he [Jupiter] limited reason to the head, leaving all the rest of the body to passion. Then he set up against solitary reason two most fierce tyrants, as it were: anger, which occupies the citadel and very fountainhead of life, the heart; and passionate desire, which holds wide sway over the rest, all the way down to the

³⁵⁹ Cave discusses the difficulties of such cases, which appear in the theme of concupiscence and dissemination expressed in the *Tiers Livre* and which he links to Plutarch and Erasmus' discussion of the difficulty of curing a flux of words by means of verbal medicine (1979, 194).

³⁶⁰ See Screech's commentary on the moderation of carnal desires within matrimony (1958, 69-71).

genitals.”³⁶¹ Relating the influence of physiological impulse over reason to the proportion of body to head, Folly indicates the leading role of the passions in individuals’ behavior. Individuals, lead by the folly of passion, the abandonment of reason, inevitably act upon these impulses. Recognizing that these tendencies could also be the case for Panurge, Rondibilis recommends marriage. His pronouncement of Panurge’s readiness for marriage concludes the first stage of his discourse, the “course” on restraints for lust.

As Panurge proceeds from the prior marriage question (“Me doibz je marier ou non?”) to the post marriage question (“Seray je point cocu?”), Rondibilis focuses on the notion of “woman.” His discussion changes from advice on tempering sexual impulses to examining causes for sexual excess, which appears in the example of the hermits of the he has mentioned. “Woman,” Rondibilis describes, is a creature driven to propagate. Her boundless sexual energy is explained simply by her physiognomy (Screech 1958, 95). Her natural tendency is to “courir l’aiguillette”³⁶² (R 1994, 454; 1995, 311), an accoutrement that Panurge lacks, considering the removal of his codpiece. Driven by an insatiable sexual appetite, Panurge’s spouse would, as implied in the title of the chapter,³⁶³ continue to pursue men at every opportunity. This tendency, almost instinctual, is an effect of woman’s particular anatomy and to its affect on woman’s humoral constituents. Woman’s humoral balance is related to her particular anatomy, which is distinct from that of man, suggesting activity specific to woman: “Car Nature leur a dedans le corps posé en lieu secret et intestin un animal, un membre, lequel n’est es

³⁶¹ Miller describes such a division of man’s faculties being Platonic and the popularization of this notion by Cicero (E 1979, 28 n.7).

³⁶² “L’aiguillette servait à attacher la braguette aux chausses. De là cette expression courante” (R 1995, 310, n. 10).

³⁶³ “Comment Rondibilis declare Coqüage estre naturellement des apennages de mariage” (R 1994, 52; 1995, 307).

hommes ... ” (R 1994, 453-4; 1995, 309). Describing this *animal avidum generandi* (Screech 1958, 94), Rondibilis attributes a “mouvement propre” to the uterus. Such autokinetic movement is the sign of a being that is animate in its own right, from an Aristotelian point of view.³⁶⁴ The uterus propels woman in her behavior as do animal instincts. The humors released from this organ, which is “tout nerveux, et de vif sentiment” has the effect of making “tous les sens raviz, toutes affections interinées, tous pensements confonduz” (R 1994, 454; 1995, 309, 11). Woman’s heightened senses stem from the potency of this organ, resulting in her elated senses and confused thoughts. These signs of folly are directly connected to her constitution, indicating the dominance of senses, of physiological impulse, of behavior directed by the body rather than the intellect or spirit. The humors released from the uterus become “salses, nitreuses, bauracineuses, acres, mordicantes, lancinantes, chatouillantes amerement” (R 1994, 454; 1995, 309), resulting in increased libido. The effect of salty humors on woman’s anatomy also affects her soul, exciting it to lust, as described by Galen, following Plato (Screech 1958, 93). Her dominant cold and moist humors and desire for completion by intercourse with the male contribute to her tendency toward propagation (Maclean 1980, 30). Women are thus governed by their sexual appetites, their actions being determined by their stance in the natural world.

Rondibilis introduces the cosmological figure of the moon to explain woman’s behavior. His comparison of woman to the moon echoes the cosmological analogy made by Hippothadée. Like the theologian, the physician draws an analogy between the relationship between the sun and the moon and the relationship between husband and

³⁶⁴ This idea is drawn from Aristotle’s *Physics*, VIII, 1-6 (R 1995, 310 n. 13); also see Maclean (2002, 246).

wife, but rather than show the way in which the behavior of one spouse reflects the behavior of another, he points out the unique behaviors of a wife of which the husband should be aware. The moon reflects woman's internal states. Its transitory nature reflects woman's instinctual movement. The numerous forms in which the moon appears reflects her dissemblance. The alternating appearances of the sun and the moon in the sky emphasize the distance between husbands and wives and their diametrically opposed natures. Internalizing these traits of the moon, woman's changing behavior and dissemblance reflect the various stages that the moon enters and mirrors its various appearances.

As in his course on cures for concupiscence, Rondibilis introduces a mythological figure that accompanies women in matrimony. Cuckoldry appears as a personified attribute of marriage, much as love appears personified in the *Amores*, or folly in the *Encomium moriæ*. This character, a "messer Coquage," takes on the role of a thwarted deity who incessantly intervenes in the affairs of married couples. Left out of a celebration of feast days, he constantly seeks out recognition, appearing at will in the course of daily domestic activities. A companion to "Déesse Jalousie," messer Coquage may be spurred on by the attitude of husbands (Screech 1958, 103). Rondibilis's cautionary words on over-vigilant husbands point out the opposite effect that their efforts bring about, producing a breach of the conjugal contract. This observation recalls prior writings that give similar advice, such as those of the narrator of the *Amores*, who speaks of wives goaded on to transgress the boundaries of matrimony by husbands who jealously guard their wives' movements: "Grant you have guarded well the body, the mind is untrue ; and no watch can be set o'er a woman's will ... Ah, trust to me, and cease to spur

on to fault by forbidding ; indulgence will be the apter way to win” (Ovid 1958, III IV 5-6, 11-12). Similarly, Rondibilis speaks of the sacrifices that belong to messer Coqüage, those of “soubson, defiance, malengroin, guet, recherche, et espies des mariz sus leurs femmes” (R 1994, 457; 1995, 317), suspicion, displays of mistrust that ironically pay homage to cuckoldry. Rondibilis implicitly advises taking on a more charitable attitude toward one’s wife, similar to the advice given by Ovid’s narrator. Woman’s will proves to be even more powerful than the most vigilant surveillance, pointing to impulses that seem innate. Even her thoughts seem to be dominated by these physiological preoccupations. This commentary on woman seems to be a commentary on the contrary aspects of human nature.

The appearance of messer Coqüage on the scene underscores the performative role of personified figures in the narrative that develop themes of *copia*. Independent forces of love and nature, as seen in the novellas of the *Heptaméron*, develop fragments of prior texts to which the narrative alludes. Bacchus’s appearance takes on a particularly significant role in representations of phronesis, as he is associated with abandonment of reason as well as a quelling of nervous tension, effects of the amaranthine substance that he offers. Occupying a curative antidote to sources of Panurge’s dilemma, Bacchus takes on the role of medical practitioner. His entry into the narrative during the consultation with Rondibilis reflects the way in which personified figures contribute to the cornucopian movement of the text.

Personified figures of abundance in the context of phronesis recall other figures associated with *eros*, figures that also produce effects on the narrative in both theme and form. Ovid’s Cupid changes his narrator’s composition from epic poetry to elegiac poetry

by stealing metric feet: “Arms, and the violent deeds of war, I was making ready to sound forth – in weighty numbers, with matter suited to the measure. The second verse was equal to the first – but Cupid, they say, with a laugh stole away one foot” (Ovid 1958, I i 1-4).³⁶⁵ Like Cupid, the personified figures in the narrative of Panurge’s quest alter its path, producing, through their various physiological references, an effect on the text that changes the course set forth by the two previous chronicles. In the same manner, Folly, accompanied by her personified companions, assumes fragments of text – from Platonic, Pauline, and other authoritative sources – and places them within her self-referential encomiastic discourse that suggests irony. Redirecting individuals from their reasoned paths, folly underscores impulsive behavior, emphasizing its performative role in the narrative and in this way rewriting text.

III.ii Reading Signs

“So too all the sacrifices and things over which the art of divination has control – that is, the intercourse that gods and mortals have with one another – concern nothing other than the preservation and cure of Love” Plato, *Symposium* 188b,c.

Panurge’s fixation on cuckoldry motivates him to seek advice, but ultimately stagnates his decision to marry. His obsession with finding an answer to his conjugal dilemma paradoxically keeps him from perpetuating his family line. What he does

³⁶⁵ This is a reference to couplets of elegiac poetry consisting of alternating hexameter and pentameter verse vs. the dactylic hexameter of epic poetry.

continue prolifically is the verbose expression of his preoccupations with pleasing himself, in contexts of castleship and marriage. Such expressions suggest his own will and appetites, his verbosity thereby contributing to figures of human nature in the text. Terence Cave has described the manner in which Panurge's verbosity curtails the sexual mythologies introduced in the opening chapters of the *Tiers Livre* (1979, 189). Referring to the image of the cornucopia, Cave contrasts the inexhaustibility of the text, alluded to in the prologue by the "Cornucopie de joyeuseté et raillerie" (R 1994, 352; 1995, 29), with the fall that is presaged by this symbol of abundance: "Dynamic productivity becomes an emptying-out, a flux, a repetition, in the post lapsarian world" (1979, 183). Panurge's sexual dissipation,³⁶⁶ following the utopian establishment of Dipsodie, appears as a metaphor in the praise and removal of his codpiece (chapters VII and VIII), and leads to an impasse on his decision to marry. His recourse to divinatory knowledge suggests an effort to regain original meaning through use of language and gesture in their original forms. Methods of interpretation that include abbreviated speech and extra-linguistic communication reveal the importance of recognizing obscure signs, which occurs through reading *in bonam partem*.

The encounters with Nazdecabre and Triboullet, the deaf-mute and the fool, emphasize the manner in which Panurge's fecundity asserts itself primarily at the lexical level, an aspect of the narrative illustrated by the protagonists' venture into the recovery of obscured meaning. As he turns his focus toward his own physiology, he directs his rhetorical energy into gestural forms of communication, focusing on signs inscribed on the body. The encounters with Nazdecabre and Triboullet, which take place in divinatory

³⁶⁶ Cave includes sex and economy under Panurge's doctrine of self-dissipation (1979, 191) (see Chapter II).

contexts,³⁶⁷ show Panurge's attempts to read the signs with the help of consultants whose discourse will not fall into previously established rhetorical patterns. These episodes focus on gesture, relating an abundance of signs inscribed on the body; these indicate above all a semiotic system of repetition and flux in the context of human nature.

The encounters with these characters occur at the advice of Pantagruel, who surprisingly seems to encourage his friend in his divinatory endeavors. He has previously shown skepticism for divinatory techniques, as illustrated in chapter X when he warns Panurge against placing too much faith in Homeric and Virgilian lots: "Je ne veulx toutesfois inferer que ce sort universellement soit infaillible, affin que ne y soyez abusé," (R 1994, 382; 1995, 113).³⁶⁸ As a process that is considered the most dangerous form of demoniacal wisdom,³⁶⁹ divination is at best a precarious method of attaining knowledge. At worst it is a "fornication of the soul," as Augustine describes it in the *De doctrina christiana*.³⁷⁰ This manner of attaining knowledge reveals the delusion and madness of those who seek information that they are unable to use appropriately.³⁷¹ These inappropriate pursuits of knowledge are described by Folly in the *Encomium moriæ*, who contrasts the vacuity of "word-jugglers" with the grace of "simple people of the golden age," who "had more reverence than to pry into the secrets of Nature with irreligious curiosity – to measure the stars, their motions and effects, to seek the causes of mysterious phenomena – for they considered it unlawful for mortals to seek knowledge beyond the limits of their lot."³⁷² While remaining prudent in his approach to divination,

³⁶⁷ Céard refers to the Triboulet encounter as divinatory (1996, 152-3).

³⁶⁸ Céard describes Pantagruel's skepticism toward divination, (1996, 151).

³⁶⁹ Céard refers to Cardano's *De sapientia*, Nuremberg 1543 (1996, 134).

³⁷⁰ Augustine describes the evils of divination (II xxiii xxxv, xxxvi).

³⁷¹ Augustine describes the folly of those who attempt to observe the stars in order to predict life's events (II xxii xxxiii).

³⁷² Folly refers to Cato's *disticha* 2.2.3 and the *Adages*, 569 (E 1979, 51).

Pantagruel offers Panurge methods of discourse that focus on signs based in physiology, a locus that is closer to the internal workings of nature in individuals. Bodily signs are anchored in everyday existence and imply an immediacy in discourse that can be contrasted with the distance between written symbols and their sources.

The manner in which these consultants set forth a contrast to Panurge's loquaciousness, using epigrammatic forms of communication, suggests reasons for Pantagruel's support of such divinatory techniques. In these episodes, Pantagruel not only suggests that Panurge consult with someone whose words are nonsensical but also suggests that he consult with someone who cannot speak at all. His intent, which he states in chapter XIX, is to sidestep the arbitrariness of language that might obscure meaning. In addition to speech, gesture comes in as a counterpoint to Panurge's lexical fixation, taking on a primary role in his exchange with a deaf-mute and a fool. This gestural means of communication is an aspect of language that Marie-Luce Demonet refers to as "somantique." Citing classical authors who have explained language from a socio-biological perspective (such as Vitruvius, Diodorus, and Epicurus),³⁷³ Demonet describes three sites of study for this " 'corporité' de la faculté langagière": comparison with animals, observation of deaf-mutes, and infantile language (1992, 487). Each of these comparisons appears in the Nazdecabre and Tribouillet episodes,³⁷⁴ the most obvious example being Nazdecabre himself. As a form of communication that functions by imitation and appropriation, gesture can convey meaning through voluntary movement that reflects the use of pantomime or involuntary movement that occurs in spontaneous and impulsive action. Each type of gesture takes on meaning in its immediate context.

³⁷³ Demonet discusses the recognition of the body in the origin of language and signs in her sixth chapter, entitled: "Somantique" (1992).

³⁷⁴ These appear in anecdotes that refer to Herodotus and Plato.

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“... cum conaremur [in triclinium] intrare,
exclamavit unus ex pueris, qui super hoc
officium erat positus, ‘Dextro pede.’ ”
Petronius, *Satyricon* 30 17-19.

The episode with Nazdecabre is the concluding episode of the divinatory consultations³⁷⁵ and the moment at which Pantagruel introduces the idea of interpretive difficulties tied to the obscurity of language. The emphasis on gesture in the episode displays an attempt to circumvent the obstacles of spoken language and its codified systems of expressing meaning. Chapters XIX and XX relate gesture to impulsive physical behavior and to the interpretive processes with which such behavior is associated. From this perspective, signs are related to internalized natural phenomena in individuals and reveal information in a manner similar to the way in which they reveal information in medical contexts. Gesture is posited as revealing “true” meaning, analogous to the position of impulsive behaviors and physiological changes that indicate individuals’ levels of prudence. Meanwhile, gesture is shown to enter into different registers, as does language, implying the importance of examining the surrounding factors of gestural exchange. The encounter between Nazdecabre and Panurge shows a range of interpretive practices linked to gesture, including the way in which conventional signs may be distinguished from signs that exist outside of convention. This eventually emphasizes the

³⁷⁵ Duval designates the divinatory consultations as the chapters on sortes Virgilianæ, dream interpretation, the encounter with the Sibylle de Panzoust, and the encounter with Nazdecabre, as illustrated in his diagram (1997, 108).

significance of context in approaching physiological signs, an aspect of reading *in bonam partem*.

The method of consulting with a deaf-mute explores the borders between conventional signs and natural signs, an issue that reflects Cratylid debates that were prominent during the Renaissance.³⁷⁶ These debates on whether language occurred by nature or convention open the discussion in chapter XIX of exploring the linguistic limits of expressing meaning. Pantagruel's partiality to language occurring by convention reflects the dominant view of language during the sixteenth century, as Céard notes (R 1995, 188 n. 6). The idea of sidestepping language as a step toward eliminating convention raises issues of reaching common interpretive ground through gesture. Gestures may have intentional purposes or may occur as instinctual reactions, as shown by the contrast between the first stage of the encounter with Nazdecabre, which consists mainly of abstract signs recreated by movements, and the final gestures of offensiveness and violence that provoke anger.

Pantagruel's suggestion that Panurge consult with a deaf-mute is not without precedent, as Céard notes, and stems from a tradition inspired by ideas on natural language. These ideas appear in certain methods of divination and in anecdotes drawn from authoritative texts.³⁷⁷ Pantagruel's argument against rhetoric recalls the *devisants'* goal in their storytelling, of avoiding the obscurities in language posed by rhetorical flourishes. Like the *devisants*, Pantagruel emphasizes inclusive forms of communication

³⁷⁶ The debates took up material in Plato's *Cratylus*, which relates the conversation held between Socrates and two other interlocutors, Cratylus and Hermogenes, on whether language occurs by nature or by convention.

³⁷⁷ Céard describes the attribution of divinatory powers to deaf-mutes as rare but not unheard of (R 1995, 188, n. 3). Anecdotes on the origins of language appear in the passage in references to the *Histories* of Herodotus and in the *Digest*, XLV, 1 (R 1995 188, n.5, n.7).

that reach the greatest number of individuals possible, in a Pauline manner.³⁷⁸ The inclusion of a wide range of consultants supports this inclusive approach to discourse. The focus on gesture brings up the issue of the degree to which gesture, based in physiology, is a demonstration of internalized natural phenomena. Linked to individuals' internal states, accurate interpretation of gesture suggests glimpses of the human condition in the way that a good reading of manifestations of nature provides glimpses of a larger natural order.

Another precedent for a gestural approach to meaning is found in chapter XIX of the second chronicle,³⁷⁹ in which Panurge and the English scholar Thaumaste argue by gesture rather than spoken language. The current chronicle builds upon their use of gesture to grasp at “matieres ... tant ardues” for which Thaumaste finds words to be an insufficient form of expression (R 1994, 282). His preference for gesture suggests deficiencies in human language when approaching lofty topics, which in turn indicate general limitations on the capacity of language to convey meaning. The point of view reflects an Augustinian stance on the role of words in expressing meaning, which contrasts imperfect forms of human communication with perfect divine expression.³⁸⁰ Thaumaste's attempt to recapture inherent meaning through the use of gesture appears again in the current chronicle. While this attitude posits physiological signs as a mechanism for escaping the constraints of rhetoric, it also points to certain interpretive drawbacks of somatic expression that are a result of imperfect human expression.

³⁷⁸ Helgeson discusses the relationship between the Nazdecabre and Thaumaste episodes and I Cor. 14:9-15, verses that describe the importance of language used for the purpose of ‘building up’ the church (*aedificatio*) (2008, 189).

³⁷⁹ For similarities between these episodes see Demonet (1992, 531); on the Thaumaste episode and pantomime see Demonet (1992, 275-82); also see Rigolot (1996, 48-54) and Helgeson (2008, 1).

³⁸⁰ This appears in Augustine's description of conventional signs in the DDC 2, particularly in 2.2.3.

One difficulty of communication through gesture comes from the confluence of different interpretive systems. While these various systems may contribute to interpretive ground reached through gesture, they also set forth potential obscurities in discourse resulting from the confusion of these systems. Both the Nazdecabre and Thaumaste episodes reveal gestures that belong to different interpretive systems, which Demonet describes as belonging to five categories: 1. intentional gestures that are “bi-interprétables” (able to be interpreted in more than one way, as representational or imitative, for example) 2. socially codified gestures 3. non-equivocal gestures (such as Panurge designating his codpiece) 4. reflexes (such as coughing) 5. grimaces and threatening gestures (1992, 534). The use of gesture in each episode bears certain semiotic similarities, though the context for their use differs. In the Thaumaste episode, the exchange takes place in a forum of debate, before a gathered audience, with Panurge trouncing Thaumaste and emerging victorious. The exchange between Panurge and Nazdecabre takes place before Pantagruel and several companions³⁸¹ and occurs as a result of Panurge’s search for information. The divinatory context of this encounter gives an oracular function to Nazdecabre’s gestures, allowing Pantagruel to attribute meaning to his involuntary movements (e.g. sneezing) in a manner similar to his reading of intentional gestures (hand signs). The less formal context of the Nazdecabre episode pushes further into the spontaneity that the text associates with intrinsic meaning.

In the preamble to the consultation with Nazdecabre, Pantagruel and Panurge discuss the origins of language and the obscurities into which language can fall. The contrast between views of language occurring through convention and language

³⁸¹ See chapter XIV when “Epistémon, Ponocrates, Eudémon, Carpalim et aultres” are gathered for Panurge’s dream interpretation (R 1994, 393; 1995, 143).

expressing intrinsic meaning takes up Cratylid debates, applies them to current circumstance, and eventually transfers them into the context of gesture. When discussing the limits of language, Pantagruel sets forth idea of words themselves obscuring meaning: “Maintes foys y ont faict erreur ceulx voyre qui estoient estimez fins et ingenieux, tant à cause des amphibologies, equivocques et obscuritez des motz, que la briefveté des sentences” (R 1994, 408; 1995, 187). Pointing out the misleading effects of oracular knowledge, whether occurring through writing or through spoken words, Pantagruel recalls the linguistic confusion that can result from interpretation out of context. Pantagruel proceeds to describe deficiencies in language that make it difficult for words to convey meaning. He points out the wide margin of error to which interpretation of spoken prophetic statements is subject due to the obscure nature of phrases that give information in riddles and occur out of context. His observation recalls Augustine’s warning against hasty or lazy interpretation of figurative speech in Scripture that lead to the substitution of one meaning for the other as a result of misinterpreting obscure or ambiguous terms.³⁸² The elimination of speech from communicative forms shows an attempt to counteract these fallacies in human interpretation. His introduction of Nazdecabre as a figure who will deliver pertinent information on Panurge’s conjugal future through kinetic signs emphasizes knowledge that is tied to immediate experience. The manifestation of signs on the body presents information whose relevance is conveyed through its immediacy. It also occurs in context, since gestures are connected to the body and performed in space.

³⁸² “But hasty and careless readers are led astray by many and manifold obscurities and ambiguities, substituting one meaning for another; and in some places they cannot hit upon even a fair interpretation” (DDC 2.4.7).

Panurge initially professes faith in uses of language to express intrinsic meaning. His idea suggests the goal of recovering hidden meaning through readings of Scripture, which reveals divine knowledge to charitable readers. His idea of an original language, common to all speakers, reflects Augustinian descriptions of Scripture originally being expressed in one language, before being disseminated through the world (DDC 2.5.6). Illustrating the idea of an original tongue, Panurge brings up an anecdote drawn from Herodotus's *Histories*, as he asks whether it is really necessary to avoid spoken discourse when seeking intrinsic meaning in language: "Vous doncques ne croyez ce qu'escript Herodote des deux enfans gardez dedans une case par le vouloir de Psammetic roy des Ægyptiens, et nourris en perpetuelle silence? les quelz après certain temps prononcerent ceste parolle *Becus*, laquelle en langue Phrygienne signifie pain?" Citing II, II of the *Histories*,³⁸³ Panurge suggests the existence of an innate language whose terms would take on "original," presumably more accurate meaning than the vernaculars that remain in common use. It further indicates the authority of a language that remains solely in script.³⁸⁴ The idea recalls the tale of Babel, though it assumes a secular character in the context of classical sources that predate the Bible.³⁸⁵ Suggesting a logocentric model of language, "according to which language is presumed to have a natural and, ultimately, a supernatural grounding" (Cave 1979, xvi), the tale of the Phrygian-speaking children, like the tale of Babel, points to a type of prelapsarian linguistic state. The textual figures that arise from these tales set forth notions of a search for higher meaning in linguistic signs, a recovery of meaning regarded as lost or exceedingly obscure. The idea that the Phrygian

³⁸³ Huchon notes that this is a popular reference in debates on natural language during the sixteenth century.

³⁸⁴ The Phrygian language was spoken from approximately the eighth century BCE to the fifth century CE. For proximity of Phrygian to Greek, see Plato's *Cratylus*. Neo-Phrygian used Greek script.

³⁸⁵ See Demonet on the secularization of natural language theory (1992, 518).

language would occur spontaneously, coming from a predetermined internal source, sets forth the idea of a “natural language” whose terms would not obscure meaning. This logocentric view, one that Floyd Gray describes as an essentially medieval perspective, adheres to the idea of words being the reflection of thought, of writing coinciding with meaning. Panurge’s affinity for a Cratyllic view of language indicates another turn in the narrative, as it stands in contrast to his use of rhetoric in the praise of debts, which obscures the original uses of love set forth in the writings of Ficino and Seneca (see Chapter II).

Pantagruel refutes entirely the logocentric model, instead echoing Hermogenes’ assertion of language occurring as a result of agreement upon meaning. This perspective emphasizes the uses of common interpretive ground. Setting forth notions of the arbitrariness of linguistic terms and the significance of semantic contexts, Pantagruel describes the uses of conventional forms of language: “Les languaiges sont par institutions arbitraires et convenances des peuples : les voix (comme disent les Dialecticiens) ne signifient naturellement, mais à plaisir” (R 1994, 409; 1995, 189).³⁸⁶ Evoking the Aristotelian idea of language occurring by convention,³⁸⁷ Pantagruel emphasizes uses of terms that occur “à plaisir,” that develop independently of a predetermined path. This basis for communication reflects the development of forms of communication through the accidents, absurdities, and etymological conditioning to

³⁸⁶ Céard describes “voix” as a reference to sounds being arbitrary, “à plaisir” as a reference to meaning agreed upon by convention, (1995, 188, n. 6). Rigolot observes that Pantagruel’s views on “languaiges arbitraires” are commonplace in medieval philosophy and are taken directly from Pierre d’Espagne (1976, 130).

³⁸⁷ This idea appears in the *Peri Hermeneias* (Demonet 1992, 284), (Helgeson 2008, 178).

which uses of language are subject.³⁸⁸ In this way, designated terms follow the impulsive paths of human nature.

Such issues carry over from linguistic contexts into domains of study. In the medical field, for example, experts rely on knowledge of terminology in order to accurately diagnose symptoms. Thus, Rondibilis spends the better part of his exposé giving a “course” on counteracting concupiscence and on describing the term “woman.” The issues surrounding terminology arise in sign interpretation, an aspect of medicine that concerns the acquisition of knowledge, as Maclean illustrates (2002, 105-6). Medical debates arise from differences over the role of words, whether they “should fit things as clothes fit the body,” as Cardano describes,³⁸⁹ or whether they should be grasped in their correct meaning in order to avoid error, according to Galen (*De complexionibus*) (Maclean 2002, 106).³⁹⁰ Diverse approaches to terminology, either finding a *mot juste* or seeking a type of universal referent for a term, bring up issues that interaction with Nazdecabre is meant to resolve. Seeking to recover a type of meaning lost with the Tower of Babel, this encounter illustrates the narrative’s foray into questions of the effects of language on meaning and the effects of these on text.

Pantagruel introduces gesture as a form of communication by juxtaposing it with spoken language. The idea of gesture transcending linguistic barriers is based on the notion of the preeminence of the physiological origins of language.³⁹¹ As “porte-parole de la Nature” (Demonet 1992, 275), bodily movements assume the medium of common

³⁸⁸ See Chapter II, which discusses how such uses of copia, as described by Cave (1979, xvii), contribute to discourse on economic themes in the *Tiers Livre*.

³⁸⁹ He describes this in the *Contradicentium medicorum libri duo*, 1565.

³⁹⁰ See Maclean on the relationship between things and names in a medical context (2002, 105).

³⁹¹ Demonet describes the notion of the preeminence of physiological signs, referring to articulation of ideas through gestures without using words; she relates movements, cries and interjections to animal communication, referring to Epicurus and Vitruvius (1992, 275).

ground in complex linguistic situations. The visual context of such encounters suggests a manner in which interpreters may bypass linguistic terms. While the idea of plural linguistic groups compounds the difficulty of negotiating terms, evoking Babylonian linguistic chaos, the use of gesture is set forth as a manner of resolving differences. Indeed, Pantagruel relates an anecdote of King Tyridates of Armenia who, having seen a farce-player perform at the theater in Rome, remarks upon his ability to understand him through his signs and gestures, even when speaking a foreign language. Selecting the farce-player as a departing gift from the Roman emperor, King Tyridates expresses an intention to use him as a liaison between himself and the various peoples of his linguistically disparate dominions. Pantagruel's anecdote brings up the significance of gesture as a particular way of communicating, one that occupies a special position within semiotic systems. As with the Thaumaste episode, the reference to King Tyridates' farce-player favors gesture over words as a vehicle for discussion, thereby granting gesture a significant place within oratory.

This manner of communicating suggests pantomime, the use of gesture to evoke ideas by imitating form and movement.³⁹² This theatrical form of communication suggests speaking to a large audience through the medium of gesture. In the context of Pantagruel's anecdote, gesture assumes a position that transcends the divisive aspects of different vocal locutions. While giving the illusion of naturalness and universality pantomime, does, however, have its own codes (Demonet 1992, 533). As a performative practice, it mimics gestures that already have conventional meanings or, alternatively, it copies visual images. The process of miming to communicate relatively complex

³⁹² Late sixteenth century uses of the term pantomime (*pantomimus*) would indicate actors using mime in theater.

thoughts resembles the act of articulating medical conditions in that each “completes what nature cannot bring to a finish, and apes her” (Porzio in Maclean 2002, 246). As pantomime becomes more and more stylized, it becomes an art in itself, possessing characteristics akin to rhetorical flourishes. Pantomime reveals how exaggerated or repetitive uses of gesture enter into codified systems of communication. Though the farce-players movements hold clear meaning for King Tyridates, they are not the focus of his performance, instead accompanying his spoken words. A focus on gesture, along with an elimination of spoken discourse, illustrates the manner in which individuals build on form and movement for the purpose of communication and the way in which such movements adapt and change according to context.

The issue of physiology itself interfering with uses of gesture comes up in Panurge’s rejection of the idea of consulting with a woman. In this case, woman’s nature would obstruct communication through gestural signs, as her immediate response to gestures performed by a man would be guided by her sexually biased impulses. Woman’s sexual biases affect both the vehicle of interpretation – woman – and the interpreter, as Panurge points out in the two objections that he raises to consulting with a woman.³⁹³ His first objection is that a woman would interpret every gesture as a venereal sign: “Car la femme penseroit tous nos signes estre signes Veneriens” (R 1994, 410; 1995, 191) while the other is that women would inspire venereal thoughts in men through their own folly: “Ou si signes aulcuns nous faisoient responsifz à nos propositions, ilz seroient tant follastres et ridicules que nous mesmes estimerons leurs pensemens estre Venereicques” (R 1994, 410; 1995, 193). Citing anecdotes from Antonio de Guevara and Erasmus,

³⁹³ Céard describes how the first example illustrates signs not being univocal and that the second example shows univocal interpretation on the part of the interpreter (R 1995, 190, n. 10, 192, n.12)

Panurge illustrates the peculiarities of female logic that are guided by her fixation on sensual pleasure. Panurge's objection to a having female consultant foreshadows the difficulties he experiences with Nazdecabre as a result of his own fixation on cuckoldry. This sets forth the possible obstructions that anatomy and humors pose to interpretation.

The characters' approach to Nazdecabre addresses gesture as a mechanism for elucidating the obscurities of spoken language. As the consultation proceeds, gesture enters into different registers, reflecting the various registers of language that are signaled by the narrative. Panurge and Nazdecabre's interaction begins in a deliberative mode, progresses to involuntary movement, and ends with spontaneous emotional responses. The exchange can be broken into two segments, the first focusing on issues of reading intentional signs and the second focusing on immediate responses to spontaneous gestures. The different stages of this consultation indicate the depth of origins of gesture and the variety of systems upon which gesture relies. The contrast between deliberate and spontaneous gestures points to similar attributes of spoken languages and reveals the interpretive issues posed by overlapping systems of communication.

Two of Panurge's gestures show a literal overlapping of such systems, as he yawns and then traces over his yawn the Greek letter *tau*. These reveal his gestures as both an expression of his internal state and as a medium for the inscription of signs. His yawn suggests a reflex related to a state of fatigue but, from the point of view of pantomime, is also an easily imitated gesture. The tracing of the letter *tau* shows imitation of written symbols, which also points to the use of pantomime. Panurge's imitation of writing recalls Augustinian descriptions of human attempts to capture utterances, which fade away with sound, by the written symbols that make spoken words

visible to the eye: “But because words pass away as soon as they strike upon the air, and last no longer than their sound, men have by means of letters formed signs of words. Thus the sounds of the voice are made visible to the eye, not of course as sounds, but by means of certain signs.” (DDC 2.4.5). Panurge’s transcription of writing into another medium that only lasts as long as it is performed points to movement as a mediating vehicle between signs and meaning. Making simultaneous use of the visual medium of writing and the immediacy of utterances, he constructs an interpretive site that includes various registers of gesture. The insertion of his yawn into codified gestures reflects the development of a lexicon for medical discourse, which seeks to record and make sense of various physiological phenomena. This reveals the manner in which interpretation is applied to phenomena that seem intrinsic to the human condition.

Nazdecabre’s gestures resemble those of Panurge, as he likewise uses a series of hand gestures that are accompanied by a physiological reflex when he sneezes in the midst of his performance. Pantagruel’s interpretation of the sneeze as an oracular expression of higher knowledge goes beyond the context of physiology to reflect the effects of external phenomena. Interpreting the sneeze as a sign of “le dæmon Socraticque” (R 1994, 413; 1995, 199, 201), Pantagruel resets the sneeze as an expression of supernatural intervention. This grants it symbolic status, one that refers to Socrates’ description of beings that accompany individuals and whose voices are heard through sneezing (R 1994, 413 n. 7). Taking on the role of an oracle, the sneeze suggests the channeling of information through a bodily vessel from an exterior, often supernatural entity. This interpretive approach signals a similar approach to the fool in chapters XLV-

XLVI. In this way, the body becomes a locus for external meaning, thereby expanding its use of different interpretive systems.

The second segment of the encounter presents signs that become less and less abstract, approaching the intended direct path to meaning that Pantagruel introduces with the anecdote of King Tyridates. This development reflects a progression from partial knowledge to a clear understanding of meaning, suggesting Pauline descriptions of charitable paths to knowledge and the illuminated moments of revelation in scripture to which St. Paul refers.³⁹⁴ Such moments of illumination appear, however, at undignified moments of the passage, suggesting the limited capacity of individuals' uses of such knowledge. These limitations recall Augustinian warnings against divination, even when accurate information is revealed.³⁹⁵ The clarity of Panurge's gestures in the second segment is introduced by the narrator's comparison of Panurge's eyelid, jaw and tongue movements to those of a monkey and a rabbit. As recognizable signs of observed phenomena in the natural world, they suggest a continuity of meaning in imitative gestures linked to environment.

Examples of immediate meaning taken on by gestures extend to the use of gestures that are offensive or violent. The escalation of the exchange into a provocative register occurs as a result of perceived threats on the part of Panurge. These are both physical – Nazdecabre's fingers come dangerously close to his eyes – and symbolic – the form of the fingers resembles horns, a symbol of cuckoldry. Nazdecabre's gesture of placing his outstretched index and small finger onto Panurge's navel and walking these

³⁹⁴ Descriptions of glimpses into higher meaning through charitable approaches to discourse appear in I Cor 13.

³⁹⁵ Augustine discusses the way in which individuals who follow superstitious observances whose predictions of events are accurate become ensnared by such methods and continue along a "labyrinth of most pernicious error" (DDC 2.23.35).

toward his eyes causes an indignant Panurge to yell insults and make an obscene gesture at his consultant, “luy faisant la petarrade” (R 1994, 414; 1995, 203), which includes a rude noise. Nazdecabre, of course, cannot hear any of the noises Panurge makes, as Frere Jan points out, which causes Panurge to raise his fist to strike Nazdecabre, only stopping out of respect for Pantagruel. Panurge’s spontaneous emotional responses signal clear meanings to his audience, which is illustrated by Pantagruel’s response to Panurge.

Pantagruel’s remark following Panurge’s gesture reminds him of this disparity: “Si les signes vous faschent, ô quant vous fascheront les choses signifiées” (R 1994, 415; 1995, 203). His distinction between signs and meaning reinstates ideas on the arbitrary nature of signs into discourse on gesture. Gestures may reveal human conditions, as with Panurge’s display of anger, or they may take on a representational function, as with his animal movements. They may further symbolize abstract ideas, as with Panurge’s imitation of writing. The meaning of Panurge’s gestures, which may be clear for his audience, might not be clear to his consultant. These interpretive difficulties that the text offers are compounded by the inability of the interpretive audience to know the meaning that these signs take on for Nazdecabre himself, as he is deaf and dumb by birth (Rigolot 1996, 49). The narrator alludes to this discrepancy when he describes the moments at which Nazdecabre continues to make gestures despite Panurge’s shouting, oscillating his horn sign on Panurge’s face, even as Panurge threatens him, and jumping in front of him to make more gestures with his hands and arms as Panurge attempts to take leave of him. These interpretive discrepancies emphasize the correlation between signs and the context in which they occur. When removed from context, these signs take on different meaning or fall into obscurity.

Panurge's violent gesture illustrates the original use of pantomime that Pantagruel sets forth with the anecdote of King Tyridates' use of a farce-player as a figure who transcends linguistic difference. Although his fist does not reach Nazdecabre, his meaning is clear, reinforced by his shouting and by the repetition of the term "fasché" three times in the passage to describe Panurge's words and actions.³⁹⁶ In the context of this episode, Nazdecabre acts as a figure that raises issues associated with divination through gesture. He provokes different uses of gesture in the manner of demons who, aping the divine, embody a confused conglomeration of utterances when they have not abandoned speech altogether: "De fait, comme Dieu a frappé de mutité, mais peut aussi communiquer le don des langues, les démons, qui sont singes de Dieu, sont parfois muets et parfois capables de provoquer la polyglottie ou la glossolalie" (Céard 1996, 142). These demons are capable of provoking cacophonous speech that recalls a post lapsarian splintering of languages. As with Panurge's imitation of flatulence that falls on deaf ears, this speech reflects the emptiness of this type of communication, the empty repetition of *loquacitas*.³⁹⁷ Demonic aping of divine knowledge may bring to mind oracular insight, but fails to use such information constructively, recalling Augustinian warnings of uses of divination (see above).

The Nazdecabre sequence raises issues of language and writing through an examination of gesture, which is recorded in the text for the chronicle's literary audience. This record of gesture illustrates concerns with textual *mimesis*, a Renaissance

³⁹⁶ These include the moment at which Panurge draws back from Nazdcabre's fingers: "À tant, Panurge se fascha, et taschoit se defaire retirer du Mut," the moment Panurge responds threateningly to Nazdecabre: "Par Dieu, maistre fol, vous serez battu si ne me laissez, si plus me faschez, vous aurez de ma main un Masque sus vostre paillard visaige," and the moment at which Panurge raises his fist to strike Nazdecabre: "Panurge de ce fasché leva le poing pour frapper le Mut" (R 1994, 414; 1995, 203).

³⁹⁷ See Cave's description of attempts at *copia* falling into *loquacitas* (1979, 5).

preoccupation of major concern for humanist pedagogy, as Gray remarks, that engaged humanists to such an extent that it tended to dominate the discipline (2004, 7). The Nazdecabre episode acts out this concern for *mimesis*, its imitative aspect – that is, individuals using gestural exchange to imitate conversation – evoking debates on the origins of meaning in language. The literal references to imitation in the text, pointed out by the narrator (e.g.: similarities to animal movements), take on burlesque characteristics, underscoring the trajectory of the narrative suggested in Pantagruel’s anecdote of King Tyridates. The absurdity of the proposition of divination through signs increases through the farcical representation of gesture in the text, its comedic aspect granting the audience perspective on language debates.

On the other hand, such a relationship to gesture sets forth a model for linguistic structures within which writing may improvise. As with texts from antiquity, which provide a model for Renaissance examples of improvisational writing, the narrative model introduced by the Nazdecabre sequence shows structural linguistic models within which meaning can expand. As gesture diverges from its intended use, so does language deviate from meanings that it attempts to convey. The relationship between gesture and writing surfaces in the text with the abstract movements that seem to take on meaning for Nazdecabre and Panurge. The representational aspect of the episode through writing extends the idea of recording and systematizing gestural signs, signaled in the Thaumaste episode: “Au regard de l’exposition des propositions mises par Thaumaste, et significations des signes desquelz ils userent en disputant, je vous les exposeroyz selon la relation d’entre eulx mesmes” (R 1994, 291). The narrator expresses a desire to write an additional piece on the gestures that appear in the Thaumaste debate, thereby signaling a

desire to clarify the meanings attached to these gestures. This desire to develop what he has mimetically recorded expands the text, fulfilling figures of *copia*, while also stepping away from the immediacy expressed by the use of gesture. This distancing from the physiological distinctness of gesture through its mimetic recording in writing suggests the distancing that comes out in the encounter with Nazdecabre (as with symptomatic gestures from the bodily states that they normally express). The narrator's wish reflects the implied desire of the interlocutor Thaumaste, who has already set out to record his own debate: "mais l'on m'a dict que Thaumaste en feist un grand livre imprimé à Londres, auquel il declare tout sans rien laisser : par ce je m'en deporte pour le present" (ibid). The narrator's reference to the interlocutor in the debate signals deference to the sources of these signs. The narrator's record of the Nazdecabre episode picks up this desire to record the pantomime that takes place in the second chronicle, acting as an extension of the recording of signs in the Thaumaste debate. Rather than providing the literary audience with a lexicon associated with gesture, the narrator raises polemics on meaning attached to somatic aspects of language. This underscores the performative aspect of the text central to representations of *copia*.

*

"A motley fool; a miserable world!"
Shakespeare,
As You Like It II.vii.13.

"denique inspicere, tamquam in
speculum, in uitas omnium iubeo atque
ex aliis sumere exemplum sibi"
Terence, *Adelphæ* III.iii.414-16.

Triboulet is the last person Panurge goes to for advice, a significant position in a work that is itself an encomium to folly, as V. L. Saulnier and François Rigolot have noted (1957, 65; 1996, 162). As a consultant who will not rely on learned texts or eloquence in order to communicate, his gestures and words remain untouched by rhetoric. But, as Pantagruel remarks, like a company of “jongleurs” who perform for the public, the greatest fool is represented by the most talented individual (R 1994, 468; 1995, 351). In the same manner Triboulet, by his foolish disposition, is presented as Panurge’s optimal consultant. Possessed by madness, he appears as a figure who is able to convey higher sources of knowledge, in the manner of Platonic, Ciceronian, and Pauline tradition. Embodying the qualities of Erasmus’ Folly, Triboulet’s behavior suggests physiological, gestural, and linguistic sincerity that upholds charitable approaches to discourse.

The figure of the fool takes a prominent position in the narrative, not only as the culmination of the consultations, but as the consultant to whom Panurge reacts positively and who causes Panurge’s quest to change course.³⁹⁸ Indeed, Triboulet and Panurge each show behaviors traditionally ascribed to fools, placing them on common ground. Scriptural representations of the behaviors of a fool include the raising of the voice while laughing, a peculiar manner of lending money, and inopportune speaking.³⁹⁹ Both Triboulet’s nonsensical phrase and Panurge’s peculiar relationship to debt reflect such foolish attributes. In addition to these characteristics, Scriptural references to folly include the idea of being senseless, mindless, and lacking intelligence, while also appearing in the Corinthian Epistles as a rich concept with at least three shades of

³⁹⁸ His interpretation of Triboulet’s gestures with the wine bottle inspires his search for the Dive Bouteille, the theme of the fourth chronicle.

³⁹⁹ The ISBE finds this approach to fools in the Apocrypha (s.v. “Fool; Foolish(ly); Folly.”).

meaning that point to its value in attaining Christian charity.⁴⁰⁰ The abandonment of worldly wisdom, which seems foolish to those outside the Christian community, illustrates a type of folly that leads individuals along a divine path and that allows them to be filled with the revelatory spirit of the gospel. In a similar manner, Triboulet's abandonment of rhetorical conventions, his nonsensical phrase, and his abrupt actions suggest revelatory manifestations of intrinsic meaning in his speech and behavior.

The spontaneity of Triboulet's responses suggests the instinctual, symptomatic behaviors characteristic of the human condition. His spontaneous phrase reflects Folly's own extemporaneous speech in the *Encomium moriæ*. Folly herself describes the proximity to nature that is characteristic of fools: "Now the simple people of the golden age, who were not armed with any formal learning, lived their lives completely under the guidance of natural impulses" (E 1979, 50-1). These natural impulses evoke images of a prelapsarian state, characterized by facility of communication, made possible by harmonious relationships guided by nature. In contrast to learned individuals, whom Folly designates as "word-jugglers" (see above), Triboulet's discourse remains unclouded by the rhetorical flourishes that would obscure meaning. In this way, Triboulet evokes a proximity to nature that lends authenticity to his words and gestures. Triboulet conveys meaning in the most direct sense, through his impulsive reactions to Panurge's questioning. Triboulet's impulsive actions and phrase evoke an immediacy that suggests a direct path to pure expressions of meaning.

⁴⁰⁰ The ISBE describes uses of the term *moria* to indicate the folly of following the gospel and of Christ dying for people's sins (s.v. "Fool; Foolish(ly); Folly").

Pantagruel broaches the subject of seeing a fool in chapter XXXVII, several chapters before the encounter⁴⁰¹: “J’ay souvent ouy en proverbe vulgaire, Qu’un fol enseigne bien un saige” (R 1994, 468; 1995, 349). A common Greek proverb, this citation also evokes the topos of wisdom and folly that appears throughout Scripture, notably in I Cor 3:18 (see above). This topos appears in Folly’s observation: “Often a foolish man says something to the point,” as she refers to earlier writings in the *Adages* 501 and Gellius NA 2.6.9 (E 1979, 138). The same idea appears in the evangelical strain in other works contemporary with the *Tiers Livre*, such as the farcical *Trop Prou Peu Moins* of Marguerite de Navarre (Saulnier 1957, 66). Triboulet’s unadulterated language, his spontaneous movements, and his nonsequential actions illustrate ideas that are not filtered through the conventions of acquired language and gesture. Embodying Panurge’s proverbial expression, Triboulet fulfills the role of rewriting fragments of old texts that is promised in the prologue. The wise-fool topos that the text follows culminates in the encounter with Triboulet, bringing to fruition the various images of *copia* suggested by the intrigue and the cornucopian form that the chronicle takes on.

In addition to Triboulet’s significant performance in the narrative’s wise-fool topos, the character’s very name conjures up images of a fool. The name possesses both historical and lexical associations that affirm the character’s qualities of foolishness, recalling François I’s court jester, Triboulet,⁴⁰² and evoking Randle Cotgrave’s definition of a fool: “ ‘a slovenlie fellow, one that usually wears his hose ungartered, and shooes

⁴⁰¹ Céard describes the encounters with Bridoye and Triboulet as intertwined, occurring almost simultaneously, with one interrupting the other (1996, 147-55); see Duval on the way in which the interruption of the Triboulet episode by the encounter with Bridoye is symmetrical to the interruption of the Raminagrobis episode in the triptych formed by the consultations with Raminagrobis, Epistemon, Her Trippa, and Frere Jan (1997, 114; 133-4).

⁴⁰² See Frame (R 1991, 369 n. 1), Saulnier (1957, 185), and Duval (1997, 78).

untied’ and more generally ‘any fop, cokes, ridiculous ninniehammer, or laughing-stocke’ ” (in Duval 1997, 78). Indeed, Triboulet’s name is the basis for the lexicon that Pantagrue and Panurge build when they blazon him in chapter XXXVIII. The abundant terms they use to describe Triboulet recall Folly’s description of her own uses in the *Encomium moriæ*.⁴⁰³ Such lexical productivity further responds to other moments in the narrative that show a proliferation of activity and language, such as actions of Diogenes with his barrel in the prologue and the reference to the sexual mythologies of Dipsodie in the opening chapters.⁴⁰⁴ The blazoning of Triboulet indicates his varied qualities, pointing to the shades of meaning that folly takes on in the narrative. This blazoning, in the manner of the *Encomium moriæ*, breaks out of its genre, its form of inventory borrowing from dialogue and poetry and taking on dynamic forms, which contrast with the static nature of lists (Marrache-Gouraud 2003, 100). In this way, Pantagrue’s “Morosophe,” his wise fool (1994, 493; 1995, 423),⁴⁰⁵ takes on the role of counsel by appropriating folly into action.

The consultation with Triboulet consists of a series of disconnected actions and a single nonsensical phrase. First, Triboulet accepts Panurge’s gifts, including an empty bladder filled with dried peas, a gilded wooden sword,⁴⁰⁶ and a bottle of wine. Triboulet finishes off the wine, hands Panurge back the bottle and, while Panurge is beginning to describe his dilemma, cuts him off with a great punch between the shoulders. He

⁴⁰³ Rigolot mentions that Rabelais has obviously borrowed this paradoxical development from his “maître Érasme” (1996, 163).

⁴⁰⁴ Rigolot describes the episode of Triboulet as a response to the episode of Diogenes (1996, 163); Cave describes the extraordinary fecundity of the Utopians illustrated in Chapter I of the *Tiers Livre* (1979, 189).

⁴⁰⁵ See Huchon on origins of the term (R 1994, 493 n. 1); see Miller and Blum for uses of “morosophous” to designate perfect fools wanting to pass for sages, after Lucian’s “morosophoi,” (μοροσοφος (English translation, “foolosophers,” French “morosophe,” each having elements of “sophomore”) (E 1979, 13; 1992, 13); this also recalls the figures in N26.

⁴⁰⁶ These objects are traditionally held by fools (R 1994, 490 n. 4).

continues to assault Panurge by flicking his nose with the bladder and, shaking his head violently, utters the phrase: “Par Dieu, Dieu, fol enraigé, guare moine, cornemuse de Buzançay” (R 1994, 491; 1995, 417). When Panurge continues to press him further on the subject, Triboulet attempts to strike him with the sword. Triboulet’s response leaves Panurge undeterred, as the latter proceeds with his agile discourse, in the meantime pronouncing Pantagruel a fool.

Panurge’s statement signals a conflation of wise and foolish figures in the text, introduced by Pantagruel’s “morosophe.” During this consultation, the well-behaved and composed figure of Pantagruel shows characteristics of Panurge’s verbose excitement and Panurge shows signs of “pantagruélisme” in his generous treatment of Triboulet. Pantagruel’s detailed interpretation of Triboulet’s words and actions draw from different interpretive systems, as he presents a conglomeration of classical and Scriptural references along with historical and mythological examples that point to Panurge’s impending cuckoldry. Panurge, meanwhile, attributes intimate knowledge of himself to Triboulet: “Le veridicque Triboulet bien a cogneu mon naturel, et mes internes affections” (ibid). Designating him as a purveyor of accurate information, he interprets Triboulet’s words in the best manner, inferring a happy outcome to his marriage. In addition, he happily accepts being punched and flicked on the nose, excusing these actions as those of a fool and thereby recalling the way in which Scripture suggests the excusal of certain behavioral patterns of fools, such as those listed above.⁴⁰⁷ Unlike his violent rejection of Nazdecabre’s invasive gestures, Panurge shows a favorable inclination toward Triboulet, even when Triboulet actually strikes him. Sending

⁴⁰⁷ The idea comes from passages in the Apocrypha. Examples of such behaviors are listed above. (ISBE, s.v. Fool: Foolish(ly); Folly).

Triboulet away with more gifts of appreciation, he acknowledges the fool as his optimal consultant and interprets his words and actions as having the best possible meaning.

Panurge has already shown an affinity toward Triboulet in chapter XXXVII when, in a state of reverie, he is seen wagging his head: “en maintien de un resveur, ravassant et dodelinant de la teste” (R 1994, 467; 1995, 349). Panurge’s movement signals the head shaking that distinguishes Triboulet as a vessel of higher forms of knowledge. It further suggests his predisposal toward the type of counsel a fool would provide, the emptiness that would benefit him and the consequent elimination of the cumbersome repetition of terms and stipulations that come from the counsel of experts. When they meet Triboulet in chapter XLV, Pantagruel points out Triboulet’s head vacillations as a sign of his prophetic ability: “Avez vous consideré, comment sa teste s’est avant qu’il ouvrist la bouche pour parler, croulée et esbranlée? Par la doctrine des antiques Philosophes, par les ceremonies des Mages, et observations des Jurisconsultes povez juger que ce mouvement estoit suscitè à la venue et inspiration de l’esprit fatidicque?” (R 1994, 491; 1995, 417). As a figure whose involuntary actions reach higher forms of knowledge, Triboulet’s physiological state indicates the pathological alteration of a fool’s mental faculties that makes him receptive to oracles. Showing Triboulet’s predisposition to receive oracular knowledge, “l’esprit fatidicque” enters easily into his empty brain, causing the head tremors that occur when he utters his phrase. Triboulet thus reveals his prophetic role within the context of Panurge’s quest, while his shaking suggests the proliferation of figures that the text offers throughout the narrative. His single phrase, able to provoke prolific commentary, motivates the protagonists to pursue the central quest of the narrative. In this light, Triboulet’s movements suggest the motivating role of

human nature as he illustrates the manner in which the prophetic spirit, in accordance with nature, acts upon him, determining his words and gestures, and catalyzing his interlocutors' speech.

Signs of divine insight through shaking become part of prophetic tradition, as Pantagruel points out. Its inscription within prophetic tradition acts in a manner similar to the recording of physiological signs in the medical corpus. Figures such as the *mænads*, frenzied diviners, shake their heads, while others, such as the Emperor Heliogabalus, voluntarily shake their heads in order to cultivate a prophetic reputation. Still others, such as the Pythian prophetess, project the motion of shaking onto objects such as laurel leaves. The tradition of shaking even affects nomenclature, as in the case of Cybele, whom Pantagruel associates with the Greek term *kubistai*, which he associates with “rouer, tortre, bransler la teste, et faire le torti colli.”⁴⁰⁸ While shaking stands on its own as a sign of the prophetic spirit, its use as a sign suggests its potential incorporation into the deliberate gestures of pantomime. Both manifestations take on mimetic roles that resemble communication through kinetic signs, as illustrated in the encounter with Nazdecabre. The distinction between voluntary and involuntary shaking poses the question of the origins of prophetic ability, bringing up similar issues to those raised in the encounter with Nazdecabre. As in the encounter with the deaf-mute, the encounter with Triboulet points out the superposition of different interpretive systems. It also points to the abstraction of physiological signs, as shown by the projection of shaking onto inanimate objects. In a similar vein, the narrative projects signs onto different contexts, as it incorporates authoritative references into the encounter with the fool.

⁴⁰⁸ Céard and Huchon describe origins of the term and the way in which R uses the term (R 1994, 492; 1995, 419).

In addition to reflecting approaches to physiological conditions in the medical corpus, Triboulet's shaking head signals Christian tradition. Triboulet's movements occur involuntarily, as do those of the medically insane, who in turn share characteristics with those experiencing Christian ecstasy (Screech 1980, 85). In this manner, Triboulet's signs of a praeternatural state lead to revelations of the supernatural, recalling the appearance of revelatory signs in obscure passages of Scripture. The abrupt changes in a fool's behavior reflect this direction toward sublimation, as Folly points out: "Then the entire expression of their faces vacillates repeatedly: now happy, now sad; now crying, now laughing – in short, they are completely beside themselves." (1979, 137). Ungoverned by worldly convention, fools abandon control over their words and gestures, leaving their bodies to undergo the effects of an exterior agent. As their souls strive to leave their bodies (Screech 1980, 85), they undergo experiences that draw them closer to the divine.

Triboulet's economical use of language reflects Folly's description of the wise simplicity of fools' language, one that is closer to nature in its candidness: "Whatever a fool has in his heart, he reveals in his face and expresses in his speech." (E 1979, 55-6). A fool's lack of rhetorical training suggests the gestural sincerity that Pantagruel sees in King Tyridates' farce-player and the sincerity in speech that Panurge ascribes to authoritative languages, in the manner of Herodotus's Phrygian speaking children. Like these children, fools exist apart from the world, which causes them to leave aside worldly preoccupations that lead to inhibitions and to a rejection of information in new and unusual forms. Fools retain a proximity to nature that is marred by rhetorical training, which can mask information. While a fool's words and gestures reflect what he thinks, a

wiseman's words deceive, as Folly notes: "But wisemen have those two tongues ... with one they speak the truth, with the other whatever they think convenient for the moment" (ibid). Learning and rhetoric mask the meanings of words that wisemen use, leading to an obscuring of knowledge through their wordiness. Such knowledge is lost to other wisemen, who are unable to recapture the masked meaning as a result of their rejection of unfamiliar forms of knowledge that may seem foolish. The discourse of fools eliminates such deceptive uses of language, instead directing individuals toward a more innate, and therefore more truthful approach to information.

Pantagruel and Panurge's diverse interpretations of Triboulet's phrase illustrate the way in which terms can take on different meanings and signals the obscurities into which words may fall, if hastily or lazily interpreted (see above). Their focus on the bagpipe, the "cornemuse de Buzançay," takes on particular significance, representing both visual and auditory allusions to Panurge's future conjugal state. Not only does the "cornemuse" reiterate the recurring image of horns in the narrative, but the bagpipe also becomes a metonymic reference to Panurge's future wife, its musical qualities reflecting her manner of speaking. Pantagruel's negative description of the loud, unpleasant sound of the Buzançay bagpipe appears as an augury for the grating speech of Panurge's future wife. But for Panurge the geographic complement for the bagpipe, "de Buzançay," becomes a reference to his future wife's origins. Sidestepping traditional imagery that relates "cornes" to cuckoldry, he refers to the "cornemuse" as a symbol of his wife's pleasant demeanor, signaled by the pleasure he takes in the sound of the bagpipe (much as Triboulet takes pleasure in the sound of the rattling pea). The reference that is

cacophonous in Pantagruel's interpretation becomes melodious in the interpretation of Panurge, suggesting the discrepancies to which Triboulet's disconnected phrase leads. This stands in contrast to a prelapsarian moment in time when individuals experienced unity through language, not needing specific grammatical structures in order to point to meaning, as Folly describes: "What need was there for grammar when everyone spoke the same language and when speech served no other purpose than to let one person understand another ... What room was there for rhetoric when there were no litigious troublemakers?" (E 1979, 51). Alluding to a divisive overabundance of terms and rules for language, Folly presents her own characteristics as a path toward common understanding. The connection she draws between the confounding uses of rhetoric and the litigation recalls the overabundance of laws that charitable interpreters would seek to replace with the unique law of *caritas*.

The episode ends with Panurge extending his charitable gestures toward Triboulet to the rest of the party, as he contributes to the creation of a lexicon to be put to use during their voyage. After Pantagruel and Panurge reaffirm their inseparable friendship, Panurge referring to himself as an Achates to Pantagruel's Æneas, thereby echoing Pantagruel's assertion at their encounter in II, IX, they plan their voyage in search of the Dive Bouteille, inspired by Triboulet's gesture with the wine bottle. Showing a practical application of his linguistic talents, he his use of Lanternese, a language he uses during this encounter, as a useful tool for the upcoming voyage. He recites Lanternese verse, translates it into alternating rhymes in intelligible French, and promises to build a Lanternese lexicon as a reference for his companions. This translation may be an effort to repair the effects of the splintering at Babel, which would be a reverse effect of his

tendency to render more complex the signs that are presented to him. At the close of his consultations, Panurge contributes to common endeavors, acting on words that he has heard, the words of a fool.

IV. CONCLUSION

Descriptions of human nature in the texts point to individuals' original states, delineating sources of the bonds that link individuals. Contributing to illustrations of charity, individuals are drawn together as a result of states of "amour, affection, tendresse" linked to passions. Such passions cause impulsive behaviors that come out in descriptions of spontaneous actions and speech. The fulfillment of these desires counteracts physical deficiencies in individuals, as in the case of Jehan Pietre, whose union with his beloved enlivens his otherwise passive, melancholic character. Resistance to such impulses causes imbalances that have serious repercussions, as in the case of the *dame saige*, whose efforts to quell her attraction to the seigneur d'Avannes result in her death. Panurge's impulses lead him toward marriage, a state that Rondibilis recommends for him as a result of determining the effects of his "poignans aiguillons de sensualité." Such impulses characterize the behavior of women, who are driven by their specific anatomical traits to "courir l'aiguillette." Rondibilis's attribution of female behavior to anatomy contributes to an illustration of universal characteristics of the "genre humain" by virtue of the human form. Other images of the "genre humain" occur through allegorical references to the human condition, through figures such as "Amour," who unites Jehan Pietre with his beloved, and "Cocüage," who participates in the conjugal union. These images develop a portrait of the way in which humors and personal experience, constituents of levels of prudence in individuals, contribute to the bonds that link them.

Examples of human nature in the texts draw attention to the significance of a charitable reading of physiological signs. Signs of melancholia, indicated by a yellowed complexion, are misread by Jehan Pietre's medical attendants as effects of jaundice, a misinterpretation that leads them to perform a procedure on Jehan Pietre that eventually contributes to his demise. Other symptoms brought on by a melancholic state – extreme states of heat and cold, for example – are misread during the *dame saige*'s illness, preventing her medical attendants from recommending a proper cure for her condition. Conversely, false signs of a particular condition lead interpreters astray, as in the case of the duchess who attributes her listlessness to pregnancy rather than her unfulfilled desire and in this way sets off a series of misunderstandings. Such discrepancies between bodily signs and the physiological states of individuals appear in the encounter with Nazdecabre, as the various gestures performed change from abstract reproductions of symbols to vulgar representations of an insulting and violent nature. Revealing the different registers into which gesture may enter, the encounter illustrates the way in which both internal states and the context of exchange affect interpretive efforts.

Impulsive behaviors, while revealing levels of prudence in individuals, are characteristic of folly. Folly seems to materialize suddenly, act spontaneously, and have unexpected effects on situations that individuals experience. Folly's appearance seems to reflect atypical behavior, as in the case of the *dame folle*, whose unbridled physical passion deviates from the conventional behavior of the other characters in N26. Folly departs from the conventions of behavior and speech, as illustrated by Triboulet's sudden, incongruous actions and disconnected phrase. Such examples of foolish behavior signal departures from individuals' natural, normal course of action, suggesting

praeternatural origins, while also suggesting an abandonment of protocol that brings individuals nearer to their original states. From this perspective, folly becomes a guide toward prelapsarian divine states and thus a vehicle of wisdom. Wisdom in foolish behavior appears in the conflation of wise and foolish figures, illustrated by the reversal of the wise and foolish attributes given to the *dame saige* and *dame folle* at the conclusion of N26. It also appears in the pivotal role Tribouillet takes on in Panurge's quest, inspiring their subsequent voyage, as well as Panurge's acts of charity. In this manner folly, which points to the limitations of the human condition, also provides a path to charitable approaches to human nature.

CONCLUSION

Descriptions of community, friendship, and human nature in the *Heptaméron* and the *Tiers Livre* reveal charity as a principal bond between individuals. Charity develops national identity, brings about unity of mind and spirit, and appears as a distinctive human quality. Anecdotes in Marguerite and Rabelais's narratives illustrate ways in which charity emerges from obscure figures in the text, including figures that suggest deviations from charitable models. In this way, portraits of charity arise alongside contrasting figures and forms in the manner of the dual position of the term "exemplaire."⁴⁰⁹ The incorporation of examples that detract from charity into a portrait of charitable models reflects the inclusion of praeternatural forms of nature into descriptions of human nature, thereby indicating the role of aberrant figures and forms in developing the narratives. By including counterexamples to charity, such as a portrait of a *locus terribilis*, techniques of discourse reliant on cavillation, and dispositions characterized by *philautia*, images of charity take shape in relation to these deviant figures in the texts. Illustrations of charity in the *Heptaméron* and the *Tiers Livre* are informed by older writings, which are renewed by the dialogic forms of the narratives and expanded by the rhetorical registers into which the narratives enter. In this way, charity assumes its place as an ideal social and interpretive model, while also developing through anecdotal figures and forms.

The focus on charity in Marguerite and Rabelais's narratives reveals its significance in the broader Renaissance corpus. Charity appears as an influential notion

⁴⁰⁹ Lyons describes the way in which the Latin term *exemplum*, which denotes both model to be copied and the copy or representation of that model, is maintained by the French term "exemplaire" (1989, 11).

on the topic of nation building, on the question of marriage, and on the way in which interpreters approach both authoritative and anomalous texts. In this way, charity informs approaches to the various classical and medieval traditions inherited by Renaissance writings. Erasmus' diverse writings provide insight into the role of charity in the *Heptaméron* and the *Tiers Livre*, illustrating the variety of forms it takes on, as well as its various uses. Texts of Erasmus that describe Pauline approaches to everyday life, the institution of marriage, and the creation of dialogic space illustrate the role of charity in a wide range of contexts that are pertinent to Marguerite and Rabelais's works. Charitable approaches to discourse are also distinguished by individuals who seek appropriate forms of knowledge, as embodied by a personified Folly in the *Encomium moriæ*. In this way, charity guides individuals who experience encounters with alterity as they form communities, participate in friendships, and experience physiological changes.

Descriptions inspired by discourse on charity also elucidate deviations in the narratives brought about by figures of folly. Allegorized representations of love and nature in the *Heptaméron* point to individuals' physiological conditions while Panurge's encounter with Triboulet reveals uses of folly in his approach to the question of marriage. Episodic portraits of topics such as love and marriage in the *Heptaméron* and the *Tiers Livre* point to the uses of a *captatio lectoris*, which Erasmus explains in the *De copia* and which appear in *exempla* that he gives in various forms of writing. Such examples arise not only in his adages and dialogic works, but also in his *encomia* and in longer, more extensive works, such as his treatises on marriage and childrearing. Parallels with Erasmus' writings not only show the influence of his descriptions of charity on Marguerite and Rabelais's texts, but also show a connection between these and the larger

Renaissance corpus. Addressing many of the issues that preoccupy humanist writers, Erasmus' writings draw from different traditions, as do the texts of Marguerite and Rabelais.

Principal findings in this work include the way in which certain types of writing are related to textual productivity. Uses of figures, such as mythological characters, show how topics act in the texts, how the texts draw upon different literary traditions, and how antiquated figures change when entering these newer writings. This appears with the personified figures used in the text as devices that explain phenomena such as alterity, invective, and the praeternatural. Personified figures assume the role of messenger or doctor in these texts, propelling the narratives toward their culminating events. The texts appropriate traditional mythological figures by creating new figures that are celebrated in their own right, such as "messer Coquage." "Amour" and "Nature" cause characters to act in unintended ways and to experience moments of clarity in situations that are unrecognizable, having escaped elucidation by human wisdom. Figures also become inscriptions in the text, following models set forth in the prologue, such as that of Corinth. Like the pithy expression of the Greek proverb encapsulated in the figure of Corinth,⁴¹⁰ letters, lists, and gestures are inscribed in the anecdotes related in the bodies of the texts. Such inscriptions reveal the threshold between the spontaneity that mimetic writing seeks to convey and the static nature of writing.

Taking the designated interpretive communities from a *locus terribilis* to a *locus amœnus*, the narratives suggest paths that effectively navigate unexpected or threatening circumstances. Offering dialogue as the principal means of counteracting adversity, the texts offer modes of creating dialogic space. Within these dialogic spaces, the texts

⁴¹⁰ "It is not given to everyone to land at Corinth" (CWE 31, 317) (see Chapter I).

illustrate the rewriting of prior texts. Rewriting the *Decameron*, the *devisants* survive flood and physical attack rather than succumbing to “destructive autonomy.”⁴¹¹ Rewriting folly, Rabelais’s narrator illustrates the Socratic theme of *conosce te ipsum* as a prerequisite for engaging in social discourse. As the texts progress, they continually introduce new dialogic spaces, drawing from different traditions while expanding discourse with observations of immediate surroundings. In this way, they fulfill expectations of creating a *locus amœnus* that are set forth in the prologues, creating an interpretive space that follows precepts of charity.

⁴¹¹ Teodolinda Barolini describes the splintering of social relationships resulting from the plague (1983, 523) (see Chapter I).

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